

# WORLD VISION®

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## MEXICO: THE CRISIS NEXT DOOR





IS MEXICO POISED FOR A NEW REVOLUTION—  
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL?

# MEXICO: THE

KEVIN MCKIERNAN





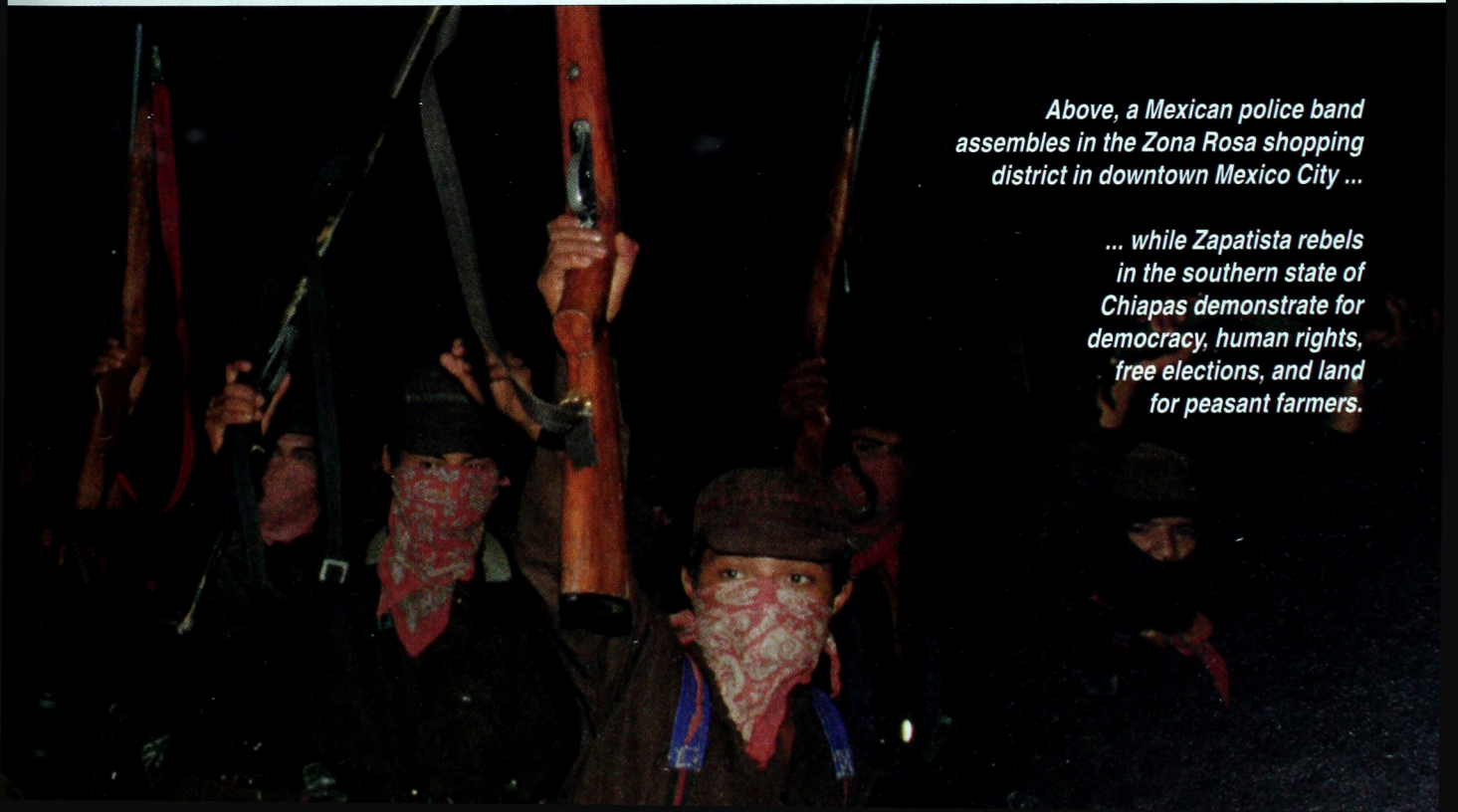
BRUCE BRANDER / WORLD VISION

BY BRUCE BRANDER

# CRISIS NEXT DOOR

*Above, a Mexican police band  
assembles in the Zona Rosa shopping  
district in downtown Mexico City ...*

