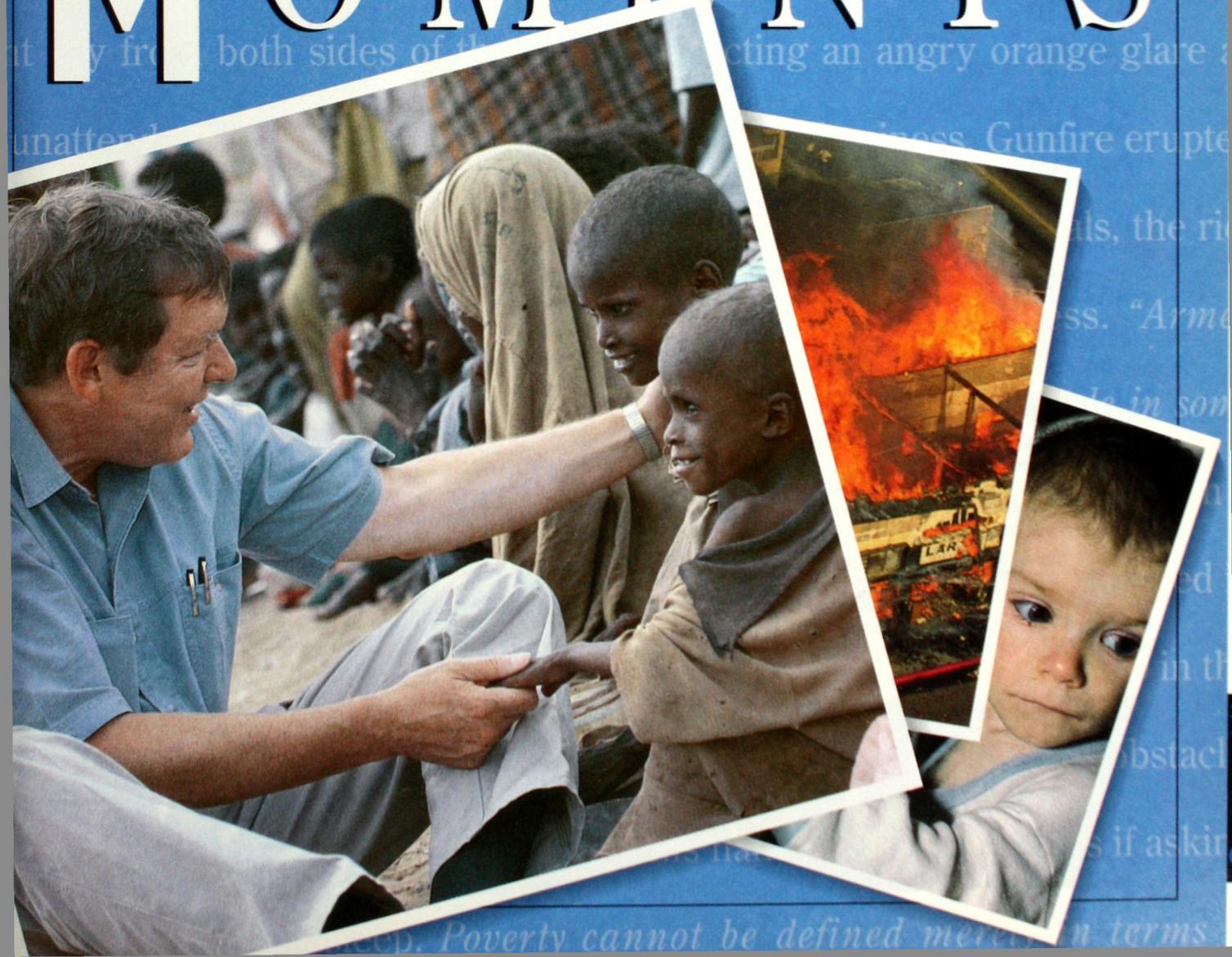


WORLDVISION®

nts and uncles had died, too, so the children were on their own.
REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF DESPERATE NEED AND DIVINE HOPE
aying house with gaping holes in the roof had been emptied by creditor

DEFINING MOMENTS



Poverty cannot be defined merely in terms

**WORLD
VISION
PRESIDENT
ROBERT
SEIPLE
REFLECTS
ON THE
PAST YEAR
AND FINDS
RENEWED
HOPE AND
COMMIT-
MENT FOR
THE YEAR
AHEAD.**

The Gospels contain Jesus' defining moments—those events that demonstrate most clearly who Jesus was, his purposes on this earth, his values, and his message of forgiveness and reconciliation.

His message was not only in words, but in entire experiences: spiritual and physical, actions and words, facts and feelings. Some of the most powerful passages in Scripture have few words and gripping images. Eternal truths are conveyed powerfully and eloquently through key defining moments in Jesus' ministry.

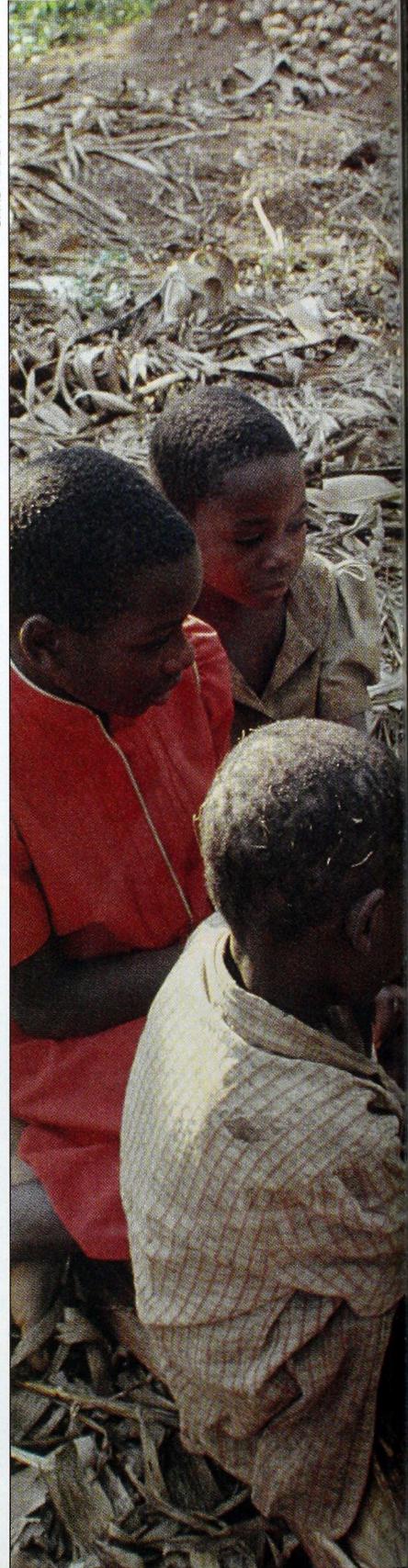
Forgiveness—In a single sentence to the thief on the cross, Jesus says that no one is beyond forgiveness, that it is never too late, that the repentant heart means more than a lifetime of appearances.

Compassion—Jesus wept; his friend had died.

Joy—We see the value God places on celebration, marriage, and simple rejoicing when Jesus creates wine for a wedding.

Practical compassion—Feeding the multitudes. He knew the time of day, how long they had been listening. He knew they were hungry so he fed them all.

Advocacy—He defended a guilty party



A GENERATION DESTROYED We met four Ugandan children, ages
dren buried their mother and father among their small farm's ban
decaying house with gaping holes in the roof had been emptied by

DEFINING



UGANDA:
We met four children whose
parents died of AIDS.

against an angry mob when, by the law, she was justly condemned. But he said to the adulterous woman, "Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." We see Jesus valuing people before protocol and hearts before possessions.

A YEAR OF DEFINING MOMENTS

Defining moments—we all have them. As this new year begins I find myself reflecting on them, considering the values they demonstrate, and praying that Christ's example of compassion will be increasingly evident in all that I do.

A generation destroyed. We met four Ugandan children, ages 5 through 12, whose parents died of AIDS within a week of each other. The children buried their mother and father among their small farm's banana trees. Aunts and uncles had died, too, so the children were on their own. A decaying house with gaping holes in the roof had been emptied by creditors. Two possessions remained: a broken-down bed, and a photograph of their parents. *Fifteen years of civil war and death by bullets has given way to a silent but more sure killer.*

What would Jesus do? Value the children, provide for their survival, heal their broken hearts.

A city aflame. I was leaving Los Angeles for a business trip and driving to the airport through chaos. Smoke boiled up into the night sky from both sides of the street, reflecting an angry orange glare as the unattended fires roared through business after business. Gunfire erupted as looters ran from a store with arms full. Sparked by five acquittals, the riot was fueled by a profound sense of alienation and hopelessness. *Armed ethnicity bared its teeth, even as burning crosses has returned to style in some parts of the country.*

What would Jesus do? With practical compassion, touch the hopelessness that fueled the flames, then bring reconciliation and healing to those burned by the hatred.

Throwaway children. We had finished dinner in a small city in Honduras. The area was poor, and thousands of children lived on the streets. Restaurant patrons literally stepped over a young boy asleep in the dust outside. He was small, insignificant, and invisible except as an obstacle. His head rested on an outstretched arm, his hand

gh, whose parents died of AIDS within a week of each other. The chi
e aunts and uncles had died, too, so the children were on their own.
ors. Two possessions remained: a trodden-down bed, and a photograph o

MOMENTS

turned upward as if asking for help, even in his sleep. *Poverty cannot be defined merely in terms of money, but in what it does to children.*

What would Jesus do? Turn the hearts of the mothers and fathers to their children, place the solitary in families, restore the promise of childhood.

BUILDING OUR WORK ON CHRIST

We gain much by understanding the personal values and individual events in our lives. This is especially relevant now, I believe, for the world is searching for a new value system. Since the end of World War II, the world has been largely driven by political and economic values. Capitalism versus communism. Democracy versus totalitarianism. West versus East. But the Cold War is over, and we face a values vacuum.

That vacuum—that hunger—will be filled. But will it be centered on Christ? Perhaps at no other time have we had such opportunities to influence the direction of our world by what we value, by how we live, *by who lives in us.*

There is a hidden value in this world, rarely measured, and contained in the heart of a child. It is as fragile as a daydream, resilient as a secret hope, elusive as a smile in sleep. This world's powerful, from governments to institutions, struggle to understand its very existence.

Yet a civilization will ultimately stand or fall depending on how well it preserves and nurtures its children. We must define our social priorities on the basis of intrinsic human worth, not the potential for productivity. Jesus valued people before anything else. Even his own life.

World Vision, as a channel of Christian values, must continue reaching into desperate situations to prevent death, preserve hope, and protect the future of the children. Values begin with the human heart. The successful World Vision project, therefore, offers legitimate hope in the present because of the eternal hope secured in Christ.

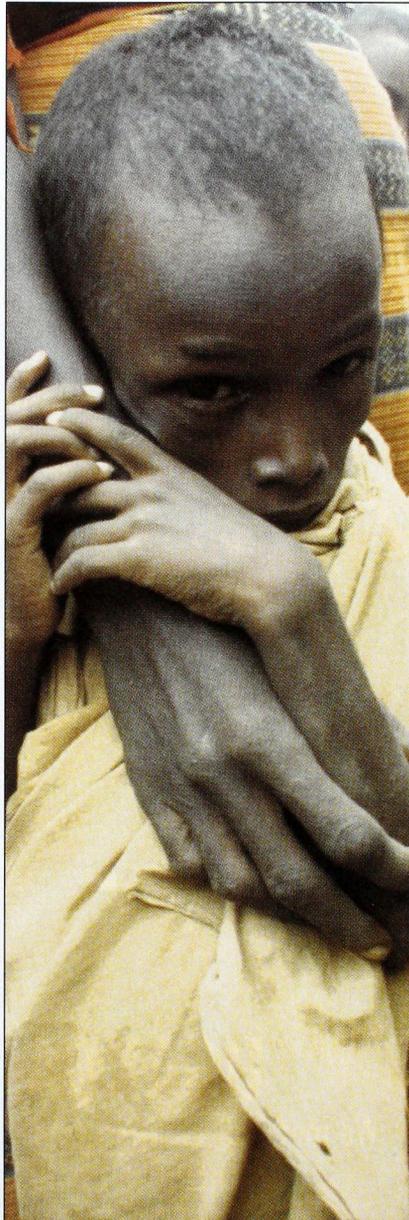
GOD IN THE DARK

Greater challenges stand before us than perhaps at any other time in our ministry. The situation in Somalia is so dire that we don't have the language to describe it. The combined dynamics of

social turmoil and drought have produced an unspeakable tragedy. It is one thing to understand how it has happened—quite another to reconcile one's self to the horror of dead children and adults lying unburied where they fell because the survivors are too few and too weak to bury them.

If ever the value of human life is in question, if ever hope of the gospel is needed, if ever the reality of sin is

JOHN SCHENK / WORLD VISION



THEY HAD LOST THEIR PARENTS TO WARFARE AND DISEASE. YET MIRACULOUSLY THEY HAD NOT LOST THEIR HOPE.

irrefutable, it is in Somalia. Humanity's fall from God is all too clear. The countryside is barren, stripped of anything even remotely edible. The cities have become death camps. Yet God is there.

He is hard to see, I admit. The tangible evidence is exceedingly slim. But peer into the face of an expectant child at our feeding station in Baidoa, and you'll feel God's tears running down your cheeks. Hold out a bowl of life giving food, and you'll feel God's hands fill your own. And yes, witness the sorrow of a mother over her dead child, and you can feel his heart breaking inside your chest.

God is present in situations too horrific to describe. When we went into the Romanian orphanages in 1989, we found helpless, innocent children consigned to death in institutions so barbaric and hopeless that the first visitors left in a state of shock.

Yet as therapists and health care professionals began working with the children, they discovered an unexpected resilience. Life was there, vibrant and strong beneath the disease. The children had not only survived neglect, they had also somehow learned to love despite having no human models. God has been there all along.

A recent event demonstrated how hearts and values have been transformed. Until 1991, 40 percent of the children in some institutions died every year. But for the first time, a wake was held to mourn the deaths of the thousands of unremembered and often unnamed children, ascribing value to the orphaned children, recognizing their loss.

The service was held in the institutional graveyard in Hirtau, attended by leaders from the Romanian Orthodox and Hungarian Reformed churches (bitter enemies for centuries), as well as by staff and local volunteers. What the children had learned from God—to love—

of the parents. Fifteen years of civil war and death by bullets has given way
n a business trip and driving to the airport—through chaos. Smoke boils
range glare as the unattended lives roared through business after busine

SOMALIA:

The cities have become death camps.

the adults had now learned from the children. And having learned to love once again, they were free to feel a pain that for 45 years had been denied.

The wake appeared a small step, but it spoke of a profound change in the hearts of the Romanian people. Such change gives us hope.

It reveals God's working. We know that disasters will continue. Yet we also know that each one of them is an opportunity to invade pain and suffering with an eternal message of hope and peace.

ANDREW TAYLOR / IMPACT IMAGES



STRIVING AHEAD

As we look forward, we are challenged to strive for the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We will respond both to new crises and maintain our existing commitments:

- Helping the inner-city residents of major U.S. cities, including Houston, Seattle, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, through student mentoring, jobs, church networking, and life-skills training.

- Feeding the hungry in 15 nations in Africa and providing long-term support for the rehabilitation of the people and their land through child sponsorship, church leadership training, water resource development, agricultural support, and education.

- Bringing reconciliation and health care to Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand, where turmoil and disease have dominated people for centuries.

- Restoring hope and opportunity to the Commonwealth of Independent States through Bible distribution, health care, and specialized intervention for the children of Chernobyl.

- Advocating the cause of the poor in Latin America through child-focused development, crisis intervention for street children, small business development, and church leadership training.

- Demonstrating Christ's love through holistic projects centered on him, declaring his message directly and distilling eternal truths into immediate and pragmatic assistance.

SINGING NEW SONGS

As I look forward to next year, I am humbled by our limitations, yet I am strengthened by God's presence. He extends an invitation to every one of our world's five billion people to know him, to be like him, to receive and be transformed by his love. We are privileged to partner with him and others worldwide in sharing that message of hope in tangible, practical ways.

Though unseen by the natural eye, God is with us on a sometimes dark and rocky path. We do not walk alone. He is there. And we will ask him, "What would you do? What would you have us do?"

Defining moments. Visiting a home in Uganda where 20 orphaned children

have joined in a new definition of family. The oldest was 12. They had lost their parents to warfare and disease. Yet miraculously they had not lost their hope.

They sang for us, these survivors of the darkness. I was amazed they had songs left to sing. Yet they are the future of Uganda, and they speak of the future of Africa and the world. Their lasting image reminds me that our work is to bring forth a new song. A song of hope, a song of deliverance, a joyous song that sings to a better present and an eternal tomorrow. ☉

JOHN SCHENK / WORLD VISION



L.A. RIOTS:

Fueled by a profound sense of alienation.

ROMANIA:

Yet the children had somehow learned to love.

ENVIRONMENT IN CRISIS

Writing this book is part of a personal journey that began more than 25 years ago, a journey in search of a true understanding of the global ecological crisis and how it can be resolved," writes Vice President-elect Gore in his book *EARTH IN THE BALANCE: ECOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT*.

The former senator from Tennessee writes in bold, controversial terms, an analysis of how the global environmental problem has developed and declares that nothing short of a global change will avert disaster.

For the past 15 years, as congressman, senator, and in 1988 as U.S. presidential candidate, Gore has tenaciously pushed ignored environmental issues into public and political arenas. Terry Madison, editor of *World Vision* magazine, interviewed Gore earlier this year.

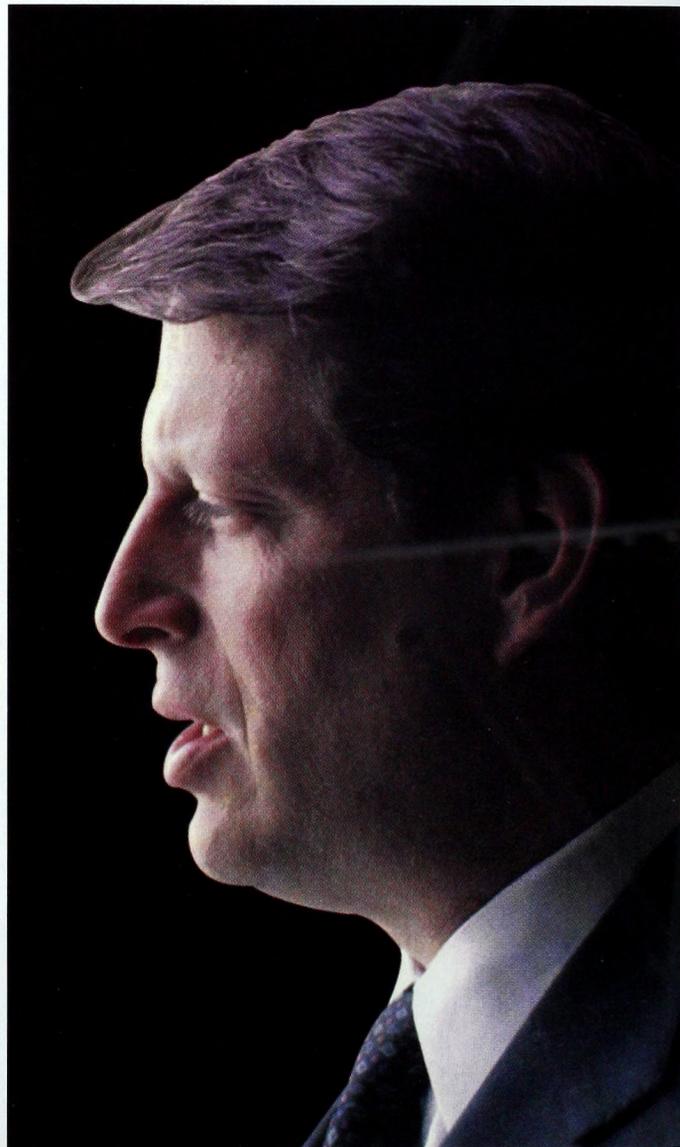
WV: Your book is a heavyweight with lots of substance. What was the catalyst that sparked your interest in writing it?

AG: After my son's accident, my priorities in life changed. On April 3, 1989, my wife and I took our youngest child, our six-year-old son, to the opening day of the baseball season. The game went to 11 innings and the crowd all left at once. We got to the final street before the parking area and at that moment my son's

(continued on page 8)

This interview explores Gore's beliefs about how Christianity, the U.S. government, the Third World, and individuals play a role in environmental issues.

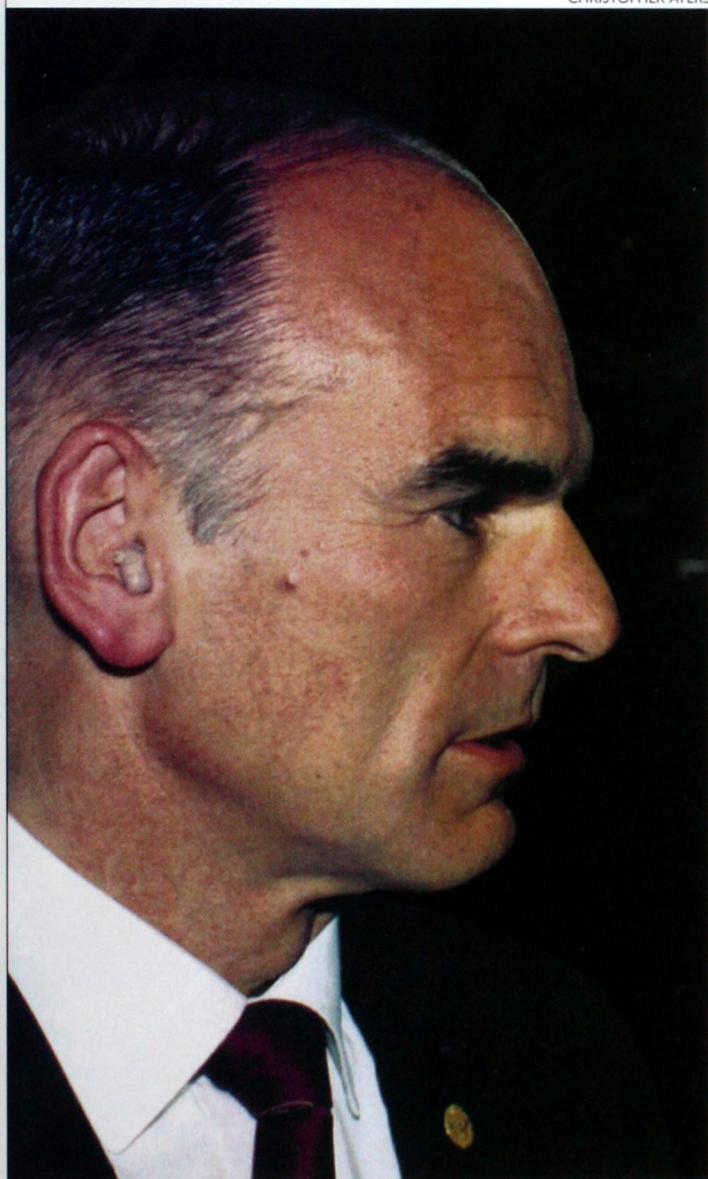
TERRY MADISON / WORLD VISION



ECONOMIC ECOLOGY

The only way to truly help the poor and the environment is with a strong economy, according to the former secretary of the interior.

CHRISTOPHER AYERS



Last May, Donald Hodel, along with several Christian leaders and environmentalists, gathered in Washington, D.C., for a three-day forum sponsored by World Vision to discuss issues related to poverty and the environment. Hodel, the former secretary of the interior under President Ronald Reagan, was one of the major speakers. The following is excerpted from his address.

Environmental fervor abounds in this country. We see bumper stickers proclaiming Mother Earth. We see almost the worship of wildlife. These ideas seem to be driving policy in the United States and many other developed countries.

Environmentalists constantly assault us with pseudo facts, many of which are intended to justify shutting down economic activity. To the extent they're successful, World Vision will have that much more to do, because the number of poor will increase, their suffering will be greater, and they will have fewer resources to deal with those problems.

That's not to say that we aren't dealing with serious environmental problems. They're significant, material, and substantial—dams, deforestation, contamination of groundwater, pollution of rivers, clearing and erosion of fields, paving of

(continued on page 10)

friend ran across the street and said, "Come on, Albert." He pulled away from my hand and ran after his friend just as a car came speeding through a gap in the crowd.

He was knocked 30 feet through the air, scraped another 20 feet along the pavement, and came to rest in the gutter. As I reached his side I saw and felt the absence of life. I knelt beside him and I prayed. After a torturous long period—it seemed longer than it was—there was a faint sound, which was a stirring. Two off-duty nurses who carried their medical kits with them wherever they went helped to stabilize him.

Following 30 days and 30 nights in his hospital room, I began to put down some ideas that eventually became *EARTH IN THE BALANCE*. I had already spent an enormous amount of time investigating the environmental crisis worldwide, visiting the front lines of this crisis and seeing the suffering of people, especially the poor and the children.

But, it didn't really come into a spiritual focus until my life changed in the aftermath of this tragedy. We felt the power of prayer during that period. That was the catalyst for the book.

WV: Where does the Christian faith connect with the environment?

AG: The environmental crisis is at bottom a spiritual crisis. The various ecological catastrophes we read about in the newspapers—global warming, climate change, ozone depletion, destruction of the rain forests, the loss of living species, the poisoning of the oceans—are symptoms of the deeper underlying crisis, which is profoundly spiritual in nature.

The great heresy within Christianity from the early days onward was gnosticism; now it might be called scientism. That's not fair to science, but I'll use the word. This heresy rests upon the assumption that the spirit and the flesh are separate in a way that takes God out of the physical world.

The notion that we are simply disembodied intellects entitled to manipulate God's creation for our amusement or exploitation is a spiritual crisis. We are interwoven with the entirety of creation, given a special role and dominion but required to exercise stewardship. Yet we have chosen to ignore those spiritual obligations.

WV: How does the environmental crisis affect the poor and the Third World?

AG: Those who suffer the most from environmental degradation are the poor

and those who have the least political and economic power to defend themselves. It is always the poor who suffer the most when the environment is destroyed. It is usually the young, as well.

This is true not only in the developing world but also in the United States. It's not an accident that hazardous chemical dump sites or other environmental hazards are much more likely to be found in poor neighborhoods and

communities with relatively less political power.

WV: Where are we as a nation on the environmental issue?

AG: I like to think about environmental problems as falling into three large categories. These categories are ones I learned during my years of work on military policy and strategic nuclear policy. Military historians define conflicts in

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS IS AT BOTTOM A SPIRITUAL CRISIS. YET WE HAVE CHOSEN TO IGNORE THOSE SPIRITUAL OBLIGATIONS.

DON AYLAND



THE BOOK

The following are excerpts from **EARTH IN THE BALANCE: ECOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT** by Vice President-elect Albert Gore (Houghton Mifflin, 1992).

The loss of one and a half acres of rain forest every second, the sudden, thousandfold acceleration of the natural extinction rate for living species, the ozone hole above Antarctica and the thinning of the ozone layer at all latitudes, the possible destruction of the climate balance that makes our earth livable—all these suggest the increasingly violent collision between human civilization and the natural world. ... Much more worrisome are [people] who will not acknowledge these destructive patterns. Indeed, many political, business, and intellectual leaders deny the existence of any such patterns in aggressive and dismissive tones."

"We tolerate ... the violation of the rights of those who will come after us. As we strip-mine the earth at a completely unsustainable rate, we are making it impossible for our children's children to have a standard of living even remotely similar to ours."

"In today's world, the links between social injustice and environmental degradation can be seen everywhere: the placement of toxic waste dumps in poor neighborhoods, the devastation of indigenous peoples, and the extinction of their cultures when the rain forests are destroyed, disproportionate levels of lead and toxic air pollution in inner-city ghettos, the corruption of many government officials by people who seek to profit from the unsustainable exploitation of resources."

"When considering a problem as large as the degradation of the global environment, it is easy to feel overwhelmed, utterly helpless to effect any change whatsoever. But we must resist that response, because this crisis will be resolved only if individuals take some responsibility for it. By educating ourselves and others, by doing our part to minimize our use and waste of resources, by becoming more active politically and demanding change—in these ways and many others, each one of us can make a difference."

three categories: local battles, regional theaters of action, and global or strategic conflicts like World War II or the Cold War.

Environmental problems are similar in that most of the ones we usually think about are local, like air pollution from a factory or water poisoned from a nearby dump site.

We have recently begun to deal with some regional environmental problems like acid rain. The smokestacks in the midwest contribute to acid precipitation in New England and Eastern Canada. Smokestacks in Great Britain cause acid rain and acid snow in Scandinavia.

But the new category is global environmental problems like climate change, ozone depletion, and poisoning of the oceans.

The United States has been the world's leader in facing up to certain local environmental problems. The Japanese have recently surpassed us, as have the Germans. But we have a right to be proud of the changes we began making in the 1970s to address local air and water pollution. With the Clean Air Act amendments of the '90s, we have begun to address regional problems caused by acid rain.

But unfortunately, we are bringing up the rear in facing global environmental problems. Yet even there we have some potential successes. We are phasing out chlorofluorocarbons, which are responsible for destroying the stratospheric ozone layer. We have contributed more to the international fund on this issue than other countries.

But where climate change and some of the other global environmental problems are concerned, we are by far the biggest contributor to the problem. We're also the most intransigent when it comes to accepting the responsibility for remedying these problems.

WV: According to your book, "The promotion of justice and the protection of the environment must go hand in hand in any society." What do you mean?

AG: There's a very strong biblical basis for the connection between justice and environmental health throughout the Bible.

First, pollution is early in Genesis when Cain slays Abel, and Abel's blood spills unjustly and renders the ground fallow. That connection between unjustly spilled blood and the unwillingness of the earth to yield fruit and sustenance is repeated elsewhere in the Bible. On many occasions the prophets found evidence of injustice in a city or nation in the degradation of the environment in

that city or nation. And in our own experience, we see the same linkage all around the world.

The worst examples of environmental degradation appear in those countries with the least appreciation for justice. In Eastern Europe for example; in the former Soviet Union; indeed wherever political and economic freedom is unjustly suppressed, the environment suffers.

There's at least one practical reason which helps explain this. When individuals live in a just society and have political and economic freedom, they naturally choose to be good stewards over the places in which they live. They are so much more likely to glorify God and make, for their children and their families, a beautiful environment in which to experience the joy of life.

But when suffering the burdens of injustice and when deprived of liberty, which is their God-given right, they do not speak out to protect the places where they live or their fellow citizens against the injustice they see around them. So it's not an especially mysterious linkage; it's a natural law, biblically

based and observed in our own practical experience.

WV: What can the church in America do to be a part of the solution?

AG: By promoting justice and by promoting concern for the poor and those less fortunate in our communities, and by focusing the attention of individuals and families on the higher values that are most important in our lives. The church calls us to focus our energies and make our choices in favor of higher values, and when those choices are made we thrive as individuals and families. And our environment receives the stewardship and protection that healthy individuals glorifying God naturally provide.

WV: What practical steps can concerned individuals take to become part of the solution to our environmental ills?

AG: There are three things every individual can do. Number one, learn about this issue. Learn enough about it so that the cynics cannot knock you off balance. And be prepared, for they will attempt to do so with a ferocity that will shock you. *(continued on next page)*

Number two, use the power of the pocketbook, make intelligent consumer choices in your own life, in your own household, and in every institution over which you have some influence. If you're on the school board, for example, or if you're on the board of deacons of your church. The budget comes up for new light bulbs: Ask the question, "Why are we buying these old bulbs that, yes, cost a little bit less but last only one-tenth as long, consume 10 times as much energy, and cause 10 times as much pollution?"

WV: Would this include food packaging and other items as well?

AG: Yes, indeed. Intelligent consumers' choices can influence the world through the marketplace. And there are lots of study guides. I have been working with a number of church denominations and seminaries that are now in the process of providing study guides for Sunday school groups and church groups.*

And then third, use the ballot box. Political freedom, like economic freedom, gives every individual enormous power. But in exercising political freedom, remember the other old saying, "There's strength in numbers." Find those who agree with you. Persuade those who do not agree with you. And join with as many as you can in making it plain, in a respectful but insistent way, to those who are asking for votes, that your votes will depend in a significant measure upon whether or not these candidates will become leaders on this issue.

WV: Can we win the battle against environmental degradation?

AG: Oh, yes. We can and will win this battle. And of course, we must. But remember the old story about the wise man's reputation of being able to answer every question, and the young man who attempted to stump the wise man with a cynical plan. He took a small bird and prepared to ask the wise man whether the bird was alive or dead and secretly prepared to crush the bird if the wise man answered alive and to let the bird fly away if the wise man answered dead. He cupped his hand with the bird inside and put his question to the wise man who pondered a moment and said, "The answer is in your hands." 🌐

*World Vision, in conjunction with David C. Cook Publishing Co., has produced a print and video study guide called Reclaiming the Garden: Caring for an Environment in Crisis. You can order it from your local Christian bookstore or call (800) 323-7543.

roads, and strip mining.

Last February World Vision sent me a letter about a 3-year-old Mexican boy named Miguel. It read: "Miguel's family was trapped in hopeless poverty. Their village was so remote and roads were so poor that even basic services never reached the village. Families like Miguel's had no clean water, electricity, or other vital essentials that you and I take for granted. But then, with the faithful support of friends like you, a World

PROPOSALS THAT MIGHT SEEM LIKE THEY WOULD IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT MAY JUST BE A DEATH SENTENCE FOR THE WORLD'S POOR.

Vision project was started in Miguel's community. Roads were paved, a medical clinic was built, new elementary school classrooms were constructed. Now Miguel drinks clean, safe water that is regularly trucked into the area."

Now that is a heartwarming, encouraging story. It's also notable that World Vision built things: roads, a medical clinic, classrooms. And they trucked in clean water. You know what the truck runs on: gasoline or diesel, nothing else.

The story is full of environmental changes, changes that were necessary to give Miguel clean water, a clinic, classrooms, and ultimately hope. And if rich nations, in the name of the environment, ignore the need for low-cost hydrocarbons, Miguel's clean water will stop flowing.

My simple proposition is this: environmental change often benefits the poor. Dams, for example, produce power. They store water for agriculture. They provide for economic development. Environmental changes that provide food, jobs, materials for homes, a need for factories, and general economic activity can be good for the poor.

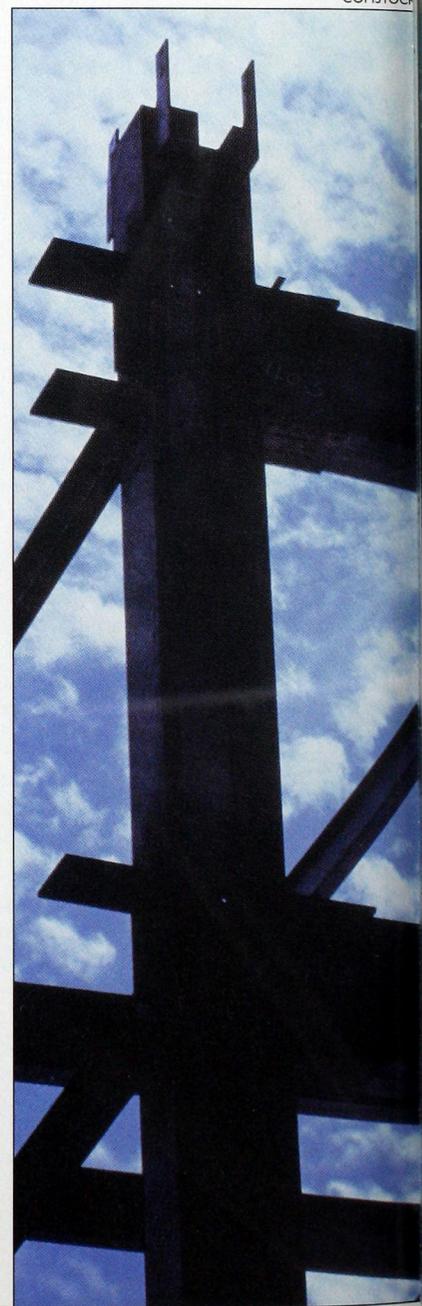
Remember, the poor are people who might soon starve without help. If an environmental change we make today creates a health hazard, or a threat of hazard, 25 or 50 or 100 years from now, that has to be a very small concern to people starving today.

Reducing the threat to the ozone layer may cost tens of millions of dollars, reducing our ability to help thousands of the poor just to head off a few hundred cancers 75 years from now. And even those cancers are not certain.

Remember that predictions of environmental catastrophes are often off the mark. Lake Erie was pronounced dead 20 years ago; it's back and improving.

Mount St. Helens, we were told, had killed the land around it for 100 years. Within two years, salmon were attempting to run back up the Tuttle River, and in 1987 I saw revegetation there that was incredible. The Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969 was an ecological disaster but 20 years later, a carefully documented Fish and Wildlife Service study could find nothing to indicate that the spill took place.

Wealth and prosperity permit us to reach out to the world's poor to improve



COMSTOCK

our environment. Wealth and prosperity will enable us to clean up the world's air and water—and help the world's starving poor while we're doing it. Those who take the Bible seriously are obligated not only to help the poor but to protect the ability to do so.

If we care about the poor, let's avoid environmental alarmism. Let's resist so-called solutions that do not meet real problems and waste large financial resources which, if expended on productive activity, could help others.

We should insist that we not save hundreds of people in future generations from disease and death by condemning millions in this generation to starvation. Instead, let's help less developed countries through economically

competitive means of producing energy, food, clothes, and materials that are also better for the environment. We should encourage their economic growth, even if that changes the environment.

In our country we need to use our wealth of technological resources and economic assets in energy production. This will help developing countries continue using simpler, more flexible, less costly resources.

We should also decide whether it is ethical for us to shut down polluting activities in our country but buy products made in other countries through those same polluting activities. And let's decide whether it's right to spend billions of dollars to clean up the last speck in our environment when those same dollars expended elsewhere would reduce world pollution levels by millions of tons, and immediately affect the physical and economic health of people worldwide.

We should insist that our leaders answer such questions, and especially, "How will proposals to stop industrial, agricultural, and development activities affect the world's economy?" In other words, our leaders must consider the impact of giving in to those environmentalists who demand shutting down the economy. And they should do so before supporting drastic cutbacks. Proposals that might seem like they would improve our environment may just be a death sentence for the world's poor.

Through World Vision, a family in the United States is supporting a poor girl somewhere in the world. She has hope that she and her family will survive because of that help.

Now imagine that the world economy falters because of environmental restrictions. One day assistance to the poor girl stops. She faces starvation. Nearing death, she asks the wise man of her village, "Why?"

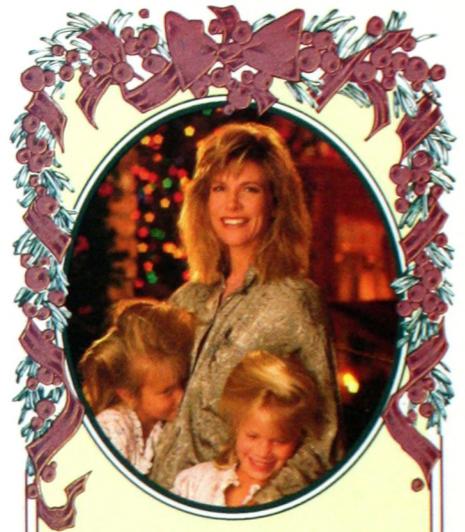
"Because," he answers, "our friends across the sea can help us no more."

"But why?" she implores tearfully.

Shaking his head in dismay, he gently tells her, "Because they are no longer rich. Many there now follow a new god who does not teach them to help the poor. For fear of doing damage to the earth 50 or 100 years from now, they have made themselves poor, and they no longer help others."

Those who are committed to helping the world's poor should resist this scenario with everything God has granted them—with their talent, time, and treasure. ☉

Donald Hodel is an energy consultant in Summit County, Colo.



For You— The Debby Boone Christmas Recording

World Vision is grateful to caring friends like you who open their hearts to the needy children of the world.

So as a special thank-you when you send a gift of \$25 or more to help a needy child this holiday season, we've made arrangements for you to receive a cassette or compact disc of Debby Boone's Christmas recording, *Home for Christmas*.

You'll enjoy Debby's clear, sweet voice in a holiday sampler of 11 Christmas favorites. They include "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Silent Night," and "White Christmas" in an unforgettable duet with Rosemary Clooney.

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CRASHING IN

Every day an average of 10 unaccompanied Mexican children are turned back to Tijuana after trying to cross the U.S. border. The YMCA is trying to keep them off the streets.

Street thugs in the rough-and-tumble town of Tijuana, Mexico, splatter 11-year-old runaway Abel Murillón Barrera with hot tar as he walks down the street in a crime-infested area near the U.S. border called El Bordo. The tar burns his face, hair, arms, and hands. Some sticks onto his right eyelid and sears away lower lashes.

The three men, satisfied, let Abel run away. He drops the Popsicle he has been eating to soothe his sore throat and cough. The scruffy little runaway from central Mexico has been living in this area for two months, spending the cold desert nights under Tijuana's Bridge of Mexico.

After nightfall, Abel settles onto a stained, bare mattress beneath the bridge, not far from the concrete banks of the man-made river and the metal corrugated fence separating the Tijuana headache from the California dream. He is proud and did not cry.

From his hometown of Uruapan, Abel hitchhiked more than 2,000 miles to Tijuana. Like many who

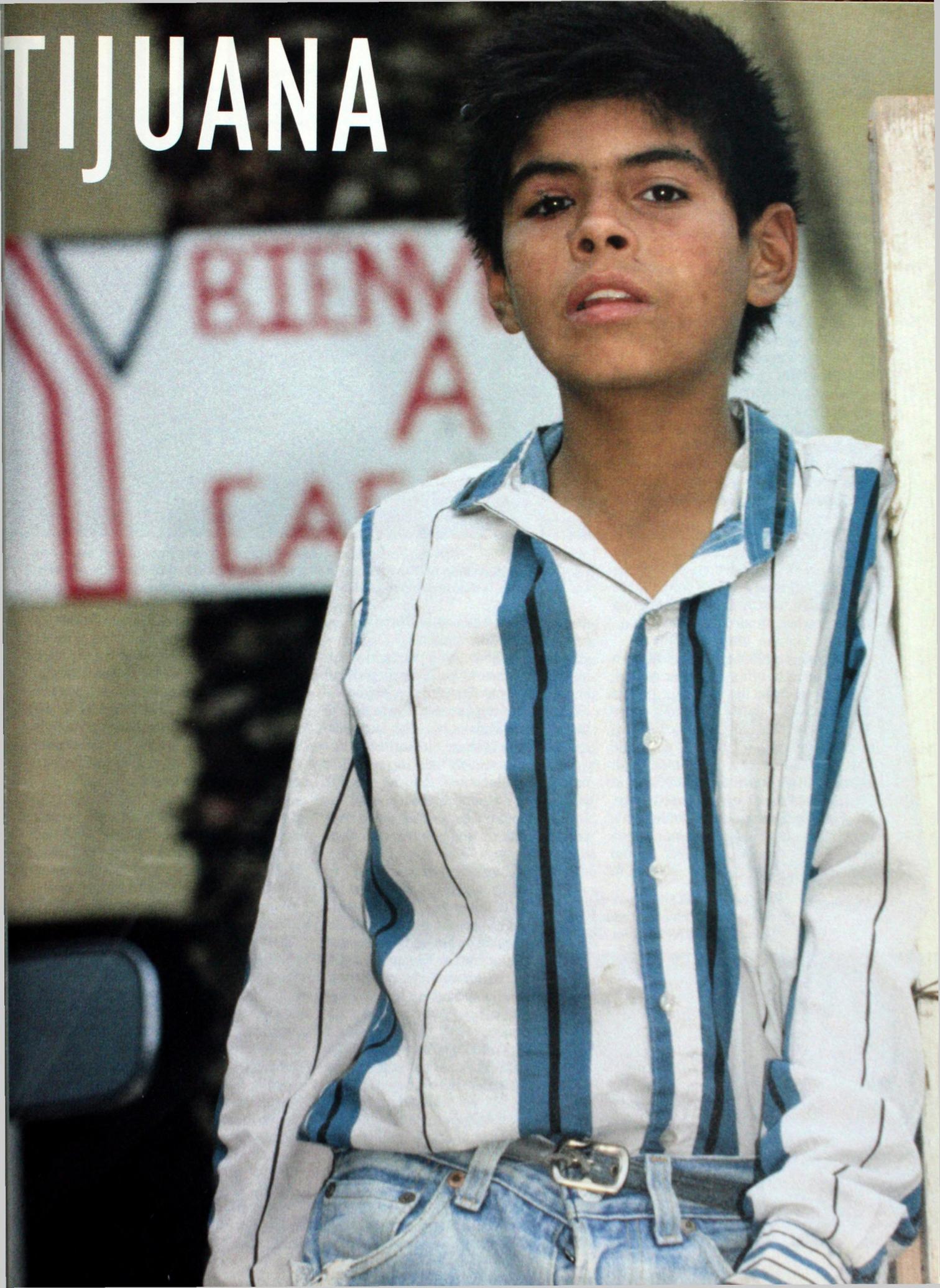
have migrated to this border city, which has swelled to more than 1 million people over the past decade, Abel came hoping to get a piece of the city's relatively robust economy. Begging by day, Abel earns money at night by cleaning sheet metal in an industrial shop.