*... while Zapatista rebels  
in the southern state of  
Chiapas demonstrate for  
democracy, human rights,  
free elections, and land  
for peasant farmers.*



# IN THE BACKWASH OF MEXICO'S WORST ECONOMIC RECESSION SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1910, THE RICH GROW RICHER, THE MIDDLE CLASS LIES DEVASTATED, AND THE POOR ARE POORER THAN EVER.

In the Nueva Area *barrio* on a bleak mountainside one hour's drive north of central Mexico City, Filomena Jimenez Ojeda seeks hope. With her husband Mario, she came to the slum settlement in 1973 from the southern state of Oaxaca to escape poverty. Now they live with four children in a shanty of sticks covered with milk-cartons for walls. They have electric light, but no telephone, plumbing, or sewage.



BRUCE BRANDER / WORLD VISION

Filomena

"My husband Mario is a mason's assistant," says Filomena. Like millions of his countrymen, he lost his job soon after Mexico's economy collapsed in December 1994. "I wash people's clothes for a little income," she added. "We used to have meat once a week, and milk, but now we can't afford that." The family lives mainly on corn tortillas and beans. She hopes that someday she and her husband will find steady employment. She also hopes their children will continue school.

Jaime D. Berebichez, general director of a construction company and a member of Mexico's middle class, is not going hungry but has lost his dreams. Last year he laid off 24 of his 30 employees and scrapped plans to build a 522-unit housing development. "We have no idea whether our sacrifice will last six months or six years," he said. "We don't harbor any hope of emerging from this crisis. It's as if we're dead."

"Crisis?" exclaimed a waiter at the plush Pacific beach resort of Ixtapa, where Mexico's young and rich come to play away the weekends. "What crisis? You won't find it here." To be sure, the country's elite feel unnerved by their nation's fiscal collapse and growing political unrest. But with an economic structure that protects them almost as effectively as it holds down the poor, few among the wealthy suffer in their daily circumstances.

In the backwash of Mexico's worst economic recession since the revolution of 1910, the rich grow richer, the middle

class lies devastated, and the poor are poorer than ever. This is the Mexican crisis that has taken the world's attention. Yet the fiscal failure and its varied consequences are only the start of upheavals shaking the country from top to bottom.

A government recovery program highlighting higher taxes and rising prices imposes hair-shirt austerity and creates unrest among a large majority of Mexico's 91 million people. Meanwhile, the reform-minded President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León treads on well-shod toes and hones dangerously sharp resentments. First he took to enforcing the law upon a political elite accustomed to blanket immunity. Then he declared legal war on at least four powerful drug cartels that invest huge sums in narco-politics.

Zedillo's Institutional Revolutionary Party—the world's longest ruling political group since the demise of communism—has dominated the country by hook or crook for 67 years. Yet the 44-year-old president, though holding an office with centralized power reminiscent of an Aztec emperor's, preaches democracy. Meanwhile, wealthy and powerful conservatives in his party, known as *dinosaurios* for their resistance to change, watch upstart candidates from previously impotent opposition parties push their stalwarts out of state and local office and maneuver to snatch the presidency in the year 2000.

In the far south, a popular insurgency with a ski-masked spokesman known as *subcomandante* Marcos makes up for its arsenal of World War II rifles and gun-shaped sticks with witty messages to the mass media and appeals for support on the global Internet.

Add to that endemic bribery and corruption plus a running series of political assassinations and you can hardly wonder that some Mexico-watchers suffer nervous nightmares about impending anarchy south of the border.

So do some Mexicans.