Tijuana also attracts minors intending to crash the U.S. border. Every day, an average of 10 unaccompanied children are caught trying to cross into the United States. In 1991, 3,740 children from the Tijuana area tried to cross the border.

The same day that Abel is assaulted, 17-year-old Israel Palmatz Lucas is making his way to the border through El Bordo. He has holed up in a Tijuana hotel for a few days after arriving with five relatives from a muddy village near Lake Patzcuaro.

To increase the chances of one getting through, Israel's relatives split up at different points along 10 miles of the heavily patrolled border. The boy walks five miles west to Tijuana's beachside community Las Playas. He hopes to reach relatives living in Los Angeles. Just before

TIJUANA



dawn, with no U.S. Border Patrol vehicles in sight, Israel runs north toward the dim hills.

U.S. Border Patrolmen arrest him shortly after he enters near Imperial Beach. He is one of 19 children, and 1,579 Mexicans overall, who have tried and failed to cross into the United States from Tijuana that night. Half of all Mexicans seized by the Border Patrol in 1992 have set out from the Tijuana area.

Israel, held at a detention center at the San Ysidro crossing, is given breakfast before authorities deliver him, along with the other kids, to Mexican authorities at the Otay Mesa crossing. He has \$1 worth of pesos in his pocket and no idea where his relatives are.

According to a Border Patrol spokesman, they try to keep relatives and adult friends together, and routinely contact each other to reunite minors with their guardians. Others, who work with the deported children, say the Border Patrol routinely separates children from adult relatives to delay their ability to recross.

Israel does not claim a guardian and is taken to Marina Herrera, a social worker who interviews deported children at the Mexican Migration Services border office for Tijuana's YMCA Home for Migrant Minors, partially funded by World Vision.

Herrera waits behind a desk in a concrete office chamber as children from the previous night's Border Patrol roundup are escorted in. She interviews them to determine which ones will go to the YMCA Home where each month an average of 44 children find refuge; in 1991, 402 children were sheltered there. Most stay less than a month, although a few children have been there for nearly a year. While encouraging them to find local jobs, the YMCA allows children to

Marina Herrera interviews deported children to determine who should go to Tijuana's Home for Migrant Children.



After suffering from cold and hunger, having people hurt them and shout at them on the highway, and finally being returned to Mexican officials, most deported children do not want to try crossing the border again.

stay at the shelter until they can be reunited with their families.

Israel—sullen, tentative, and wearing a blue T-shirt with *California* scripted above an orange Los Angeles skyline—sits in front of Herrera. She learns that he has an uncle, Rafael Lucas, who was also caught trying to cross the border.

Israel, however, tells Herrera in a barely audible voice that he doesn't know where to find his uncle, and his family at home does not have a telephone. Herrera asks him what he plans to do now.

"Um...I want to return home," he says quietly. It seems like the right answer, but Herrera knows it's not the solution for relatives who may be searching for him in Tijuana. And she doubts he would leave relatives behind and return home alone. Releasing Israel onto the streets of Tijuana, once described as "the most larcenous, vicious, predacious—the wickedest border town of them all," is not an option for the YMCA Home. He could easily become another of the city's 8,000 street children.

Herrera has Israel wait while she interviews the other 18 kids, including Ana Isabel, 14, from Guadalajara, wearing a "Support Our Troops: Opera-

tion Desert Storm" T-shirt; Julio, 15, from Ensenada, who had tried to cross with the help of a hired *coyote*, or alien smuggler; and Rodolfo Rojas, 13, who tried to cross with a 5-year-old brother and a 9-year-old sister because, as he says, an ill aunt in Los Angeles needs his help. Relatives are located for most of the children, and arrangements are made to get them home.

"These children are captured, they're away from their families, they've spent one or two days in detention, and they're scared," says Guillermo Alvarado, a social worker for World Vision in Tijuana, which funds and coordinates several projects under World Vision's *Tierra Nueva* (New Land) program. "They're disoriented, and their plans for reuniting with their families on the other side have been broken."

Herrera adds, "Most of the children have relatives on the other side. But if you ask them whether they would try to cross again, most would say no. After the entire saga of getting to the border, being cold and hungry, having people shout at them on the highway, insult them, do violence to them, most do not want to try again."

When Israel, forlorn and secretive, arrives at the YMCA Home, social worker César Cáceres tries to dissuade him from taking his chances on



about what you want to do: Make a good plan. I know you're shaken up. You can leave if you want. But give yourself a chance."

Standing in a worn denim jacket, old jeans, and boots caked with mud and dust, Israel says softly, "You know what I want to do? I want to go look for my uncle."

Cáceres asks him to sit down.

Cáceres' tug-of-war continues as half a dozen other boys are brought to the home. There is Moisés, 13, who had spent two years on the Tijuana streets after his parents kicked him out of the house, and the last six months in a juvenile jail. "They split my head open," Moisés says, part-

ing his hair to reveal the scar. "I was in bed, and because I wasn't asleep, they came and hit me."

There are four small children from Ciudad Gúzman, near Guadalajara, picked up by police in the Tijuana bus station. One is 14 years old and three say they are 12, but they look much younger. They say they came to work in Tijuana, where one has an aunt. "My father's head is messed up from alcohol," says one. "He comes home and hits me."

And the latest arrival is Abel, with the black dollops of tar seeming a permanent part of his lice-infested hair, grimy clothes, and scuffed arms. A Tijuana newspaper photographer who found him wandering at El Bordo brings him in. Abel arrives just as Cáceres has gained enough of Israel's trust to learn the hotel where Israel had stayed. As Cáceres telephones the hotel, he directs Israel's attention to Abel.

"You see him? That is what could happen to you if you go onto the streets of Tijuana."

Israel's gaze rests on Abel, whose eye is red and swollen. Israel's uncle, however, is not at the hotel. Cáceres leaves a message.

Abel takes a seat beside Moisés, who speaks and moves with a sureness and serenity that is disturbing from one so young. When YMCA social worker Eduardo "Lalo" Rivera asks him his age, Moisés says he spent his 13th birthday in jail two days ago, and that his parents have never celebrated it.

"Human beings are very special people," Rivera says, "and here we're going to celebrate your birthday." Abel sits up wide-eyed and asks, "And we're going to celebrate my birthday, too?"

"Sí, sí!" Rivera says, grinning.

Abel, who says his family did not mistreat him, expects to stay in Tijuana a long time. He has an "Aunt Cuca" here whom he expects to find some day; he thinks she can be found selling sweets on the street near El Bordo.

Cáceres later reaches Israel's uncle.

TIERRA NUEVA

World Vision, which began working in Mexico 30 years ago, has 219 projects there that help more than 41,000 children and their families. The *Tierra Nueva* (New Land) program in Tijuana, began Oct. 1, 1990 and includes the following projects:

- **MEXICO GROUP** is developing a food cooperative and children's feeding program. World Vision also provides school supplies for children and medicine for the pharmacy.
- **MIGRANT HOME** provides temporary shelter and training to homeless migrants.
- **DORCAS HOME**, a nondenominational Christian program, provides care and Christian education to children of prisoners.
- **YMCA HOME FOR MIGRANT MINORS** provides shelter, food, medical and legal help to deported children.
- **MIXTECO PROJECT** provides a sewing workshop for Mixteco Indian women to help them learn income-generating skills.

the streets. Cáceres explains that while the YMCA can't house him against his will, responsibility for him has been transferred from the government to the YMCA.

"What will you do if you leave?" Cáceres asks, as Israel, eager to leave, alternately stands and sits.

"I'll speak with my uncle."

"Do you know where to find your uncle?"

"No."

"Do you have any idea? Do you know Tijuana? You can get lost very easily in Tijuana. You have no identification. How did you leave it with your uncle when you parted?"

"He just said, 'We'll see you on the other side of El Bordo.'"

Questioning rapidly with a gentle smile and expressive eyes, Cáceres advises Israel to wait just a little while, that his uncle will come for him. Israel shakes his head no. Often during the interview Israel repeats that his uncle will not look for him, raising the question of whether "uncle" here is a euphemism for a coyote.

Cáceres tells Israel to rest and eat. Israel refuses and stands up. His manner is not impertinent, just restlessness struggling against an ingrained respect for elders. Cáceres presents the sad scenario of his family coming for him only to find him gone.

"The border area is very dangerous," Cáceres says. "Just yesterday a guy was mugged, and now he has broken ribs. Take the time to think clearly

After a few hours of getting lost in Tijuana's twisting, jumbled streets, and twice calling for directions, the 32-year-old Lucas finally arrives at the shelter by taxi. Israel and his uncle greet each other warmly as Israel shows the first signs of boyishness, saying "What bad luck—they got me." And his uncle laughs it off with a hearty "*Ni modo*," the Mexican idiom for "That's the way it goes."

Israel climbs into the taxi with his relatives, and Abel, after visiting a doctor, looks forward to his birthday celebration at the YMCA shelter. ☉

Jeff Sellers is a World Vision media relations administrator.

SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR
HELPING OTHERS
IN THE NAME
OF CHRIST

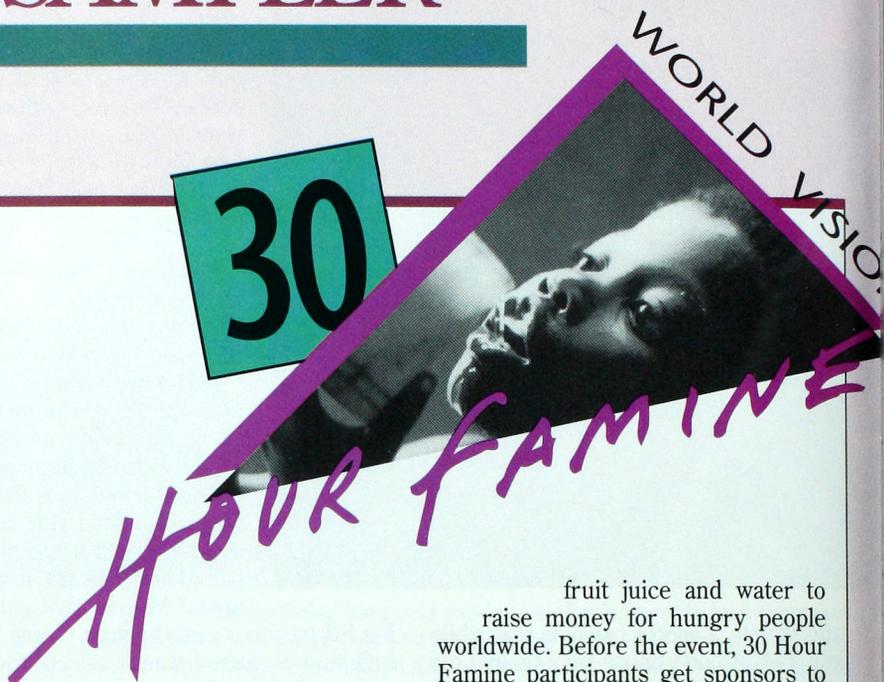
Compiled and written
by Tamera Marko

MISSION MANSION

Businessmen Bob Skold and Bob Mitchell wanted to help the struggling people in Denver's inner city. Through the Executive Network, a Denver-based nonprofit Christian organization that funds outreach programs, they founded Providence House.

One hundred years ago, a millionaire's family lived in this 21-room mansion with an adjoining 9-room carriage house. Now 30 men and women pay subsidized rent to stay in Providence for up to two years recovering from abuse, divorce, or addiction. Two additional Providence homes include programs for homeless men and struggling married couples. Each program connects residents with job and education resources and Christian counseling while providing a community setting where they can develop relationships among peers.

For information about how your church can set up similar residences, send a SASE to Bob Skold, The Executive Network, 801 Logan Street, Denver, CO 80203; (303) 860-8404.



GET THAT FOOD OUTTA YOUR MOUTH

When Mother Teresa was asked how you feed a billion starving people, her answer was "one at a time." Through World Vision's 30 Hour Famine, you can help make this happen. Adults and kids at least 12 years old dedicate 30 hours to going without food except

fruit juice and water to raise money for hungry people worldwide. Before the event, 30 Hour Famine participants get sponsors to pledge money for the program.

Money raised will help fund World Vision's relief and development programs in Somalia and surrounding regions, and in the United States.

On Feb. 19 and 20, 1993, church youth groups, schools, families, and individuals will participate in the Famine. World Vision provides a step-by-step program planning guide, including activity ideas, videos about hunger and poverty, and Bible studies. Two high school students who join the 30 Hour Famine can qualify for a trip to World Vision projects overseas.

For more information call (800) 7 FAMINE.



FASHIONABLE AID

While on a church trip to the West Indies three years ago, Jamie White, 13, was inspired by the local clothes made out of flour and sugar sacks. On the plane back to hometown Branson, Mo., she sketched her first clothing designs. With her father's help, she soon began marketing a similar line of shorts and tops. The clothing now includes over-

sized T-shirts, leggings, and Christmas sweatshirts for children and teens. On each clothing tag, White writes a brief uplifting message about topics such as friendship or Christmas.

All of the teen clothing profits, which in 1991 were more than \$100,000, go to summer camps that Jamie's father founded and runs for underprivileged children. "The best part of doing this is knowing that kids can go to camp because of it," Jamie says. The clothes are available in Dillard's department stores nationwide.

HE'S TURNING THEM

ON

CHUCK BOOHER

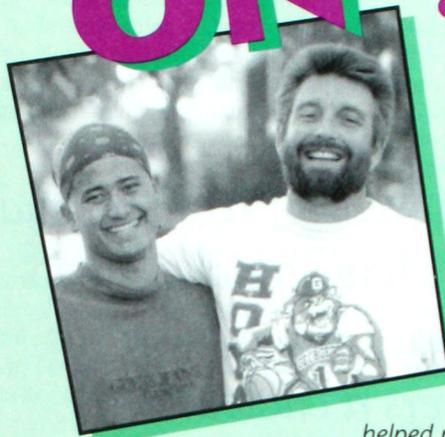
Home: Azusa, California

Ministry: Youth Pastor

Profile: Contagiously crazy; fun-loving and gregarious; a deep desire to see teens grow in Christ

Latest Accomplishment:

Turning young people on to faith in action.



"The 30 Hour Famine

helped my kids understand why we're a church. As they began to have an outward focus on those who are less fortunate, they also began to see the need to take the gospel to their friends and schools. It became a partnership that from this moment on we're going to do something more real, more vital."

His Advice: *"The 30 Hour Famine will broaden your teens' horizons to see needs beyond themselves. They'll see that they can make a difference."*

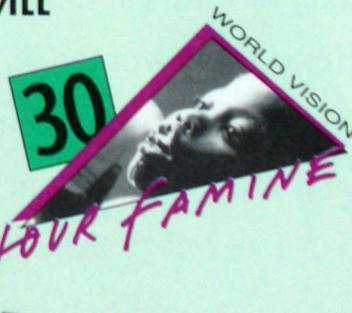
BROADEN THEIR HORIZONS

Join thousands of people across North America on **February 19 & 20, 1993**

Go without food for 30 hours and feel what millions of children worldwide experience every day. Through World Vision's 30 Hour Famine, your youth group, school or individuals can learn about the causes of world hunger and Christ's compassion for the poor, while raising money to fight the problem. World Vision supplies plenty of materials and ideas to make the 30 hours fun and eye-opening.

Call 1-800-7FAMINE to Make It Happen!

YOUR YOUTH GROUP WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!



IT WAS AN AWESOME EXPERIENCE. I KNOW NEXT YEAR I'M GONNA GET A LOT OF FRIENDS TO COME ALONG.
—JASON KARMAN

ILLUSTRATION BY STAN SAKAI

REINCARNATION

Want to recycle your old Christmas cards? Send your used cards from Christmas and other occasions to the following non-denominational Christian organizations:

- *International Aid Inc.*, 17011 West Hickory, Spring Lake, MI 49456.

More than 360 volunteers use the cards to make postcards and colorful plaques for missionaries. With a Scripture verse written in the local language, the plaques are also part of International Aid Inc. care packages for children in Eastern Europe. "The orphanages there have nothing on the walls," says Joel Sammy,

marketing director. "These plaques stimulate the children to dwell on Scripture."

- *St. Jude's Ranch for Children*, 100 St. Jude St., Boulder City, NV 89005.

St. Jude's Ranch provides homes, counseling, academic tutoring, and activities for abused children.

Children at the facility receive 5 cents for each

recycled card they complete. "Most of these children come from families on welfare," says Susan White, fundraising coordinator. "The cards give the children a sense of learning and earning. They learn they can break the cycle of welfare." St. Jude's Ranch sells the recycled cards in 10-packs for a \$6.50 suggested donation.



MOTHER'S CHOICE

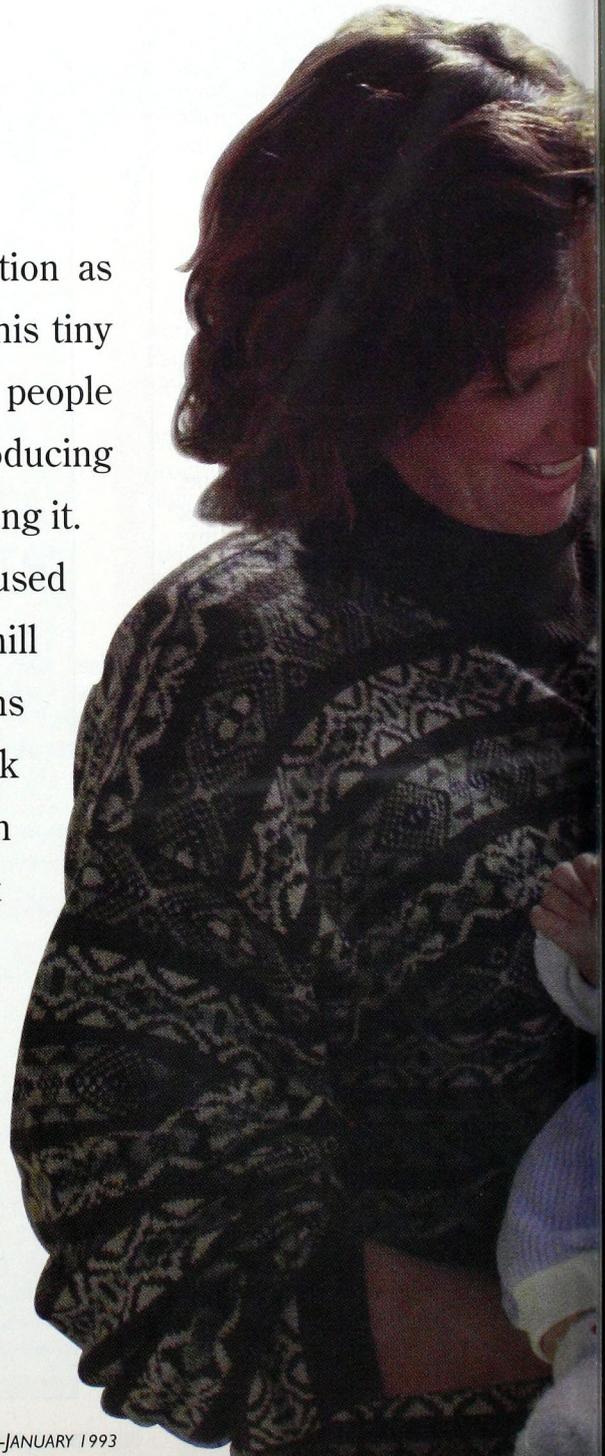
TEXT BY RON WILSON
PHOTOS BY GREG BURT

Each month, hundreds of women, many from Hong Kong, have quick, cheap abortions in China. One ministry is giving these mothers a choice.

Few dispute Hong Kong's reputation as the world's shopping capital. In this tiny British crown colony, six million people are caught in a frenzy of producing goods, earning money, and spending it.

That's why the humanitarian enterprise housed in a gray concrete building, perched on the hill overlooking the thriving business district, seems so out of place. Dwarfed by scores of new bank and office buildings is a life-saving operation that has given hundreds of single, pregnant Hong Kong women an alternative to abortion.

While hundreds each month "dispose of an unwanted pregnancy," quickly and cheaply a few miles away in China, these women now have another option—Mother's Choice. It's aptly named because those who go there for help are the castaways of Hong Kong society with no place else to go.



The ministry

It all began over tea one Sunday afternoon at the Hilton Hotel with a group of expatriates. An Indian entrepreneur and his American wife and two North American missionaries were appalled by a series of articles in the *South China Morning Post*.

Young women, it reported, could take the train a few miles to the border of the Chinese People's Republic, walk across, and get an abortion at one of at least eight hospitals in Shenzhen Province. These abortions had become such a hustling business, the hospitals gave taxi drivers a kickback for each girl they brought in. Worse, many of these hospitals abort third trimester pregnancies. And one Chinese doctor admitted that abortion had generated significant income for the province.

The birth of a program

It was not just their abhorrence of the Chinese abortion mill that moved the four, but the plight of the young women. In Hong Kong, the stigma attached to what many refer to as "naughty" girls makes them unwanted by their families and often by the church. Some girls can't identify the baby's father, and even if they can, very few can support a family.

We're not responsible for China's policy, the four reasoned, nor can we change it. But we *are* accountable for what happens in our society and we can do something.

Helen and Gary Stephens,

the missionaries, could call on a cadre of skilled friends and workers to get involved. Ranjan Marwah has, as he puts it, "more than my share of blessings," meaning he could help fund the idea. It also meant he had a wide circle of friends, including some of the colony's leading industrialists and politicians. "I'm a businessman," he confessed, "and we don't see problems like this as things we can chip away at. We want to change situations immediately."

HELEN STEPHENS received the Hong Kong American Chamber of Commerce award of the year as the individual who voluntarily made the most outstanding contribution to the Hong Kong people. Mother's Choice was awarded \$2,500 for its ministry.

Helen thought a lot about the pregnant girls crossing the border. One day she prayed, "Lord, tell them not to do that," and the answer came back to her in the form of a question. "Helen, are you willing to get involved? Will you get your hands dirty to do something about it?"

Immediately, she did. She found an abandoned building that belonged to the government, and Ranjan, using his contacts, got the government to lease it to them for \$1 a year. The building, however, was derelict, nothing but a mildew-coated shell. Gary sent in workers to itemize what it needed and the answer was *everything*—new wiring, plumbing, flooring, windows.

So the ball went back to Ranjan. "Hong Kong is the kind of place," he says, "where people write a check to get something off their conscience." Ranjan asked for more. He wanted to get them involved. He knew, however, that appealing to people to help the "naughty" girls wouldn't work. So he talked about saving the life of an unborn child.

Help pours in

Ranjan persuaded a Chinese businessman, the biggest rice importer in Hong Kong, to supply all the rice and oil they needed. The head of a conglomerate that owned several major hotels offered furniture. Another friend, in the electric fan business, a big item in humid Hong Kong, promised Ranjan enough fans to equip the building. Still another friend donated diapers.

Phyllis Marwah (left)
and Helen Stephens



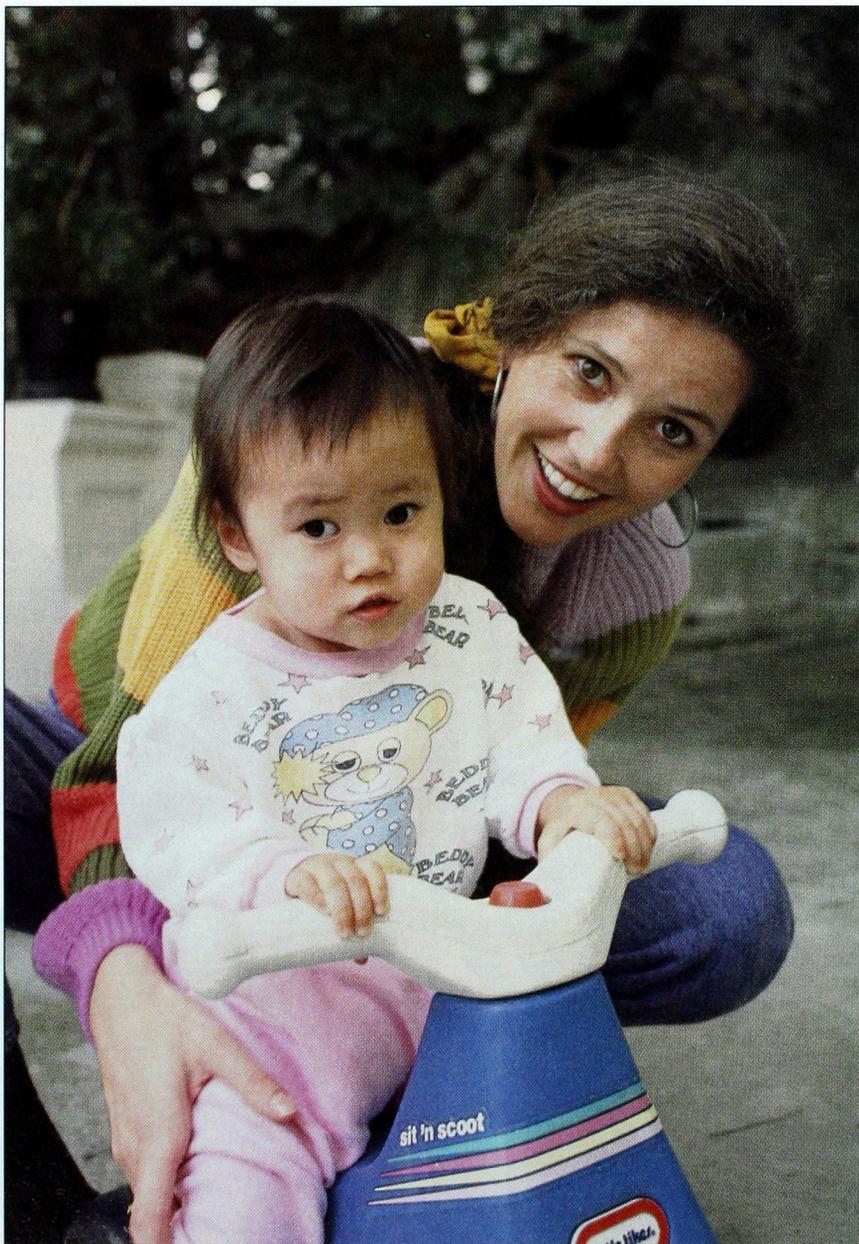
Helen and Ranjan's wife, Phyllis, spread the word to the Christian community, and soon the building was full of volunteers—scrubbing, painting, patching, hauling. An electrical contractor, Mr. Wong, agreed to do all the wiring. At the end of the week he told Helen and Phyllis he was impressed that *gweilo* [foreign] women would give so much of themselves for the Chinese girls.

A full house

Finally, Helen, Gary, Phyllis, and Ranjan gave a lunch to show the building to the community and publicize the project. Just as they put the finishing touches on their lunch preparations, the phone rang. It was a girl, six months pregnant. Her mother had thrown her out, and someone had told her about

Mother's Choice. Could she come over right away? They hadn't even opened the doors, but Helen, now the director, felt it was God's stamp of approval on the work. The girl was there by 3:00 p.m. that day. After that it didn't take long for the beds to fill up. Wai Ming, a 14-year-old school dropout, was pregnant from her 32-year-old boyfriend. A sweet, quiet girl, she cried a lot when she first came. Lai Ha, 21, was a recent refugee from the mainland. Her boyfriend in China had a wife and two children, so Lai Ha fled to Hong Kong where she didn't know anyone. A legal aid officer called and asked if Mother's Choice would go to court for a pregnant girl in jail. Choi San's boyfriend owed money to the notorious Chinese gangs, so she had turned to prostitution to help pay the debt.

Most of the 500 women helped at Mother's Choice are between 16 and 17 years old. More than 75 percent of the girls give up their babies for adoption.



The founding four had no idea whether the girls would be tough or like the girl next door. It turned out that many come from single parent homes in Kowloon, a low-rent section of Hong Kong, where hundreds of families live in high-rise apartments stacked on top of each other.

The average girl at Mother's Choice is 16 years old, and most are between four and seven months pregnant. Some are contrite like the 15-year-old who wrote, "Father, I don't know what to say—because I am really sorry for what I have done." Another wrote to her unborn child, "I did not listen to my mother. I went out a lot and got in trouble. But I really regret it."

In its first four years, Mother's Choice has nurtured more than 500 young women. Most of them stayed at the home about three months, and most told the social workers that if they hadn't gone there, they would have gone to China for an abortion. Three out of four of the girls have given the children up for adoption.

Nurturing the babies

Success, however, posed another problem—what to do with all the babies. So back to the government they went. This time they came up with an old three-story colonial that would house 60 babies and a staff of 20.

But infants operate 24-hours a day. The organization soon put the word out that it needed a small army of cuddlers, rockers, feeders, and changers. Wives of businessmen, the businessmen themselves, students, clerks, local Chinese and expatriates alike, signed up for several hours a week, slipped on an apron, and reported to the nursery. Now more than 290 part-time volunteers help a 27-member paid staff and 26 full-time volunteers from 14 other countries.

Horace, an airport transportation director, comes directly from work every Wednesday afternoon. Poonja, a 16-year-old from India, comes after school. John, a British businessman, spends Sunday mornings bouncing babies. Mary, a secretary, is a regular on Saturday.

Everyone has ideas about how to care for a baby. Lay the babies on their back or stomach? Pacifier or thumb? Let them cry or pick them up? And since Hong Kong is an international community, you're apt to hear baby talk in Dutch, Cantonese, French, Afrikaans, or English. It makes for occasional confusion, but it means a steady supply of loving care.

Adoption and abandoned children

Although a steady supply of parents is easy to find, the adoption process takes time. Because Mother's

At a time when five million U.S. children go hungry, congressional reforms early next year could eliminate the Select Committee on Hunger, a bipartisan panel that the *New York Times* calls the "conscience of congress."

The committee deals not with special interests and the privileged, but with the world's 100 million street children, the starving people of Somalia, and the 200,000 Americans added to the nation's food-stamp rolls every month for the past two years.

Should the reform-minded congress terminate the only bipartisan congressional committee exclusively targeting the elimination of hunger in the United States and overseas, it would cause great suffering for millions of families.

Let your elected officials know of your concern before they vote early in the 103rd Congress. Letters should be addressed: The Honorable (insert name), U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 20515 or phone the U.S. Capitol switchboard, (202) 224-3121, for their office. —Terry Madison

WORLD VISION

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More than 290 part-time volunteers—businessmen's wives, businessmen, students, clerks, locals and expatriates—care for children at Mother's Choice.

Choice is not yet a licensed adoption agency it is not involved in the adoption process and must work through other organizations.

While doing this, however, Helen and her staff discovered abandoned children languishing in government institutions. Many of the children had special physical needs but had been placed in homes with mentally retarded children and had almost no chance of ever being adopted.

Shocked and appalled, Helen asked the board for permission to open a "Wee Care" unit for such children with special needs. It didn't take long to find Ho Chi, 3, and Sin Man, 14 months, both with Down syndrome. Then came 18-month-old Mai Lei, a Vietnamese refugee who was emotionally deprived and physically underdeveloped. Man Ting had Towne syndrome and

Emmanuel had a cleft palate, which Mother's Choice had surgically corrected before the Social Welfare Department found parents for him.

Happy endings

Meanwhile, Choi San, the girl they pulled out of jail, learned about Christ and felt his love from the staff at Mother's Choice. "For weeks before her baby was born," one staff member recalls, "all I ever saw her do was read her Bible." Their experience at Mother's Choice has a lasting impact on many of the young mothers who stay there. Many of the girls telephone often and visit occasionally. In fact, some of the girls, the staff laughs, want to form an alumni association. This is one place they can count on acceptance.

They can also count on help. A staff member who works closely with the young mothers tells this story. One day an old man walked into Mother's Choice and just looked around. When someone offered to help him he explained why he'd come. "I work at the railroad station in Lo Wu," he replied. "That's where the girls get off before they cross the border into China for their abortions and where they get on when they come back. Often I clean up the blood. I heard about what you're doing, and if any of the girls ever ask, I want to let them know they have another choice." ☺

Ron Wilson is a free-lance writer in Earlysville, Va.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Mother's Choice needs more full-time help. The program provides men and women of any age room and board for one-year assignments. Volunteers must pay for airfare and raise \$200 per month to cover personal expenses. For more information, contact Mother's Choice, #5 Bowen Road, Hong Kong. Phone: 852-525-2393. Fax: 852-526-4145.

BY JOYCE GLAZE WEBSTER

LESSONS FROM FRILLS AND FOODBASKETS

"I wasn't dreamin' of anything this Christmas," Viola Yocko said to God last Christmas Eve. "You died for me. That's enough." The 74-year-old woman had just received a holiday food basket from Father Michael Doyle, pastor of the Sacred Heart Church in Camden, N.J.

Viola lived in a green, leaning "home" in Camden, a city where murders occur daily, and poverty is difficult even for the young and robust. Despite her poverty, however, Viola's joy reflected her faith in a loving God who had sent his Son to die for her.

I have worked with many like Viola. Their rich faith in the midst of crushing poverty has profoundly affected my view of life and heaven. It has caused me to ask, "Just who are the poor and the homeless?"

According to Don Sadler of the Sunday Breakfast Association, a mission for the homeless, all of us are homeless if we have no hope of heaven. Because of this, as I try to help the poor I only volunteer for organizations that give hope along with help. And I have learned a lot about hope from those in economic despair.

A few years ago, my husband was transferred to New Jersey. Although I have lived and worked in several U.S. cities and two foreign countries, it was the first time I had lived near a city where I was told never to go out alone. Camden is only 15 minutes from my front door and is bordered by three of the wealthiest suburban South Jersey communities. During my first visit to Camden, I was amazed at the decay and destruction. It reminded me of the poverty I had seen in Third World countries. Yet Viola, living in the midst of poverty, didn't need any Christmas present other than Jesus.

I first served food to the homeless at the Sunday Breakfast Association in Philadelphia on Thanksgiving Day 1990. Affectionately called the Sunday B by patrons and volunteers, this 100-year-old ministry serves the physical, personal, and spiritual needs of many homeless people.

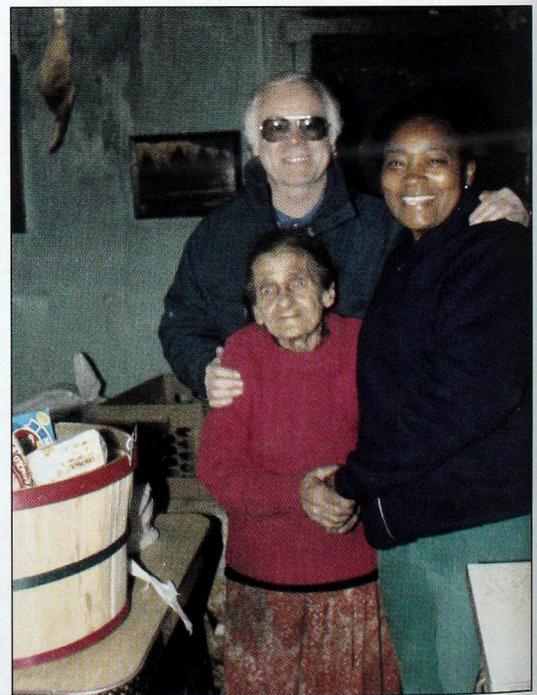
My husband and I drove to the Sunday B wondering aloud what would await us. At first I couldn't look into the faces of those who sat at the tables while I filled their cups. There was already a lump in my throat and I didn't want a watershed of tears to begin. In addition, I felt as though I would be looking in on something that I had no right to see. But as I continued, I could hear the men saying, "Thank you. Happy Thanksgiving." Soon I lost my selfish thoughts and began to really enjoy pouring the water and returning their good wishes.

Sometimes, as a middle-class citizen, I wish for the abundance of the affluent lifestyle. And that wish is not always centered in how I would help others if I were wealthy. Sometimes, I just envy the frills. But I know that money does not buy happiness. It is the same God who delivers the poor and the rich from pain and addiction.

My vision of heaven has changed over the years. In my youth, heaven was a place where people went after they died. As I matured, heaven evoked images of a quiet, restful place where I could go to live after I died. Now, heaven for me would be the privilege of watching Viola occupy her mansion promised in the Scriptures. And hearing Reverend James Campbell, executive director of the Sunday B, introduce former homeless men and women to their Creator. I'll know I'm there when I hear the rich Irish accent of Father Michael Doyle proclaiming, "Christ has not only risen, but he has returned to Camden! And all is well!" 🌐

Joyce Glaze Webster is a free-lance writer in Mt. Laurel, N. J.

Their rich faith in the midst of crushing poverty has profoundly affected my view of life and heaven.



Viola Yocko, 74, receives a food basket from Father Michael Doyle and Rose Marie McBride, Sacred Heart Church staff.



THERE'S STILL LIFE IN SOMALIA

The person on the operating table could have been the national symbol for Somalia. Multiple gunshot wounds threatened an already fragile body. A casualty of anarchy—one of many. There are entire hospitals that treat nothing but gunshot wounds and, given the random rifle shots that punctuated this day, these hospitals have never been busier.

The shooting, of course, is not always random, but there is a certain nonchalance about its intentionality. We saw it at the port in Mogadishu: An argument breaks out, everyone reaches for weapons that have become ubiquitous in the streets. Shots are sprayed, people run, and two more victims lie in their blood on the cement. Friends carry them off, and five minutes after the argument began, the port returns to “normal.”

But there is nothing normal about the person on the operating table. She is 11 years old. No one is sure whether she was specifically targeted or simply caught in a cross fire. The uncertainty is common in a country that has fallen headlong into a moral abyss. The point, of course, is moot for Bushooro. What she does know is that her life has been unalterably changed, and a new kind of pain threatens her.

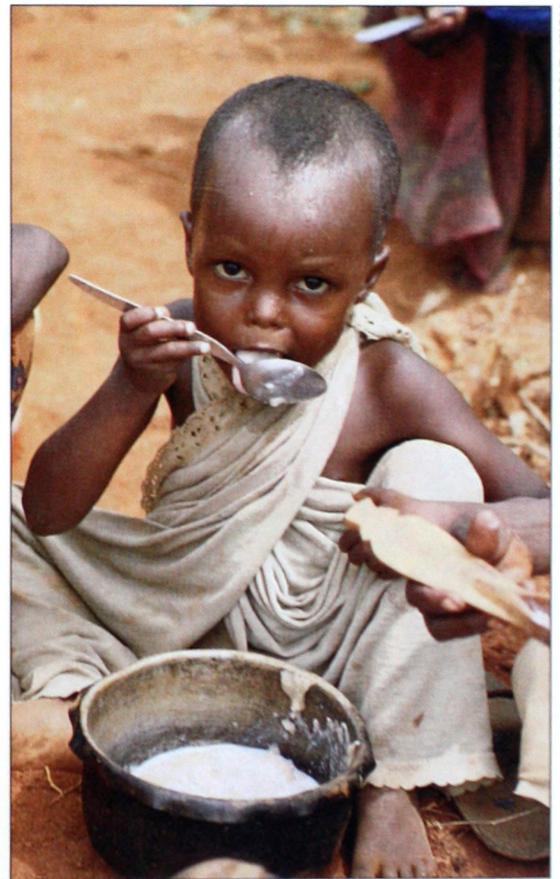
Bushooro Sleeth Unfar has been stripped of everything decent. She lost her identity when the conflict claimed her parents. Orphaned, she lost her humanity when the man-made bullets entered her body. On the operating table she was unable to control her bowels, and her dignity was taken away. Frightened, bewildered, disoriented, she lost her faculties. Perhaps in the ultimate indignity the sleeves were cut out of her blouse. If her clothing had too much value, she might tempt robbers. Her value needed to be reduced, and this was one thing Somalia could do effectively.

Bushooro long ago lost the ability to smile; a fragile, broken body that was slowly being drained of cups of infection, had now been devalued by events far out of her control. Her refuge was an operating table. She could just as easily have slipped through the massive cracks of moral consciousness and quietly escaped a society gone mad. Yet she was going to live. An 11-year-old girl was now given the opportunity of a lifetime, a healing touch from someone who cared.

Bushooro would make it because there are still people who care, people throughout the world who want to make a difference in Somalia. The Canadian nurse cleaning Bushooro's wounds incar-

nated hope. It was a sacrifice for her to be there, but the affirmation of her witness came from those who made it possible for her to be there. Donors whose compassion never became fatigued. Individuals who have not been distracted by multiple disasters nor beaten down by the magnitude of the Somali tragedy.

These are people who refuse to stay on the sidelines, riding out a worldwide recession. They want to have an impact; they care about persons more than events. For them, Somalia is not lost.



PHILIP MAHER / WORLD VISION

The obituaries written by a jaded and cynical media are, indeed, premature.

Life is still here, fragile, but capable of being renewed. And with life there is hope, sustained by the gifts and prayers of thousands of compassionate people around the world. It is a hope that endures, a hope that helps a little 11-year-old girl through the most traumatic moment of her life, and sticks around to promise her a better tomorrow. ☉

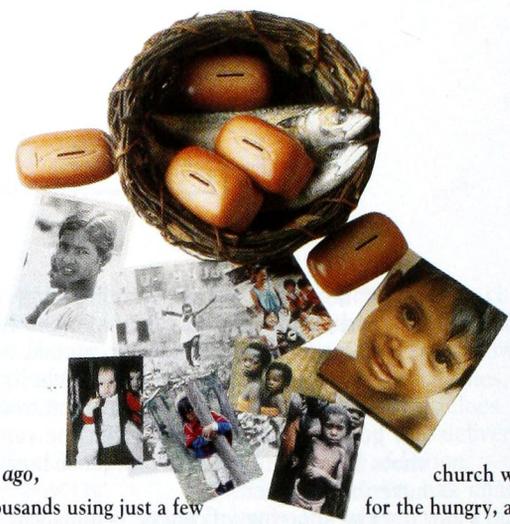
There are still people who care, people throughout the world who want to make a difference in Somalia.

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A long time ago, Jesus fed thousands using just a few loaves of bread and a couple fish. With food from one boy, He met the needs of an enormous crowd.

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Through participating in World Vision's Love Loaf program your

church will care for the hungry, as Jesus taught. In the process, the lives of your congregation will also be changed. Members will experience God's joy in sharing. Children will learn compassion. All will share the fellowship of caring together for those who suffer.

Part of the money raised can also go to your own church projects. World Vision provides the Love Loaves at no cost to you.

Call or write today to order your Love Loaves or ask for more information.

Miracles can begin here!

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Yes! I want to begin the Love Loaf program in my church.