## A MODEL OF STABILITY

For much of this century, their country shone forth as a model of stability amid the odd disorder of other Latin American lands. Mexico is no democracy. Its government is conducted by an unelected bureaucratic elite accountable only to the president. Yet the dominating party of businessmen, organized labor, and peasants piloted the country with enviable steadiness from its beginning in

1929 until recent years. Economically Mexico enjoyed regular and rising expansion from the 1940s to the early 1980s.

No wonder that the first cracks in the national structure came as a surprise. In 1982, rising overseas debt and tumbling oil prices sank the country into virtual bankruptcy. But that seemed only an aberration. Tough government measures—including tax reform, debt restructuring, sale of state-run industries, and a lot of painful austerity for almost everyone—lifted Mexico out of that crisis very nicely.

As recently as the closing months of 1994, Mexico seemed a sunny land of plenty wisely managed by its then-president, Harvard-educated Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and a circle of savvy ministers with post-graduate degrees in economics from America's best universities. A burgeoning economy fed by overseas investment nurtured 24 billionaires. A fattening middle class bought television sets imported automobiles, and other luxuries. The poor—perhaps 40 percent of the population—still waited for the benefits of growth but found hope in the progress of the other 60 percent. Salinas frosted the cake of success by confidently proclaiming that Mexico was ascending from the Third World into the First.

Meanwhile, encouraged speculators—mostly North Americans—reaped fortunes as Mexico's stock market soared to 120 times its 1982 value. From 1991 to 1993, foreign investment, mainly from United States banks and pension and mutual funds, poured into Mexico. The country absorbed between \$15 billion and \$25 billion per year more than it was earning from exports.

## PROSPERITY UNSTABLE

That, of course, was overdoing it again. With debt expanding much faster than the economy, the "Mexican miracle" was made of all imports and no internal growth. Yet blithe economic days might have lasted, but for a thundering herd of investors suddenly wanting their money back.

Major crises usually have early tremors. Mexico's economic collapse did too. Almost a year earlier, on Jan. 1, 1994 the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), conceived by President Salinas to boost trade between Mexico, the United States, and Canada, went into effect. That was good news. But bad news befell the same day when a well-organized



*Carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and other tradesmen left unemployed by economic crisis offer their services in Mexico City's central plaza.*

band of Indians began a bloody uprising in the remote southern highlands of Chiapas state. That shook investors, as well as the triumphant government.

A sharper shock came on March 23, when the president's hand-picked successor, Luis Donaldo Colosio, was shot to death at a campaign rally. Salinas found a replacement readily enough in Zedillo, his education minister. But in September the ruling party's number-two man, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, also was assassinated.

Yet euphoria persisted and Salinas left office in November 1994 hailed as a visionary reformer. Yale-educated Zedillo won what was called the cleanest election race in Mexican history. And few people foresaw the stunning developments that soon would devastate the country's economy and send Salinas fleeing into exile, first to Connecticut then to parts unknown, as a virtual fugitive.

### DEVALUATION TRIGGERS CRASH

The economic crash began on Dec. 20, 1994, triggered by a bungled devaluation of the peso. Not always is devaluation of a country's currency a misfortune. Such a move can stimulate exports and put an overvalued pound or lira or peso back into proportion with other currencies. According to Kathleen Heaney, head of Latin American equity research at Bankers Trust, financiers had been wanting to see the Mexican peso devalued for a year. "But the way it was done," she added, "really freaked people out."

First, Mexican Finance Minister Jaime Serra Puche said the peso would remain stable. A few days later, it was allowed to lose value. Money managers

in the United States, accustomed to being warned about Mexico's financial policies, were stunned.

In a computerized world, where bundles of money can zip across borders with hasty keyboard taps, billions of dollars fled the country in a few panicky days. The International Monetary Fund's Managing Director Michael Camdessus labeled the crash "the first financial crisis of the 21st century," since it pointed up dangerous volatility in the new world of free global capital flow.

Mexico's stock market tumbled by almost 50 percent in dollar terms by Jan. 10. The nation's bank shares sank like stones. The peso plunged 44 percent against the dollar.