- Please send us _____ loaves (one per household).
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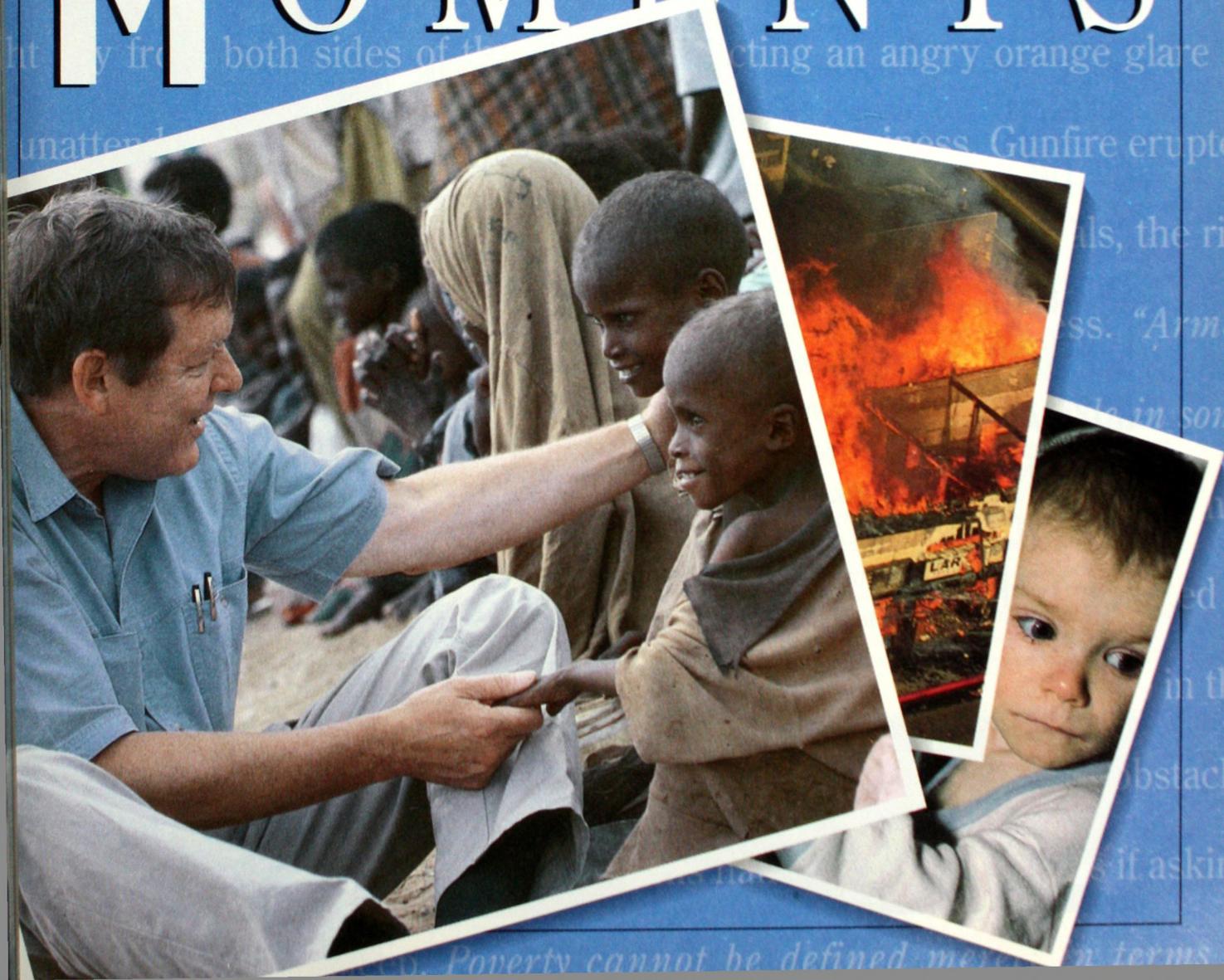
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December 1992-January 1993

WORLDVISION®

REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF DESPERATE NEED AND DIVINE HOPE

DEFINING MOMENTS



**WORLD
VISION
PRESIDENT
ROBERT
SEIPLE
REFLECTS
ON THE
PAST YEAR
AND FINDS
RENEWED
HOPE AND
COMMIT-
MENT FOR
THE YEAR
AHEAD.**

The Gospels contain Jesus' defining moments—those events that demonstrate most clearly who Jesus was, his purposes on this earth, his values, and his message of forgiveness and reconciliation.

His message was not only in words, but in entire experiences: spiritual and physical, actions and words, facts and feelings. Some of the most powerful passages in Scripture have few words and gripping images. Eternal truths are conveyed powerfully and eloquently through key defining moments in Jesus' ministry.

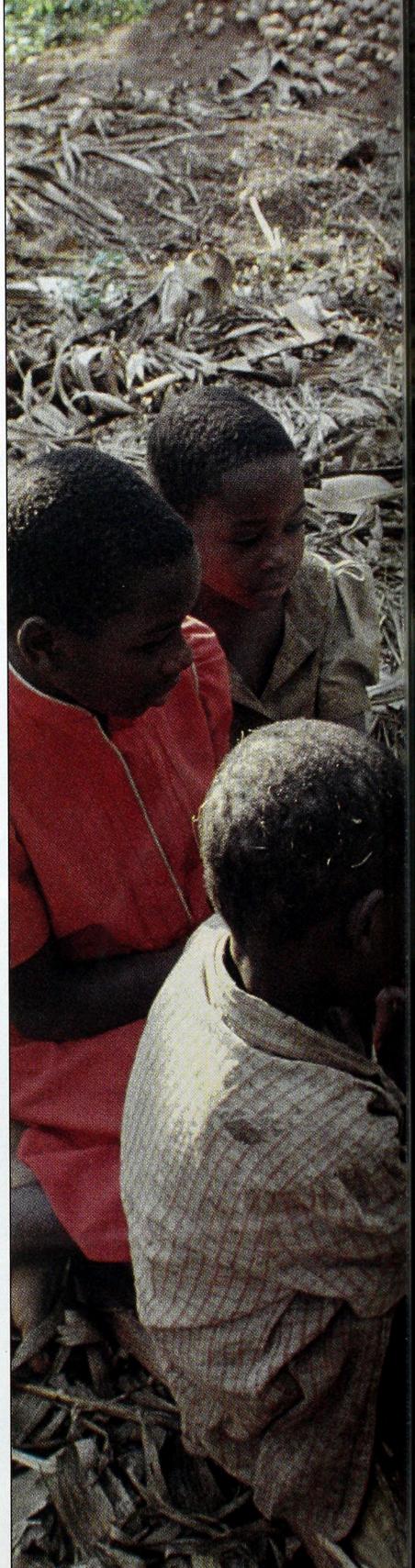
Forgiveness—In a single sentence to the thief on the cross, Jesus says that no one is beyond forgiveness, that it is never too late, that the repentant heart means more than a lifetime of appearances.

Compassion—Jesus wept; his friend had died.

Joy—We see the value God places on celebration, marriage, and simple rejoicing when Jesus creates wine for a wedding.

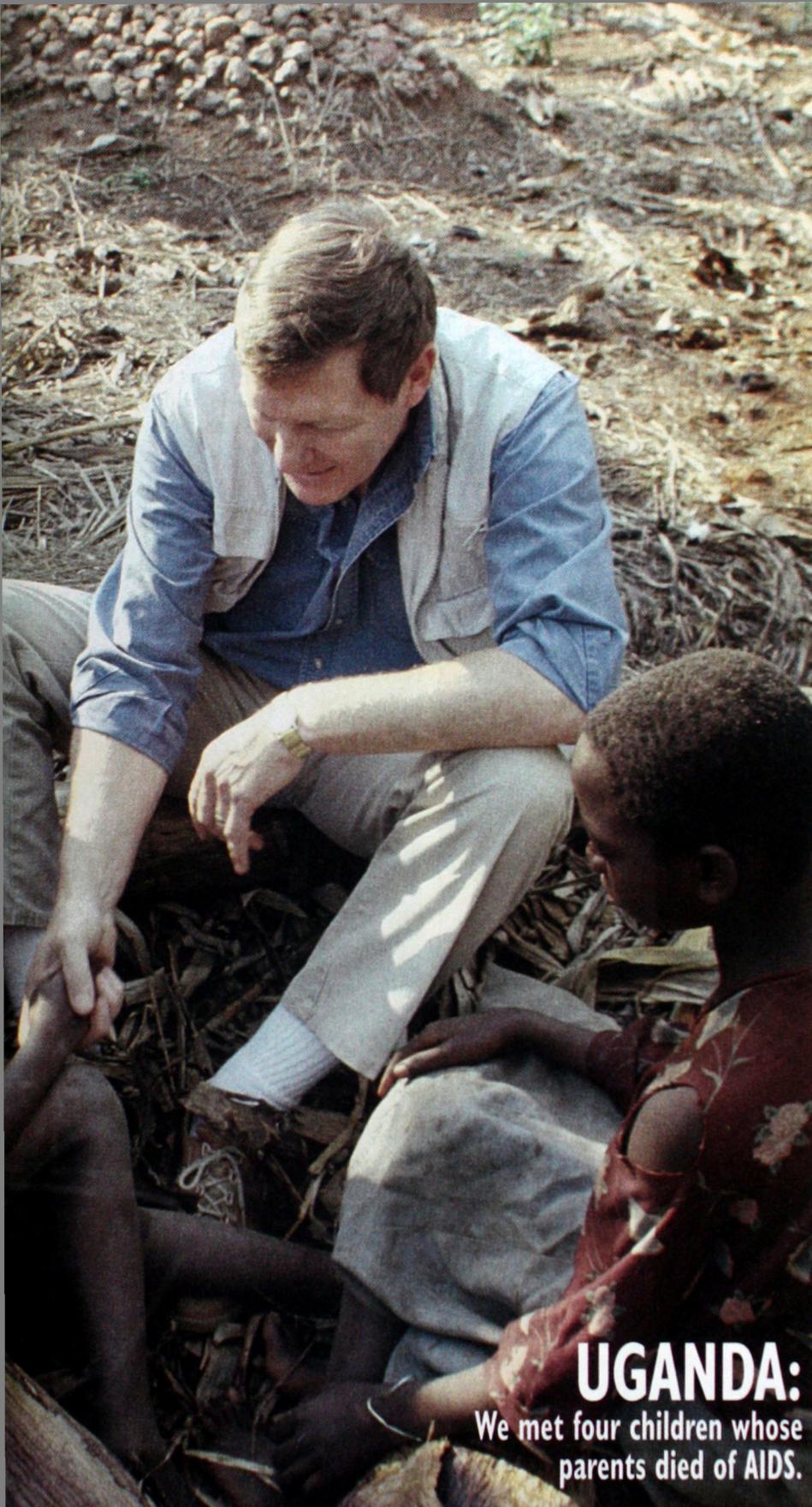
Practical compassion—Feeding the multitudes. He knew the time of day, how long they had been listening. He knew they were hungry so he fed them all.

Advocacy—He defended a guilty party



A GENERATION DESTROYED. We met four Ugandan children, ages 10, 11, 12, and 13, whose mother and father among their small farm's bare, decaying house with gaping holes in the roof had been emptied by

DEFINING



UGANDA:
We met four children whose
parents died of AIDS.

against an angry mob when, by the law, she was justly condemned. But he said to the adulterous woman, "Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." We see Jesus valuing people before protocol and hearts before possessions.

A YEAR OF DEFINING MOMENTS

Defining moments—we all have them. As this new year begins I find myself reflecting on them, considering the values they demonstrate, and praying that Christ's example of compassion will be increasingly evident in all that I do.

A generation destroyed. We met four Ugandan children, ages 5 through 12, whose parents died of AIDS within a week of each other. The children buried their mother and father among their small farm's banana trees. Aunts and uncles had died, too, so the children were on their own. A decaying house with gaping holes in the roof had been emptied by creditors. Two possessions remained: a broken-down bed, and a photograph of their parents. *Fifteen years of civil war and death by bullets has given way to a silent but more sure killer.*

What would Jesus do? Value the children, provide for their survival, heal their broken hearts.

A city aflame. I was leaving Los Angeles for a business trip and driving to the airport through chaos. Smoke boiled up into the night sky from both sides of the street, reflecting an angry orange glare as the unattended fires roared through business after business. Gunfire erupted as looters ran from a store with arms full. Sparked by five acquittals, the riot was fueled by a profound sense of alienation and hopelessness. *Armed ethnicity bared its teeth, even as burning crosses has returned to style in some parts of the country.*

What would Jesus do? With practical compassion, touch the hopelessness that fueled the flames, then bring reconciliation and healing to those burned by the hatred.

Throwaway children. We had finished dinner in a small city in Honduras. The area was poor, and thousands of children lived on the streets. Restaurant patrons literally stepped over a young boy asleep in the dust outside. He was small, insignificant, and invisible except as an obstacle. His head rested on an outstretched arm, his hand

gh, whose parents died of AIDS within a week of each other. The cl
ants and uncles had died, too, so the children were on their own.
ors. Two possessions remained: a trodden-down bed, and a photograph

MOMENTS

turned upward as if asking for help, even in his sleep. *Poverty cannot be defined merely in terms of money, but in what it does to children.*

What would Jesus do? Turn the hearts of the mothers and fathers to their children, place the solitary in families, restore the promise of childhood.

BUILDING OUR WORK ON CHRIST

We gain much by understanding the personal values and individual events in our lives. This is especially relevant now, I believe, for the world is searching for a new value system. Since the end of World War II, the world has been largely driven by political and economic values. Capitalism versus communism. Democracy versus totalitarianism. West versus East. But the Cold War is over, and we face a values vacuum.

That vacuum—that hunger—will be filled. But will it be centered on Christ? Perhaps at no other time have we had such opportunities to influence the direction of our world by what we value, by how we live, *by who lives in us.*

There is a hidden value in this world, rarely measured, and contained in the heart of a child. It is as fragile as a daydream, resilient as a secret hope, elusive as a smile in sleep. This world's powerful, from governments to institutions, struggle to understand its very existence.

Yet a civilization will ultimately stand or fall depending on how well it preserves and nurtures its children. We must define our social priorities on the basis of intrinsic human worth, not the potential for productivity. Jesus valued people before anything else. Even his own life.

World Vision, as a channel of Christian values, must continue reaching into desperate situations to prevent death, preserve hope, and protect the future of the children. Values begin with the human heart. The successful World Vision project, therefore, offers legitimate hope in the present because of the eternal hope secured in Christ.

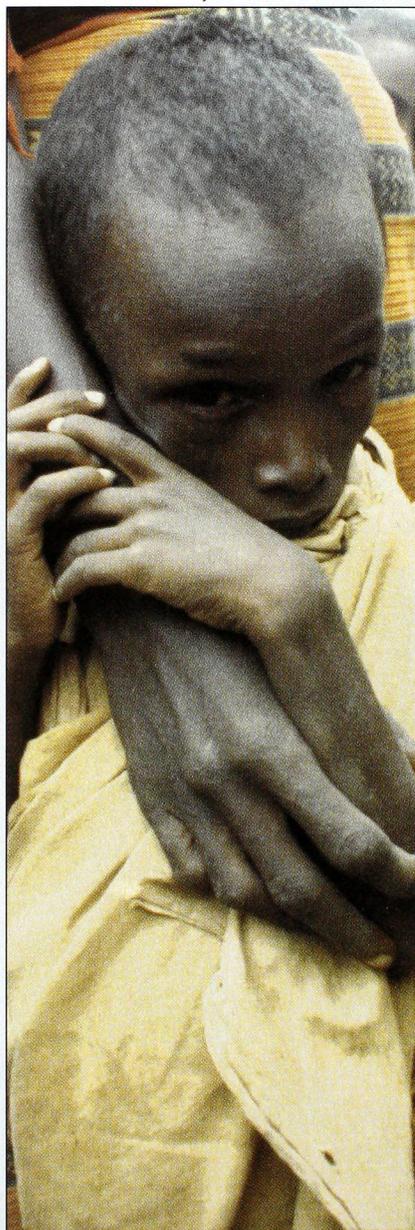
GOD IN THE DARK

Greater challenges stand before us than perhaps at any other time in our ministry. The situation in Somalia is so dire that we don't have the language to describe it. The combined dynamics of

social turmoil and drought have produced an unspeakable tragedy. It is one thing to understand how it has happened—quite another to reconcile one's self to the horror of dead children and adults lying unburied where they fell because the survivors are too few and too weak to bury them.

If ever the value of human life is in question, if ever hope of the gospel is needed, if ever the reality of sin is

JOHN SCHENK / WORLD VISION



THEY HAD LOST THEIR PARENTS TO WARFARE AND DISEASE. YET MIRACULOUSLY THEY HAD NOT LOST THEIR HOPE.

irrefutable, it is in Somalia. Humanity's fall from God is all too clear. The countryside is barren, stripped of anything even remotely edible. The cities have become death camps. Yet God is there.

He is hard to see, I admit. The tangible evidence is exceedingly slim. But peer into the face of an expectant child at our feeding station in Baidoa, and you'll feel God's tears running down your cheeks. Hold out a bowl of life giving food, and you'll feel God's hands fill your own. And yes, witness the sorrow of a mother over her dead child, and you can feel his heart breaking inside your chest.

God is present in situations too horrific to describe. When we went into the Romanian orphanages in 1989, we found helpless, innocent children consigned to death in institutions so barbaric and hopeless that the first visitors left in a state of shock.

Yet as therapists and health care professionals began working with the children, they discovered an unexpected resilience. Life was there, vibrant and strong beneath the disease. The children had not only survived neglect, they had also somehow learned to love despite having no human models. God has been there all along.

A recent event demonstrated how hearts and values have been transformed. Until 1991, 40 percent of the children in some institutions died every year. But for the first time, a wake was held to mourn the deaths of the thousands of unremembered and often unnamed children, ascribing value to the orphaned children, recognizing their loss.

The service was held in the institutional graveyard in Hirlau, attended by leaders from the Romanian Orthodox and Hungarian Reformed churches (bitter enemies for centuries), as well as by staff and local volunteers. What the children had learned from God—to love—

of the parents. Fifteen years of war and death by bullets has given way to a business trip and driving to the airport—through chaos. Smoke boils and glare as the unattended fires roared through business after business.

the adults had now learned from the children. And having learned to love once again, they were free to feel a pain that for 45 years had been denied.

The wake appeared a small step, but it spoke of a profound change in the hearts of the Romanian people. Such change gives us hope.

It reveals God's working. We know that disasters will continue. Yet we also know that each one of them is an opportunity to invade pain and suffering with an eternal message of hope and peace.

ANDREW TAYLOR / IMPACT IMAGES



STRIVING AHEAD

As we look forward, we are challenged to strive for the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We will respond both to new crises and maintain our existing commitments:

- Helping the inner-city residents of major U.S. cities, including Houston, Seattle, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, through student mentoring, jobs, church networking, and life-skills training.

- Feeding the hungry in 15 nations in Africa and providing long-term support for the rehabilitation of the people and their land through child sponsorship, church leadership training, water resource development, agricultural support, and education.

- Bringing reconciliation and health care to Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand, where turmoil and disease have dominated people for centuries.

- Restoring hope and opportunity to the Commonwealth of Independent States through Bible distribution, health care, and specialized intervention for the children of Chernobyl.

- Advocating the cause of the poor in Latin America through child-focused development, crisis intervention for street children, small business development, and church leadership training.

- Demonstrating Christ's love through holistic projects centered on him, declaring his message directly and distilling eternal truths into immediate and pragmatic assistance.

SINGING NEW SONGS

As I look forward to next year, I am humbled by our limitations, yet I am strengthened by God's presence. He extends an invitation to every one of our world's five billion people to know him, to be like him, to receive and be transformed by his love. We are privileged to partner with him and others worldwide in sharing that message of hope in tangible, practical ways.

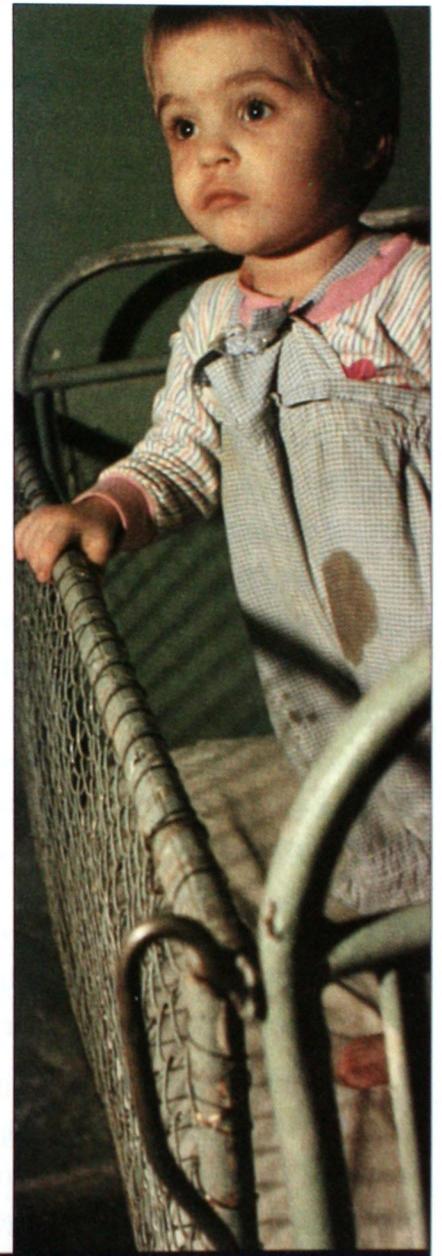
Though unseen by the natural eye, God is with us on a sometimes dark and rocky path. We do not walk alone. He is there. And we will ask him, "What would you do? What would you have us do?"

Defining moments. Visiting a home in Uganda where 20 orphaned children

have joined in a new definition of family. The oldest was 12. They had lost their parents to warfare and disease. Yet miraculously they had not lost their hope.

They sang for us, these survivors of the darkness. I was amazed they had songs left to sing. Yet they are the future of Uganda, and they speak of the future of Africa and the world. Their lasting image reminds me that our work is to bring forth a new song. A song of hope, a song of deliverance, a joyous song that sings to a better present and an eternal tomorrow. ☉

JOHN SCHENK / WORLD VISION



L.A. RIOTS:

Fueled by a profound sense of alienation.

ROMANIA:

Yet the children had somehow learned to love.

ENVIRONMENT IN CRISIS

Writing this book is part of a personal journey that began more than 25 years ago, a journey in search of a true understanding of the global ecological crisis and how it can be resolved," writes Vice President-elect Gore in his book *EARTH IN THE BALANCE: ECOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT*.

The former senator from Tennessee writes in bold, controversial terms, an analysis of how the global environmental problem has developed and declares that nothing short of a global change will avert disaster.

For the past 15 years, as congressman, senator, and in 1988 as U.S. presidential candidate, Gore has tenaciously pushed ignored environmental issues into public and political arenas. Terry Madison, editor of *World Vision* magazine, interviewed Gore earlier this year.

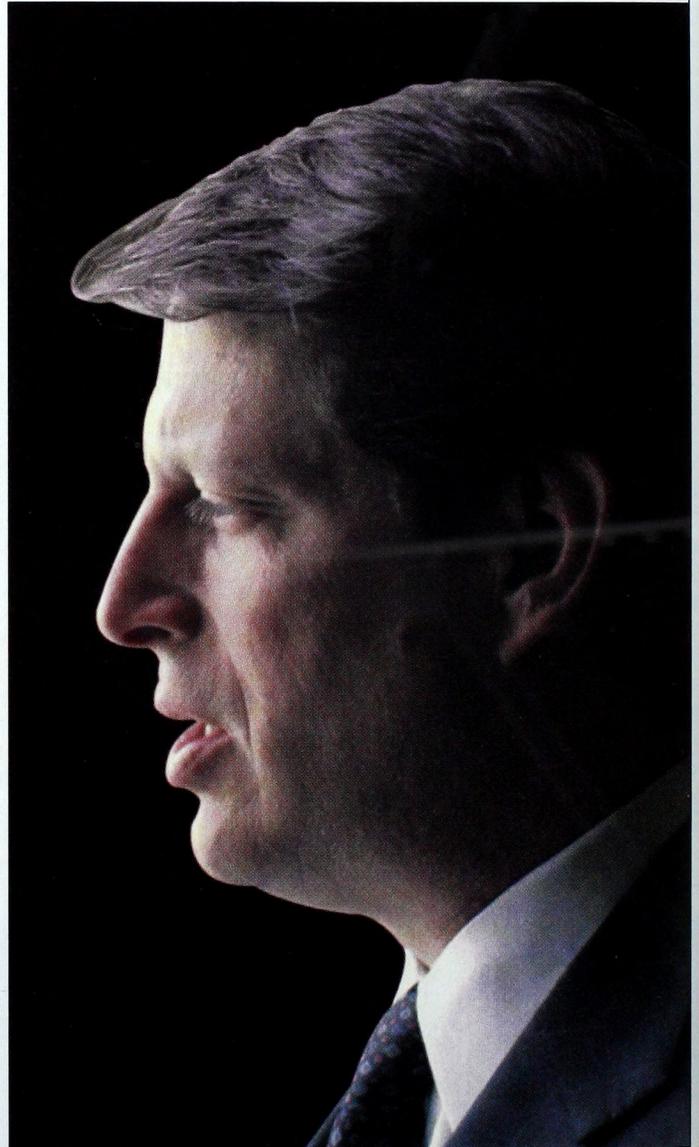
WV: Your book is a heavyweight with lots of substance. What was the catalyst that sparked your interest in writing it?

AG: After my son's accident, my priorities in life changed. On April 3, 1989, my wife and I took our youngest child, our six-year-old son, to the opening day of the baseball season. The game went to 11 innings and the crowd all left at once. We got to the final street before the parking area and at that moment my son's

(continued on page 8)

This interview explores Gore's beliefs about how Christianity, the U.S. government, the Third World, and individuals play a role in environmental issues.

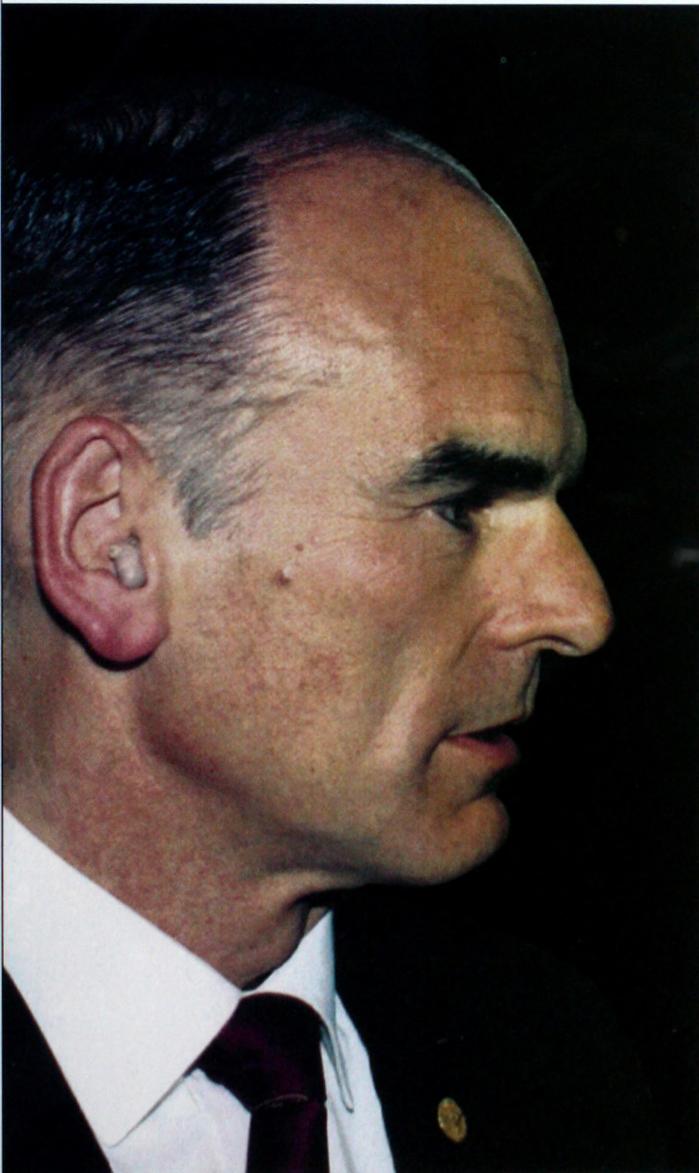
TERRY MADISON / WORLD VISION



ECONOMIC ECOLOGY

The only way to truly help the poor and the environment is with a strong economy, according to the former secretary of the interior.

CHRISTOPHER AYERS



Last May, Donald Hodel, along with several Christian leaders and environmentalists, gathered in Washington, D.C., for a three-day forum sponsored by World Vision to discuss issues related to poverty and the environment. Hodel, the former secretary of the interior under President Ronald Reagan, was one of the major speakers. The following is excerpted from his address.

Environmental fervor abounds in this country. We see bumper stickers proclaiming Mother Earth. We see almost the worship of wildlife. These ideas seem to be driving policy in the United States and many other developed countries.

Environmentalists constantly assault us with pseudo facts, many of which are intended to justify shutting down economic activity. To the extent they're successful, World Vision will have that much more to do, because the number of poor will increase, their suffering will be greater, and they will have fewer resources to deal with those problems.

That's not to say that we aren't dealing with serious environmental problems. They're significant, material, and substantial—dams, deforestation, contamination of groundwater, pollution of rivers, clearing and erosion of fields, paving of

(continued on page 10)

friend ran across the street and said, "Come on, Albert." He pulled away from my hand and ran after his friend just as a car came speeding through a gap in the crowd.

He was knocked 30 feet through the air, scraped another 20 feet along the pavement, and came to rest in the gutter. As I reached his side I saw and felt the absence of life. I knelt beside him and I prayed. After a torturous long period—it seemed longer than it was—there was a faint sound, which was a stirring. Two off-duty nurses who carried their medical kits with them wherever they went helped to stabilize him.

Following 30 days and 30 nights in his hospital room, I began to put down some ideas that eventually became *EARTH IN THE BALANCE*. I had already spent an enormous amount of time investigating the environmental crisis worldwide, visiting the front lines of this crisis and seeing the suffering of people, especially the poor and the children.

But, it didn't really come into a spiritual focus until my life changed in the aftermath of this tragedy. We felt the power of prayer during that period. That was the catalyst for the book.

WV: Where does the Christian faith connect with the environment?

AG: The environmental crisis is at bottom a spiritual crisis. The various ecological catastrophes we read about in the newspapers—global warming, climate change, ozone depletion, destruction of the rain forests, the loss of living species, the poisoning of the oceans—are symptoms of the deeper underlying crisis, which is profoundly spiritual in nature.

The great heresy within Christianity from the early days onward was gnosticism; now it might be called scientism. That's not fair to science, but I'll use the word. This heresy rests upon the assumption that the spirit and the flesh are separate in a way that takes God out of the physical world.

The notion that we are simply disembodied intellects entitled to manipulate God's creation for our amusement or exploitation is a spiritual crisis. We are interwoven with the entirety of creation, given a special role and dominion but required to exercise stewardship. Yet we have chosen to ignore those spiritual obligations.

WV: How does the environmental crisis affect the poor and the Third World?

AG: Those who suffer the most from environmental degradation are the poor

and those who have the least political and economic power to defend themselves. It is always the poor who suffer the most when the environment is destroyed. It is usually the young, as well.

This is true not only in the developing world but also in the United States. It's not an accident that hazardous chemical dump sites or other environmental hazards are much more likely to be found in poor neighborhoods and

communities with relatively less political power.

WV: Where are we as a nation on the environmental issue?

AG: I like to think about environmental problems as falling into three large categories. These categories are ones I learned during my years of work on military policy and strategic nuclear policy. Military historians define conflicts in

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS IS AT BOTTOM A SPIRITUAL CRISIS. YET WE HAVE CHOSEN TO IGNORE THOSE SPIRITUAL OBLIGATIONS.

DON AYLRARD



THE BOOK

The following are excerpts from **EARTH IN THE BALANCE: ECOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT** by Vice President-elect Albert Gore (Houghton Mifflin, 1992).

The loss of one and a half acres of rain forest every second, the sudden, thousandfold acceleration of the natural extinction rate for living species, the ozone hole above Antarctica and the thinning of the ozone layer at all latitudes, the possible destruction of the climate balance that makes our earth livable—all these suggest the increasingly violent collision between human civilization and the natural world. ... Much more worrisome are [people] who will not acknowledge these destructive patterns. Indeed, many political, business, and intellectual leaders deny the existence of any such patterns in aggressive and dismissive tones."

"We tolerate ... the violation of the rights of those who will come after us. As we strip-mine the earth at a completely unsustainable rate, we are making it impossible for our children's children to have a standard of living even remotely similar to ours."

"In today's world, the links between social injustice and environmental degradation can be seen everywhere: the placement of toxic waste dumps in poor neighborhoods, the devastation of indigenous peoples, and the extinction of their cultures when the rain forests are destroyed, disproportionate levels of lead and toxic air pollution in inner-city ghettos, the corruption of many government officials by people who seek to profit from the unsustainable exploitation of resources."

"When considering a problem as large as the degradation of the global environment, it is easy to feel overwhelmed, utterly helpless to effect any change whatsoever. But we must resist that response, because this crisis will be resolved only if individuals take some responsibility for it. By educating ourselves and others, by doing our part to minimize our use and waste of resources, by becoming more active politically and demanding change—in these ways and many others, each one of us can make a difference."

three categories: local battles, regional theaters of action, and global or strategic conflicts like World War II or the Cold War.

Environmental problems are similar in that most of the ones we usually think about are local, like air pollution from a factory or water poisoned from a nearby dump site.

We have recently begun to deal with some regional environmental problems like acid rain. The smokestacks in the midwest contribute to acid precipitation in New England and Eastern Canada. Smokestacks in Great Britain cause acid rain and acid snow in Scandinavia.

But the new category is global environmental problems like climate change, ozone depletion, and poisoning of the oceans.

The United States has been the world's leader in facing up to certain local environmental problems. The Japanese have recently surpassed us, as have the Germans. But we have a right to be proud of the changes we began making in the 1970s to address local air and water pollution. With the Clean Air Act amendments of the '90s, we have begun to address regional problems caused by acid rain.

But unfortunately, we are bringing up the rear in facing global environmental problems. Yet even there we have some potential successes. We are phasing out chlorofluorocarbons, which are responsible for destroying the stratospheric ozone layer. We have contributed more to the international fund on this issue than other countries.

But where climate change and some of the other global environmental problems are concerned, we are by far the biggest contributor to the problem. We're also the most intransigent when it comes to accepting the responsibility for remedying these problems.

WV: According to your book, "The promotion of justice and the protection of the environment must go hand in hand in any society." What do you mean?

AG: There's a very strong biblical basis for the connection between justice and environmental health throughout the Bible.

First, pollution is early in Genesis when Cain slays Abel, and Abel's blood spills unjustly and renders the ground fallow. That connection between unjustly spilled blood and the unwillingness of the earth to yield fruit and sustenance is repeated elsewhere in the Bible. On many occasions the prophets found evidence of injustice in a city or nation in the degradation of the environment in

that city or nation. And in our own experience, we see the same linkage all around the world.

The worst examples of environmental degradation appear in those countries with the least appreciation for justice. In Eastern Europe for example; in the former Soviet Union; indeed wherever political and economic freedom is unjustly suppressed, the environment suffers.

There's at least one practical reason which helps explain this. When individuals live in a just society and have political and economic freedom, they naturally choose to be good stewards over the places in which they live. They are so much more likely to glorify God and make, for their children and their families, a beautiful environment in which to experience the joy of life.

But when suffering the burdens of injustice and when deprived of liberty, which is their God-given right, they do not speak out to protect the places where they live or their fellow citizens against the injustice they see around them. So it's not an especially mysterious linkage; it's a natural law, biblically

based and observed in our own practical experience.

WV: What can the church in America do to be a part of the solution?

AG: By promoting justice and by promoting concern for the poor and those less fortunate in our communities, and by focusing the attention of individuals and families on the higher values that are most important in our lives. The church calls us to focus our energies and make our choices in favor of higher values, and when those choices are made we thrive as individuals and families. And our environment receives the stewardship and protection that healthy individuals glorifying God naturally provide.

WV: What practical steps can concerned individuals take to become part of the solution to our environmental ills?

AG: There are three things every individual can do. Number one, learn about this issue. Learn enough about it so that the cynics cannot knock you off balance. And be prepared, for they will attempt to do so with a ferocity that will shock you. *(continued on next page)*

Number two, use the power of the pocketbook, make intelligent consumer choices in your own life, in your own household, and in every institution over which you have some influence. If you're on the school board, for example, or if you're on the board of deacons of your church. The budget comes up for new light bulbs: Ask the question, "Why are we buying these old bulbs that, yes, cost a little bit less but last only one-tenth as long, consume 10 times as much energy, and cause 10 times as much pollution?"

WV: Would this include food packaging and other items as well?

AG: Yes, indeed. Intelligent consumers' choices can influence the world through the marketplace. And there are lots of study guides. I have been working with a number of church denominations and seminaries that are now in the process of providing study guides for Sunday school groups and church groups.*

And then third, use the ballot box. Political freedom, like economic freedom, gives every individual enormous power. But in exercising political freedom, remember the other old saying, "There's strength in numbers." Find those who agree with you. Persuade those who do not agree with you. And join with as many as you can in making it plain, in a respectful but insistent way, to those who are asking for votes, that your votes will depend in a significant measure upon whether or not these candidates will become leaders on this issue.

WV: Can we win the battle against environmental degradation?

AG: Oh, yes. We can and will win this battle. And of course, we must. But remember the old story about the wise man's reputation of being able to answer every question, and the young man who attempted to stump the wise man with a cynical plan. He took a small bird and prepared to ask the wise man whether the bird was alive or dead and secretly prepared to crush the bird if the wise man answered alive and to let the bird fly away if the wise man answered dead. He cupped his hand with the bird inside and put his question to the wise man who pondered a moment and said, "The answer is in your hands." ☉

**World Vision, in conjunction with David C. Cook Publishing Co., has produced a print and video study guide called Reclaiming the Garden: Caring for an Environment in Crisis. You can order it from your local Christian bookstore or call (800) 323-7543.*

roads, and strip mining.

Last February World Vision sent me a letter about a 3-year-old Mexican boy named Miguel. It read: "Miguel's family was trapped in hopeless poverty. Their village was so remote and roads were so poor that even basic services never reached the village. Families like Miguel's had no clean water, electricity, or other vital essentials that you and I take for granted. But then, with the faithful support of friends like you, a World

PROPOSALS THAT MIGHT SEEM LIKE THEY WOULD IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT MAY JUST BE A DEATH SENTENCE FOR THE WORLD'S POOR.

Vision project was started in Miguel's community. Roads were paved, a medical clinic was built, new elementary school classrooms were constructed. Now Miguel drinks clean, safe water that is regularly trucked into the area."

Now that is a heartwarming, encouraging story. It's also notable that World Vision built things: roads, a medical clinic, classrooms. And they trucked in clean water. You know what the truck runs on: gasoline or diesel, nothing else.

The story is full of environmental changes, changes that were necessary to give Miguel clean water, a clinic, classrooms, and ultimately hope. And if rich nations, in the name of the environment, ignore the need for low-cost hydrocarbons, Miguel's clean water will stop flowing.

My simple proposition is this: environmental change often benefits the poor. Dams, for example, produce power. They store water for agriculture. They provide for economic development. Environmental changes that provide food, jobs, materials for homes, a need for factories, and general economic activity can be good for the poor.

Remember, the poor are people who might soon starve without help. If an environmental change we make today creates a health hazard, or a threat of hazard, 25 or 50 or 100 years from now, that has to be a very small concern to people starving today.

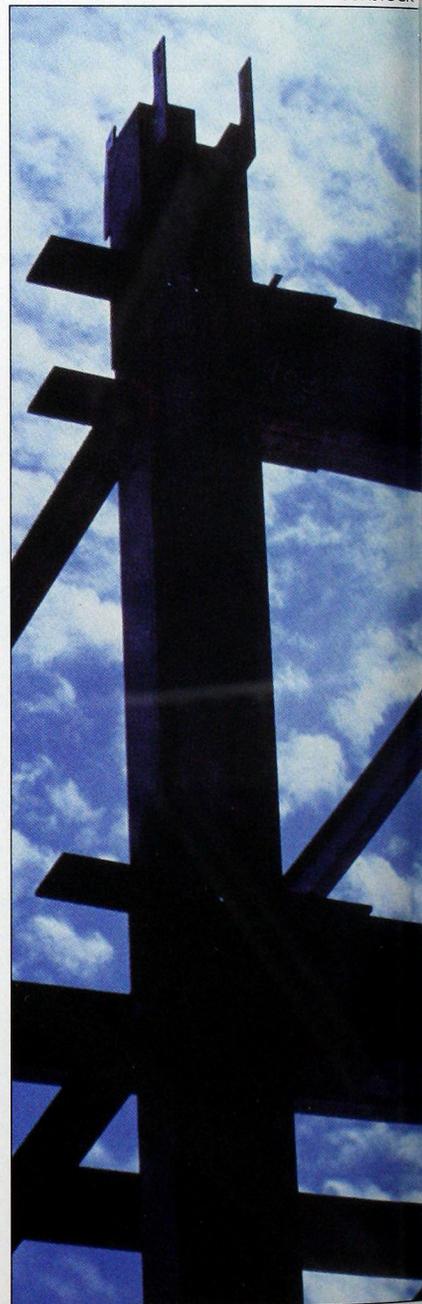
Reducing the threat to the ozone layer may cost tens of millions of dollars, reducing our ability to help thousands of the poor just to head off a few hundred cancers 75 years from now. And even those cancers are not certain.

Remember that predictions of environmental catastrophes are often off the mark. Lake Erie was pronounced dead 20 years ago; it's back and improving.

Mount St. Helens, we were told, had killed the land around it for 100 years. Within two years, salmon were attempting to run back up the Tuttle River, and in 1987 I saw revegetation there that was incredible. The Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969 was an ecological disaster, but 20 years later, a carefully documented Fish and Wildlife Service study could find nothing to indicate that the spill took place.

Wealth and prosperity permit us to reach out to the world's poor to improve

COMSTOCK



our environment. Wealth and prosperity will enable us to clean up the world's air and water—and help the world's starving poor while we're doing it. Those who take the Bible seriously are obligated not only to help the poor but to protect the ability to do so.

If we care about the poor, let's avoid environmental alarmism. Let's resist so-called solutions that do not meet real problems and waste large financial resources which, if expended on productive activity, could help others.

We should insist that we not save hundreds of people in future generations from disease and death by condemning millions in this generation to starvation. Instead, let's help less developed countries through economically

competitive means of producing energy, food, clothes, and materials that are also better for the environment. We should encourage their economic growth, even if that changes the environment.

In our country we need to use our wealth of technological resources and economic assets in energy production. This will help developing countries continue using simpler, more flexible, less costly resources.

We should also decide whether it is ethical for us to shut down polluting activities in our country but buy products made in other countries through those same polluting activities. And let's decide whether it's right to spend billions of dollars to clean up the last speck in our environment when those same dollars expended elsewhere would reduce world pollution levels by millions of tons, and immediately affect the physical and economic health of people worldwide.

We should insist that our leaders answer such questions, and especially, "How will proposals to stop industrial, agricultural, and development activities affect the world's economy?" In other words, our leaders must consider the impact of giving in to those environmentalists who demand shutting down the economy. And they should do so before supporting drastic cutbacks. Proposals that might seem like they would improve our environment may just be a death sentence for the world's poor.

Through World Vision, a family in the United States is supporting a poor girl somewhere in the world. She has hope that she and her family will survive because of that help.

Now imagine that the world economy falters because of environmental restrictions. One day assistance to the poor girl stops. She faces starvation. Nearing death, she asks the wise man of her village, "Why?"

"Because," he answers, "our friends across the sea can help us no more."

"But why?" she implores tearfully.

Shaking his head in dismay, he gently tells her, "Because they are no longer rich. Many there now follow a new god who does not teach them to help the poor. For fear of doing damage to the earth 50 or 100 years from now, they have made themselves poor, and they no longer help others."

Those who are committed to helping the world's poor should resist this scenario with everything God has granted them—with their talent, time, and treasure. ☉

Donald Hodel is an energy consultant in Summit County, Colo.

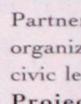
More than 2.5 million Americans are homeless. A third of these are families with children. Thousands will spend Christmas inside the foreign walls of a public shelter, or worse, on cold streets, with no hope for the New Year.



**THIS CHRISTMAS,
A HOME IS AT THE
TOP OF THEIR
WISH LIST.**



World Vision is working in more than 20 cities throughout the United States to help bring long-term solutions for homeless families.



Partnering with community organizations, churches, and civic leaders, World Vision's **Project Home Again** is helping families find permanent affordable housing and then acquire the skills and relationships necessary



to sustain themselves. ■ **Can you help bring a family home for Christmas this year?** It could be the most meaningful gift you give.

**YES! I WANT TO HELP BRING A
FAMILY HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.**

Enclosed is my gift of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other.....
(To use a credit card, call 1-800-423-4200.)

Name.....

Address.....

City.....

State / Zip.....

Please mail this coupon along with your gift to:

WORLD VISION
Project Home Again
P.O. Box 1151
Pasadena, CA 91151



CRASHING IN

Every day an average of 10 unaccompanied Mexican children are turned back to Tijuana after trying to cross the U.S. border. The YMCA is trying to keep them off the streets.

Street thugs in the rough-and-tumble town of Tijuana, Mexico, splatter 11-year-old runaway Abel Murillón Barrera with hot tar as he walks down the street in a crime-infested area near the U.S. border called El Bordo. The tar burns his face, hair, arms, and hands. Some sticks onto his right eyelid and sears away lower lashes.

The three men, satisfied, let Abel run away. He drops the Popsicle he has been eating to soothe his sore throat and cough. The scruffy little runaway from central Mexico has been living in this area for two months, spending the cold desert nights under Tijuana's Bridge of Mexico.

After nightfall, Abel settles onto a stained, bare mattress beneath the bridge, not far from the concrete banks of the man-made river and the metal corrugated fence separating the Tijuana headache from the California dream. He is proud and did not cry.

From his hometown of Uruapan, Abel hitchhiked more than 2,000 miles to Tijuana. Like many who

have migrated to this border city, which has swelled to more than 1 million people over the past decade, Abel came hoping to get a piece of the city's relatively robust economy. Begging by day, Abel earns money at night by cleaning sheet metal in an industrial shop.

Tijuana also attracts minors intending to crash the U.S. border. Every day, an average of 10 unaccompanied children are caught trying to cross into the United States. In 1991, 3,740 children from the Tijuana area tried to cross the border.

The same day that Abel is assaulted, 17-year-old Israel Palmatz Lucas is making his way to the border through El Bordo. He has holed up in a Tijuana hotel for a few days after arriving with five relatives from a muddy village near Lake Patzcuaro.

To increase the chances of one getting through, Israel's relatives split up at different points along 10 miles of the heavily patrolled border. The boy walks five miles west to Tijuana's beachside community Las Playas. He hopes to reach relatives living in Los Angeles. Just before

TIJUANA



dawn, with no U.S. Border Patrol vehicles in sight, Israel runs north toward the dim hills.

U.S. Border Patrolmen arrest him shortly after he enters near Imperial Beach. He is one of 19 children, and 1,579 Mexicans overall, who have tried and failed to cross into the United States from Tijuana that night. Half of all Mexicans seized by the Border Patrol in 1992 have set out from the Tijuana area.

Israel, held at a detention center at the San Ysidro crossing, is given breakfast before authorities deliver him, along with the other kids, to Mexican authorities at the Otay Mesa crossing. He has \$1 worth of pesos in his pocket and no idea where his relatives are.

According to a Border Patrol spokesman, they try to keep relatives and adult friends together, and routinely contact each other to reunite minors with their guardians. Others, who work with the deported children, say the Border Patrol routinely separates children from adult relatives to delay their ability to recross.

Israel does not claim a guardian and is taken to Marina Herrera, a social worker who interviews deported children at the Mexican Migration Services border office for Tijuana's YMCA Home for Migrant Minors, partially funded by World Vision.

Herrera waits behind a desk in a concrete office chamber as children from the previous night's Border Patrol roundup are escorted in. She interviews them to determine which ones will go to the YMCA Home where each month an average of 44 children find refuge; in 1991, 402 children were sheltered there. Most stay less than a month, although a few children have been there for nearly a year. While encouraging them to find local jobs, the YMCA allows children to

Marina Herrera interviews deported children to determine who should go to Tijuana's Home for Migrant Children.



After suffering from cold and hunger, having people hurt them and shout at them on the highway, and finally being returned to Mexican officials, most deported children do not want to try crossing the border again.

stay at the shelter until they can be reunited with their families.

Israel—sullen, tentative, and wearing a blue T-shirt with *California* scripted above an orange Los Angeles skyline—sits in front of Herrera. She learns that he has an uncle, Rafael Lucas, who was also caught trying to cross the border.

Israel, however, tells Herrera in a barely audible voice that he doesn't know where to find his uncle, and his family at home does not have a telephone. Herrera asks him what he plans to do now.

"Um...I want to return home," he says quietly. It seems like the right answer, but Herrera knows it's not the solution for relatives who may be searching for him in Tijuana. And she doubts he would leave relatives behind and return home alone. Releasing Israel onto the streets of Tijuana, once described as "the most larcenous, vicious, predacious—the wickedest border town of them all," is not an option for the YMCA Home. He could easily become another of the city's 8,000 street children.

Herrera has Israel wait while she interviews the other 18 kids, including Ana Isabel, 14, from Guadalajara, wearing a "Support Our Troops: Opera-

tion Desert Storm" T-shirt; Julio, 15, from Ensenada, who had tried to cross with the help of a hired *coyote*, or alien smuggler; and Rodolfo Rojas, 13, who tried to cross with a 5-year-old brother and a 9-year-old sister because, as he says, an ill aunt in Los Angeles needs his help. Relatives are located for most of the children, and arrangements are made to get them home.

"These children are captured, they're away from their families, they've spent one or two days in detention, and they're scared," says Guillermo Alvarado, a social worker for World Vision in Tijuana, which funds and coordinates several projects under World Vision's *Tierra Nueva* (New Land) program. "They're disoriented, and their plans for reuniting with their families on the other side have been broken."

Herrera adds, "Most of the children have relatives on the other side. But if you ask them whether they would try to cross again, most would say no. After the entire saga of getting to the border, being cold and hungry, having people shout at them on the highway, insult them, do violence to them, most do not want to try again."

When Israel, forlorn and secretive, arrives at the YMCA Home, social worker César Cáceres tries to dissuade him from taking his chances on



about what you want to do: Make a good plan. I know you're shaken up. You can leave if you want. But give yourself a chance."

Standing in a worn denim jacket, old jeans, and boots caked with mud and dust, Israel says softly, "You know what I want to do? I want to go look for my uncle."

Cáceres asks him to sit down.

Cáceres' tug-of-war continues as half a dozen other boys are brought to the home. There is Moisés, 13, who had spent two years on the Tijuana streets after his parents kicked him out of the house, and the last six months in a juvenile jail. "They split my head open," Moisés says, part-

ing his hair to reveal the scar. "I was in bed, and because I wasn't asleep, they came and hit me."

There are four small children from Ciudad Gúzman, near Guadalajara, picked up by police in the Tijuana bus station. One is 14 years old and three say they are 12, but they look much younger. They say they came to work in Tijuana, where one has an aunt. "My father's head is messed up from alcohol," says one. "He comes home and hits me."

And the latest arrival is Abel, with the black dollops of tar seeming a permanent part of his lice-infested hair, grimy clothes, and scuffed arms. A Tijuana newspaper photographer who found him wandering at El Bordo brings him in. Abel arrives just as Cáceres has gained enough of Israel's trust to learn the hotel where Israel had stayed. As Cáceres telephones the hotel, he directs Israel's attention to Abel.

"You see him? That is what could happen to you if you go onto the streets of Tijuana."

Israel's gaze rests on Abel, whose eye is red and swollen. Israel's uncle, however, is not at the hotel. Cáceres leaves a message.

Abel takes a seat beside Moisés, who speaks and moves with a sureness and serenity that is disturbing from one so young. When YMCA social worker Eduardo "Lalo" Rivera asks him his age, Moisés says he spent his 13th birthday in jail two days ago, and that his parents have never celebrated it.

"Human beings are very special people," Rivera says, "and here we're going to celebrate your birthday." Abel sits up wide-eyed and asks, "And we're going to celebrate my birthday, too?"

"Sí, sí!" Rivera says, grinning.

Abel, who says his family did not mistreat him, expects to stay in Tijuana a long time. He has an "Aunt Cuca" here whom he expects to find some day; he thinks she can be found selling sweets on the street near El Bordo.

Cáceres later reaches Israel's uncle.

TIERRA NUEVA

World Vision, which began working in Mexico 30 years ago, has 219 projects there that help more than 41,000 children and their families. The *Tierra Nueva* (New Land) program in Tijuana, began Oct. 1, 1990 and includes the following projects:

- **MEXICO GROUP** is developing a food cooperative and children's feeding program. World Vision also provides school supplies for children and medicine for the pharmacy.
- **MIGRANT HOME** provides temporary shelter and training to homeless migrants.
- **DORCAS HOME**, a nondenominational Christian program, provides care and Christian education to children of prisoners.
- **YMCA HOME FOR MIGRANT MINORS** provides shelter, food, medical and legal help to deported children.
- **MIXTECO PROJECT** provides a sewing workshop for Mixteco Indian women to help them learn income-generating skills.

the streets. Cáceres explains that while the YMCA can't house him against his will, responsibility for him has been transferred from the government to the YMCA.

"What will you do if you leave?" Cáceres asks, as Israel, eager to leave, alternately stands and sits.

"I'll speak with my uncle."

"Do you know where to find your uncle?"

"No."

"Do you have any idea? Do you know Tijuana? You can get lost very easily in Tijuana. You have no identification. How did you leave it with your uncle when you parted?"

"He just said, 'We'll see you on the other side of El Bordo.'"

Questioning rapidly with a gentle smile and expressive eyes, Cáceres advises Israel to wait just a little while, that his uncle will come for him. Israel shakes his head no. Often during the interview Israel repeats that his uncle will not look for him, raising the question of whether "uncle" here is a euphemism for a coyote.

Cáceres tells Israel to rest and eat. Israel refuses and stands up. His manner is not impertinent, just restlessness struggling against an ingrained respect for elders. Cáceres presents the sad scenario of his family coming for him only to find him gone.

"The border area is very dangerous," Cáceres says. "Just yesterday a guy was mugged, and now he has broken ribs. Take the time to think clearly

After a few hours of getting lost in Tijuana's twisting, jumbled streets, and twice calling for directions, the 32-year-old Lucas finally arrives at the shelter by taxi. Israel and his uncle greet each other warmly as Israel shows the first signs of boyishness, saying "What bad luck—they got me." And his uncle laughs it off with a hearty "*Ni modo*," the Mexican idiom for "That's the way it goes."

Israel climbs into the taxi with his relatives, and Abel, after visiting a doctor, looks forward to his birthday celebration at the YMCA shelter. ☉

Jeff Sellers is a World Vision media relations administrator.

SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR
HELPING OTHERS
IN THE NAME
OF CHRIST

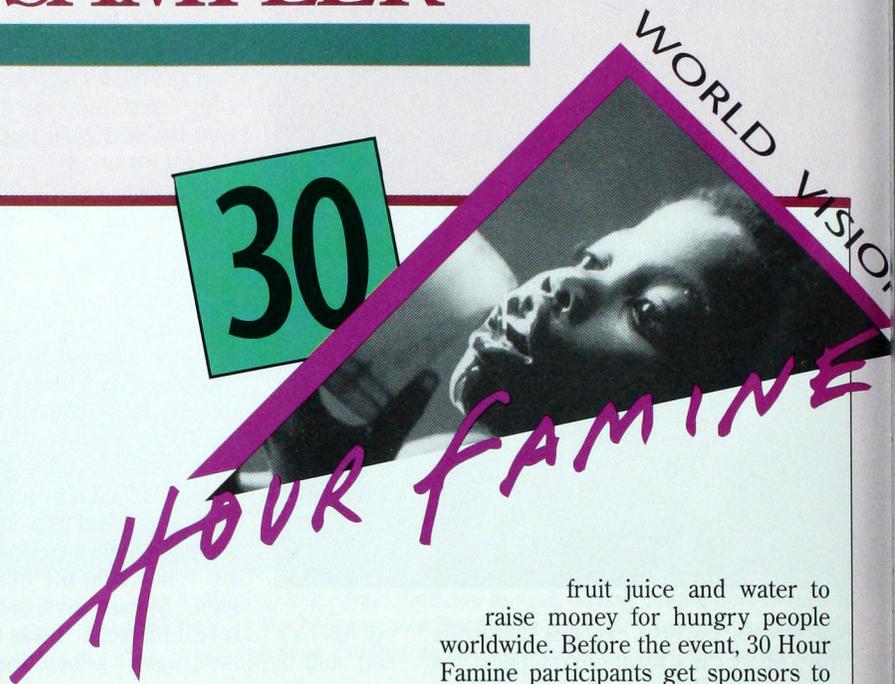
Compiled and written
by Tamera Marko

MISSION MANSION

Businessmen Bob Skold and Bob Mitchell wanted to help the struggling people in Denver's inner city. Through the Executive Network, a Denver-based nonprofit Christian organization that funds outreach programs, they founded Providence House.

One hundred years ago, a millionaire's family lived in this 21-room mansion with an adjoining 9-room carriage house. Now 30 men and women pay subsidized rent to stay in Providence for up to two years recovering from abuse, divorce, or addiction. Two additional Providence homes include programs for homeless men and struggling married couples. Each program connects residents with job and education resources and Christian counseling while providing a community setting where they can develop relationships among peers.

For information about how your church can set up similar residences, send a SASE to Bob Skold, The Executive Network, 801 Logan Street, Denver, CO 80203; (303) 860-8404.



GET THAT FOOD OUTTA YOUR MOUTH

When Mother Teresa was asked how you feed a billion starving people, her answer was "one at a time." Through World Vision's 30 Hour Famine, you can help make this happen. Adults and kids at least 12 years old dedicate 30 hours to going without food except

fruit juice and water to raise money for hungry people worldwide. Before the event, 30 Hour Famine participants get sponsors to pledge money for the program.

Money raised will help fund World Vision's relief and development programs in Somalia and surrounding regions, and in the United States.

On Feb. 19 and 20, 1993, church youth groups, schools, families, and individuals will participate in the Famine. World Vision provides a step-by-step program planning guide, including activity ideas, videos about hunger and poverty, and Bible studies. Two high school students who join the 30 Hour Famine can qualify for a trip to World Vision projects overseas.

For more information call (800) 7 FAMINE.

FASHIONABLE AID

While on a church trip to the West Indies three years ago, Jamie White, 13, was inspired by the local clothes made out of flour and sugar sacks. On the plane back to hometown Branson, Mo., she sketched her first clothing designs. With her father's help, she soon began marketing a similar line of shorts and tops. The clothing now includes over-

sized T-shirts, leggings, and Christmas sweatshirts for children and teens. On each clothing tag, White writes a brief uplifting message about topics such as friendship or Christmas.

All of the teen clothing profits, which in 1991 were more than \$100,000, go to summer camps that Jamie's father founded and runs for underprivileged children. "The best part of doing this is knowing that kids can go to camp because of it," Jamie says. The clothes are available in Dilard's department stores nationwide.

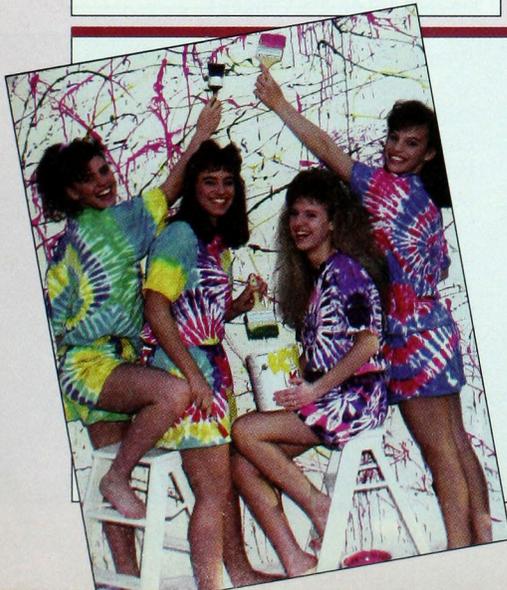


ILLUSTRATION BY STAN SAKAI

REINCARNATION

Want to recycle your old Christmas cards? Send your used cards from Christmas and other occasions to the following non-denominational Christian organizations:

- *International Aid Inc.*, 17011 West Hickory, Spring Lake, MI 49456.

More than 360 volunteers use the cards to make postcards and colorful plaques for missionaries. With a Scripture verse written in the local language, the plaques are also part of International Aid Inc. care packages for children in Eastern Europe. "The orphanages there have nothing on the walls," says Joel Sammy,

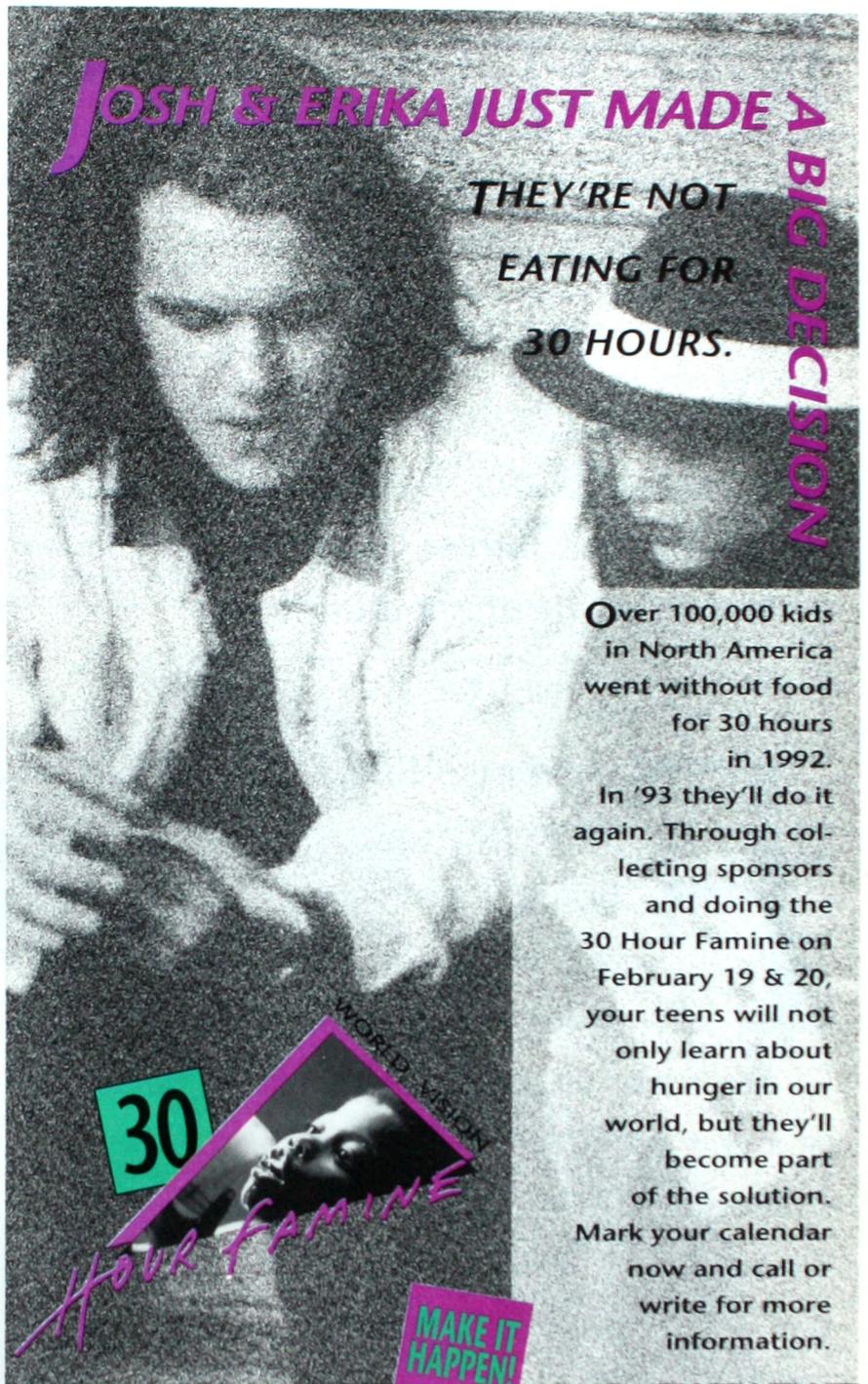
marketing director. "These plaques stimulate the children to dwell on Scripture."

- *St. Jude's Ranch for Children*, 100 St. Jude St., Boulder City, NV 89005.

St. Jude's Ranch provides homes, counseling, academic tutoring, and activities for abused children.

Children at the facility receive 5 cents for each

recycled card they complete. "Most of these children come from families on welfare," says Susan White, fundraising coordinator. "The cards give the children a sense of learning and earning. They learn they can break the cycle of welfare." St. Jude's Ranch sells the recycled cards in 10-packs for a \$6.50 suggested donation.



Over 100,000 kids in North America went without food for 30 hours in 1992.

In '93 they'll do it again. Through collecting sponsors and doing the 30 Hour Famine on February 19 & 20, your teens will not only learn about hunger in our world, but they'll become part of the solution. Mark your calendar now and call or write for more information.

CALL NOW TO GET YOUR FAMINE KIT: 1-800-7FAMINE

- Yes, I'd like to join the 30 Hour Famine!

Please send me materials for _____ people.

This is for a group family/individual.

- Yes, I'm interested but need more information first.

Please contact me.

Mail to:

WORLD VISION

30 HOUR FAMINE

P.O. BOX 1131

PASADENA, CA 91131

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Group name and leader (if applicable) _____

MOTHER'S CHOICE

TEXT BY RON WILSON

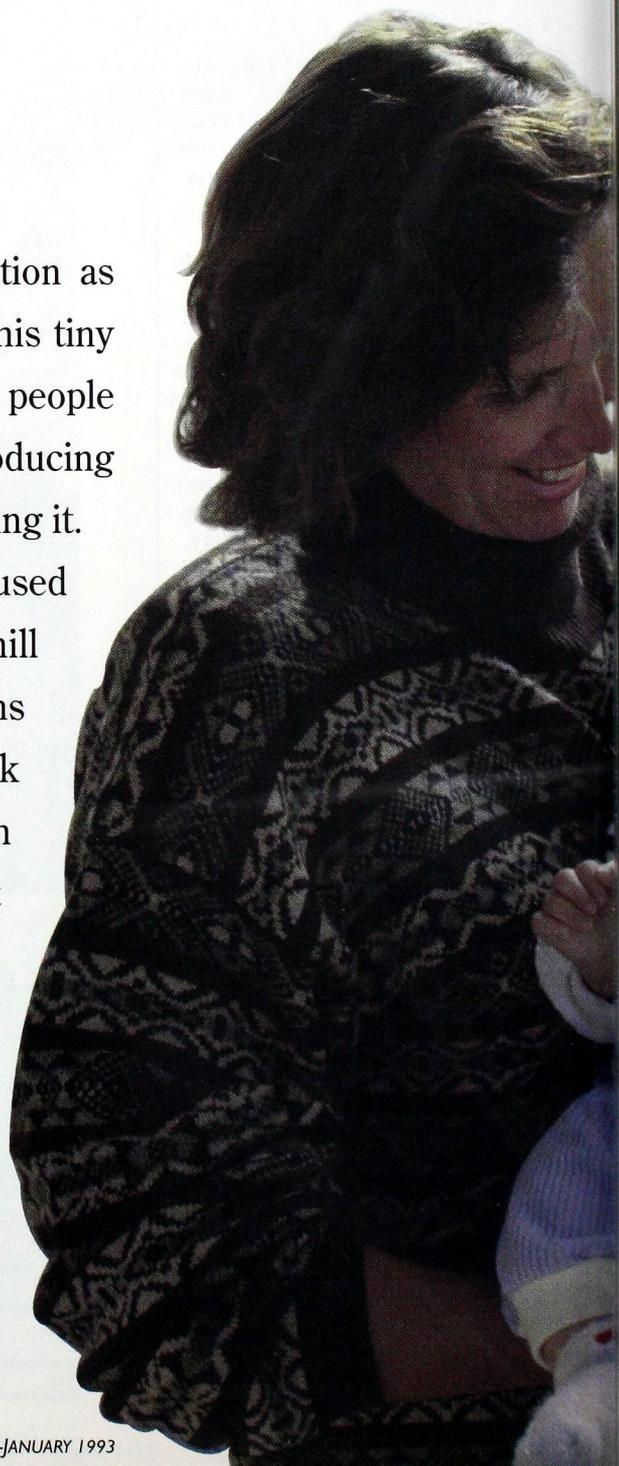
PHOTOS BY GREG BURT

Each month, hundreds of women, many from Hong Kong, have quick, cheap abortions in China. One ministry is giving these mothers a choice.

Few dispute Hong Kong's reputation as the world's shopping capital. In this tiny British crown colony, six million people are caught in a frenzy of producing goods, earning money, and spending it.

That's why the humanitarian enterprise housed in a gray concrete building, perched on the hill overlooking the thriving business district, seems so out of place. Dwarfed by scores of new bank and office buildings is a life-saving operation that has given hundreds of single, pregnant Hong Kong women an alternative to abortion.

While hundreds each month "dispose of an unwanted pregnancy," quickly and cheaply a few miles away in China, these women now have another option—Mother's Choice. It's aptly named because those who go there for help are the castaways of Hong Kong society with no place else to go.



The ministry

It all began over tea one Sunday afternoon at the Hilton Hotel with a group of expatriates. An Indian entrepreneur and his American wife and two North American missionaries were appalled by a series of articles in the *South China Morning Post*.

Young women, it reported, could take the train a few miles to the border of the Chinese People's Republic, walk across, and get an abortion at one of at least eight hospitals in Shenzhen Province. These abortions had become such a hustling business, the hospitals gave taxi drivers a kickback for each girl they brought in. Worse, many of these hospitals abort third trimester pregnancies. And one Chinese doctor admitted that abortion had generated significant income for the province.

The birth of a program

It was not just their abhorrence of the Chinese abortion mill that moved the four, but the plight of the young women. In Hong Kong, the stigma attached to what many refer to as "naughty" girls makes them unwanted by their families and often by the church. Some girls can't identify the baby's father, and even if they can, very few can support a family.

We're not responsible for China's policy, the four reasoned, nor can we change it. But we *are* accountable for what happens in our society and we can do something.

Helen and Gary Stephens,

the missionaries, could call on a cadre of skilled friends and workers to get involved. Ranjan Marwah has, as he puts it, "more than my share of blessings," meaning he could help fund the idea. It also meant he had a wide circle of friends, including some of the colony's leading industrialists and politicians. "I'm a businessman," he confessed, "and we don't see problems like this as things we can chip away at. We want to change situations immediately."

HELLEN STEPHENS received the Hong Kong American Chamber of Commerce award of the year as the individual who voluntarily made the most outstanding contribution to the Hong Kong people. Mother's Choice was awarded \$2,500 for its ministry.

Helen thought a lot about the pregnant girls crossing the border. One day she prayed, "Lord, tell them not to do that," and the answer came back to her in the form of a question. "Helen, are you willing to get involved? Will you get your hands dirty to do something about it?"

Immediately, she did. She found an abandoned building that belonged to the government, and Ranjan, using his contacts, got the government to lease it to them for \$1 a year. The building, however, was derelict, nothing but a mildew-coated shell. Gary sent in workers to itemize what it needed and the answer was *everything*—new wiring, plumbing, flooring, windows.

So the ball went back to Ranjan. "Hong Kong is the kind of place," he says, "where people write a check to get something off their conscience." Ranjan asked for more. He wanted to get them involved. He knew, however, that appealing to people to help the "naughty" girls wouldn't work. So he talked about saving the life of an unborn child.

Help pours in

Ranjan persuaded a Chinese businessman, the biggest rice importer in Hong Kong, to supply all the rice and oil they needed. The head of a conglomerate that owned several major hotels offered furniture. Another friend, in the electric fan business, a big item in humid Hong Kong, promised Ranjan enough fans to equip the building. Still another friend donated diapers.

Phyllis Marwah (left)
and Helen Stephens



Helen and Ranjan's wife, Phyllis, spread the word to the Christian community, and soon the building was full of volunteers—scrubbing, painting, patching, hauling. An electrical contractor, Mr. Wong, agreed to do all the wiring. At the end of the week he told Helen and Phyllis he was impressed that *gweilo* [foreign] women would give so much of themselves for the Chinese girls.

A full house

Finally, Helen, Gary, Phyllis, and Ranjan gave a lunch to show the building to the community and publicize the project. Just as they put the finishing touches on their lunch preparations, the phone rang. It was a girl, six months pregnant. Her mother had thrown her out, and someone had told her about

Mother's Choice. Could she come over right away? They hadn't even opened the doors, but Helen, now the director, felt it was God's stamp of approval on the work. The girl was there by 3:00 p.m. that day. After that it didn't take long for the beds to fill up. Wai Ming, a 14-year-old school dropout, was pregnant from her 32-year-old boyfriend. A sweet, quiet girl, she cried a lot when she first came. Lai Ha, 21, was a recent refugee from the mainland. Her boyfriend in China had a wife and two children, so Lai Ha fled to Hong Kong where she didn't know anyone. A legal aid officer called and asked if Mother's Choice would go to court for a pregnant girl in jail. Choi San's boyfriend owed money to the notorious Chinese gangs, so she had turned to prostitution to help pay the debt.

Most of the 500 women helped at Mother's Choice are between 16 and 17 years old. More than 75 percent of the girls give up their babies for adoption.



The founding four had no idea whether the girls would be tough or like the girl next door. It turned out that many come from single parent homes in Kowloon, a low-rent section of Hong Kong, where hundreds of families live in high-rise apartments stacked on top of each other.

The average girl at Mother's Choice is 16 years old, and most are between four and seven months pregnant. Some are contrite like the 15-year-old who wrote, "Father, I don't know what to say—because I am really sorry for what I have done." Another wrote to her unborn child, "I did not listen to my mother. I went out a lot and got in trouble. But I really regret it."

In its first four years, Mother's Choice has nurtured more than 500 young women. Most of them stayed at the home about three months, and most told the social workers that if they hadn't gone there, they would have gone to China for an abortion. Three out of four of the girls have given the children up for adoption.

Nurturing the babies

Success, however, posed another problem—what to do with all the babies. So back to the government they went. This time they came up with an old three-story colonial that would house 60 babies and a staff of 20.

But infants operate 24-hours a day. The organization soon put the word out that it needed a small army of cuddlers, rockers, feeders, and changers. Wives of businessmen, the businessmen themselves, students, clerks, local Chinese and expatriates alike, signed up for several hours a week, slipped on an apron, and reported to the nursery. Now more than 290 part-time volunteers help a 27-member paid staff and 26 full-time volunteers from 14 other countries.

Horace, an airport transportation director, comes directly from work every Wednesday afternoon. Poonja, a 16-year-old from India, comes after school. John, a British businessman, spends Sunday mornings bouncing babies. Mary, a secretary, is a regular on Saturday.

Everyone has ideas about how to care for a baby. Lay the babies on their back or stomach? Pacifier or thumb? Let them cry or pick them up? And since Hong Kong is an international community, you're apt to hear baby talk in Dutch, Cantonese, French, Afrikaans, or English. It makes for occasional confusion, but it means a steady supply of loving care.

Adoption and abandoned children

Although a steady supply of parents is easy to find, the adoption process takes time. Because Mother's



More than 290 part-time volunteers—businessmen's wives, businessmen, students, clerks, locals and expatriates—care for children at Mother's Choice.

Choice is not yet a licensed adoption agency it is not involved in the adoption process and must work through other organizations.

While doing this, however, Helen and her staff discovered abandoned children languishing in government institutions. Many of the children had special physical needs but had been placed in homes with mentally retarded children and had almost no chance of ever being adopted.

Shocked and appalled, Helen asked the board for permission to open a "Wee Care" unit for such children with special needs. It didn't take long to find Ho Chi, 3, and Sin Man, 14 months, both with Down syndrome. Then came 18-month-old Mai Lei, a Vietnamese refugee who was emotionally deprived and physically underdeveloped. Man Ting had Towne syndrome and

Emmanuel had a cleft palate, which Mother's Choice had surgically corrected before the Social Welfare Department found parents for him.

Happy endings

Meanwhile, Choi San, the girl they pulled out of jail, learned about Christ and felt his love from the staff at Mother's Choice. "For weeks before her baby was born," one staff member recalls, "all I ever saw her do was read her Bible." Their experience at Mother's Choice has a lasting impact on many of the young mothers who stay there. Many of the girls telephone often and visit occasionally. In fact, some of the girls, the staff laughs, want to form an alumni association. This is one place they can count on acceptance.

They can also count on help. A staff member who works closely with the young mothers tells this story. One day an old man walked into Mother's Choice and just looked around. When someone offered to help him he explained why he'd come. "I work at the railroad station in Lo Wu," he replied. "That's where the girls get off before they cross the border into China for their abortions and where they get on when they come back. Often I clean up the blood. I heard about what you're doing, and if any of the girls ever ask, I want to let them know they have another choice." ☺

Ron Wilson is a free-lance writer in Earlsville, Va.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Mother's Choice needs more full-time help. The program provides men and women of any age room and board for one-year assignments. Volunteers must pay for airfare and raise \$200 per month to cover personal expenses. For more information, contact Mother's Choice, #5 Bowen Road, Hong Kong. Phone: 852-525-2393. Fax: 852-526-4145.

At a time when five million U.S. children go hungry, congressional reforms early next year could eliminate the Select Committee on Hunger, a bipartisan panel that the *New York Times* calls the "conscience of congress."

The committee deals not with special interests and the privileged, but with the world's 100 million street children, the starving people of Somalia, and the 200,000 Americans added to the nation's food-stamp rolls every month for the past two years.

Should the reform-minded congress terminate the only bipartisan congressional committee exclusively targeting the elimination of hunger in the United States and overseas, it would cause great suffering for millions of families.

Let your elected officials know of your concern before they vote early in the 103rd Congress. Letters should be addressed: The Honorable (insert name), U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 20515 or phone the U.S. Capitol switchboard, (202) 224-3121, for their office. —Terry Madison

WORLD VISION

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BY JOYCE GLAZE WEBSTER

LESSONS FROM FRILLS AND FOODBASKETS

"I wasn't dreamin' of anything this Christmas," Viola Yocko said to God last Christmas Eve. "You died for me. That's enough." The 74-year-old woman had just received a holiday food basket from Father Michael Doyle, pastor of the Sacred Heart Church in Camden, N.J.

Viola lived in a green, leaning "home" in Camden, a city where murders occur daily, and poverty is difficult even for the young and robust. Despite her poverty, however, Viola's joy reflected her faith in a loving God who had sent his Son to die for her.

I have worked with many like Viola. Their rich faith in the midst of crushing poverty has profoundly affected my view of life and heaven. It has caused me to ask, "Just who are the poor and the homeless?"

According to Don Sadler of the Sunday Breakfast Association, a mission for the homeless, all of us are homeless if we have no hope of heaven. Because of this, as I try to help the poor I only volunteer for organizations that give hope along with help. And I have learned a lot about hope from those in economic despair.

A few years ago, my husband was transferred to New Jersey. Although I have lived and worked in several U.S. cities and two foreign countries, it was the first time I had lived near a city where I was told never to go out alone. Camden is only 15 minutes from my front door and is bordered by three of the wealthiest suburban South Jersey communities. During my first visit to Camden, I was amazed at the decay and destruction. It reminded me of the poverty I had seen in Third World countries. Yet Viola, living in the midst of poverty, didn't need any Christmas present other than Jesus.

I first served food to the homeless at the Sunday Breakfast Association in Philadelphia on Thanksgiving Day 1990. Affectionately called the Sunday B by patrons and volunteers, this 100-year-old ministry serves the physical, personal, and spiritual needs of many homeless people.

My husband and I drove to the Sunday B wondering aloud what would await us. At first I couldn't look into the faces of those who sat at the tables while I filled their cups. There was already a lump in my throat and I didn't want a watershed of tears to begin. In addition, I felt as though I would be looking in on something that I had no right to see. But as I continued, I could hear the men saying, "Thank you. Happy Thanksgiving." Soon I lost my selfish thoughts and began to really enjoy pouring the water and returning their good wishes.

Sometimes, as a middle-class citizen, I wish for the abundance of the affluent lifestyle. And that wish is not always centered in how I would help others if I were wealthy. Sometimes, I just envy the frills. But I know that money does not buy happiness. It is the same God who delivers the poor and the rich from pain and addiction.

My vision of heaven has changed over the years. In my youth, heaven was a place where people went after they died. As I matured, heaven evoked images of a quiet, restful place where I could go to live after I died. Now, heaven for me would be the privilege of watching Viola occupy her mansion promised in the Scriptures. And hearing Reverend James Campbell, executive director of the Sunday B, introduce former homeless men and women to their Creator. I'll know I'm there when I hear the rich Irish accent of Father Michael Doyle proclaiming, "Christ has not only risen, but he has returned to Camden! And all is well!"

Joyce Glaze Webster is a free-lance writer in Mt. Laurel, N. J.

Their rich faith in the midst of crushing poverty has profoundly affected my view of life and heaven.



Viola Yocko, 74, receives a food basket from Father Michael Doyle and Rose Marie McBride, Sacred Heart Church staff.



THERE'S STILL LIFE IN SOMALIA

The person on the operating table could have been the national symbol for Somalia. Multiple gunshot wounds threatened an already fragile body. A casualty of anarchy—one of many. There are entire hospitals that treat nothing but gunshot wounds and, given the random rifle shots that punctuated this day, these hospitals have never been busier.

The shooting, of course, is not always random, but there is a certain nonchalance about its intentionality. We saw it at the port in Mogadishu: An argument breaks out, everyone reaches for weapons that have become ubiquitous in the streets. Shots are sprayed, people run, and two more victims lie in their blood on the cement. Friends carry them off, and five minutes after the argument began, the port returns to “normal.”

But there is nothing normal about the person on the operating table. She is 11 years old. No one is sure whether she was specifically targeted or simply caught in a cross fire. The uncertainty is common in a country that has fallen headlong into a moral abyss. The point, of course, is moot for Bushooro. What she does know is that her life has been unalterably changed, and a new kind of pain threatens her.

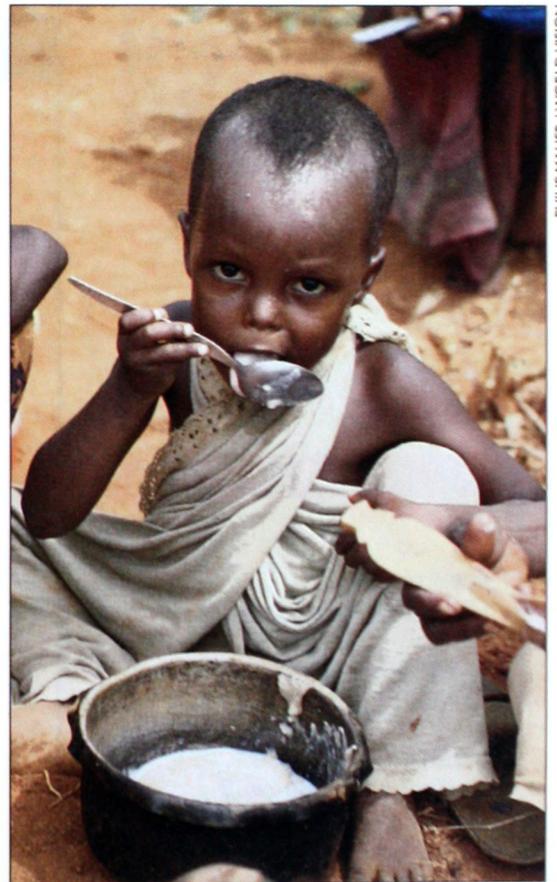
Bushooro Sleeth Unfar has been stripped of everything decent. She lost her identity when the conflict claimed her parents. Orphaned, she lost her humanity when the man-made bullets entered her body. On the operating table she was unable to control her bowels, and her dignity was taken away. Frightened, bewildered, disoriented, she lost her faculties. Perhaps in the ultimate indignity the sleeves were cut out of her blouse. If her clothing had too much value, she might tempt robbers. Her value needed to be reduced, and this was one thing Somalia could do effectively.

Bushooro long ago lost the ability to smile; a fragile, broken body that was slowly being drained of cups of infection, had now been devalued by events far out of her control. Her refuge was an operating table. She could just as easily have slipped through the massive cracks of moral consciousness and quietly escaped a society gone mad. Yet she was going to live. An 11-year-old girl was now given the opportunity of a lifetime, a healing touch from someone who cared.

Bushooro would make it because there are still people who care, people throughout the world who want to make a difference in Somalia. The Canadian nurse cleaning Bushooro's wounds incar-

nated hope. It was a sacrifice for her to be there, but the affirmation of her witness came from those who made it possible for her to be there. Donors whose compassion never became fatigued. Individuals who have not been distracted by multiple disasters nor beaten down by the magnitude of the Somalian tragedy.

These are people who refuse to stay on the sidelines, riding out a worldwide recession. They want to have an impact; they care about persons more than events. For them, Somalia is not lost.



PHILIP MAHER / WORLD VISION

The obituaries written by a jaded and cynical media are, indeed, premature.

Life is still here, fragile, but capable of being renewed. And with life there is hope, sustained by the gifts and prayers of thousands of compassionate people around the world. It is a hope that endures, a hope that helps a little 11-year-old girl through the most traumatic moment of her life, and sticks around to promise her a better tomorrow. ☉

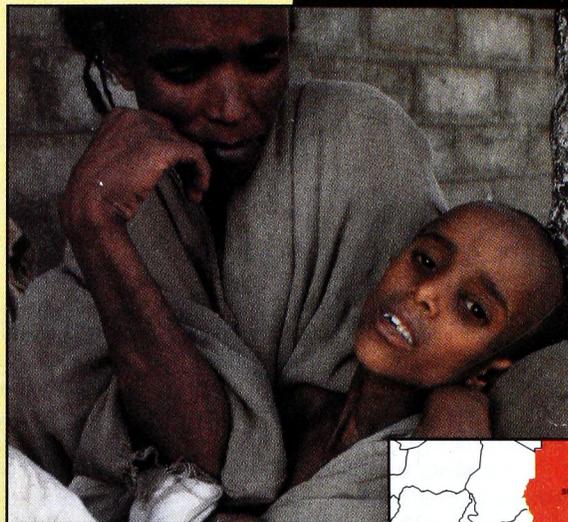
There are still people who care, people throughout the world who want to make a difference in Somalia.

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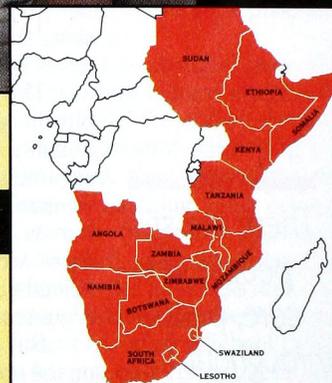
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A MOTHER'S NIGHTMARE



THE WORLD'S NIGHTMARE



Today millions of people are at risk of death from starvation in 15 countries of Africa. Low

rainfall has caused the loss of most crops; water sources are dried up. Supplies of food have run out. The resulting famine that has struck half the land mass of the African continent could cause death on a far greater scale than the Ethiopian famine of 1984-85.

But there is hope—if we act quickly. World Vision staff is working around the clock at feeding centers to help those who are in the greatest danger.

Please help get food to children and families in Africa before starvation and disease claim them.

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