The economic earthquake threatened to rumble around the world. With Mexico unable to afford its normal import diet—87 percent of it from the United States—what might \$20 billion in lost income do to the jobs of thousands of Americans? How would California, Texas and other U.S. states where some 10 percent of all Mexicans already live handle more work-seeking migrants mobbing over the 1,936-mile border? If Mexico failed to pay its debts, wouldn't nervous investors pull out of other developing economies in Argentina, Brazil, Eastern Europe? Central bankers briefly feared for the stability of the world's financial system.

### \$50 BILLION OR "ARMAGEDDON"

Paul Luke, an analyst at the British investment bank Morgan Grenfell, claims emerging markets were threatened with "Armageddon" and the developing world with catastrophic consequences. To avert

that—and to defuse an explosive situation on its southern border—the United States organized a gigantic \$50 billion international rescue fund.

That gave Mexico breathing space. Zedillo, saying he did not want to be a popular president, promised the Mexican people sharp price and tax increases, tight credit, and cuts in government spending. Meanwhile his new finance minister, Guillermo Ortiz, put forth a stabilization plan that guaranteed the people recession, unemployment, and overall personal hardship.

### HARD TIMES HIT

Many Mexicans would rather forget what happened then. Living standards plunged. Gasoline prices shot up one-third. The cost of electricity, meat, and disposable diapers climbed 20 percent. Credit card interest rates ran 80 percent and rising, while bank interest hit a startling 92 percent. Annual inflation ballooned above 50 percent.

"Prices keep climbing and we just can't keep up," said 21-year-old Vicente Robles, who washed car windshields on Mexico City streets, competing for small change with street jugglers, fire-eaters, and chewing gum vendors.

Take-home income dropped at least one-quarter, with the sharpest declines among lower-paid workers. More than 1 million Mexicans lost their jobs in the first five months of 1995, according to conservative Labor Ministry estimates, and more still after that. Their plight is magnified by lack of unemployment insurance and no welfare system.

Whole industries, such as construc-

# THOUGH MEXICO'S PRESENT PAINS ARE FISCAL, THE COUNTRY'S ROOT PROBLEMS ARE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL

tion and truck-building, virtually shut down. Store aisles emptied. Restaurants lost as much as 40 percent of their business in the first quarter of 1995.

Great masses of the country's middle-income earners faced foreclosures on delinquent auto and home loans. Doctors and engineers were out of work. Teachers cut class to peddle flowers and shoes on the streets. Children dropped out of school; an estimated 8 to 11 million under the age of 15 now work in factories and sweatshops, on farms and streets. Thousands of farmers lost their lands to bank repossession. The number of billionaires fell from 24 to 10. Crime in the sprawling capital soared to the highest rates in history.

"We don't know what to do. We don't

have anything to eat now," said Julia Morales Chona, 49, who works her family's cornfield with her husband and five children on the tropical Pacific coastline south of Acapulco. Milk is too costly. Beans are hard to get. Cooking oil long ago went up 40 percent. People simply buy less, she said, citing genuine hunger in the region.

"It's like an illness," said one small businessman about the plunging economy. "Everybody talks about it all the time, every day."

Yet the talk isn't bad for quite everyone. The cautious rich who stashed money out of the country before the collapse could nearly double their pesos by bringing it back. Tourists travel happily, the devaluation making Mexico a bargain destination. *Maquiladora* factories along the border,

which receive raw material and parts from U.S. and overseas companies and ship finished goods back under special tariff wavers, are busier than ever churning out television sets, machine tools, computer keyboards, cassette tapes, and aircraft insulation for wages ranging from \$1.06 down to 35 cents per hour. Meanwhile, the United States was spared the much-feared flood of illegal immigrants as border controls were firmed up and those who made it to *el otro lado*, or the other side, found jobs scarce in a cool U.S. economy.

## VIEW OF FUTURE CAUTIOUS

As Mexicans move through their second year of economic crisis, most view the future nervously at best. As early as August 1995, Zedillo proclaimed the country "on the threshold of recovery." The general response was only: Perhaps...

To be sure, the peso has steadied. Foreign investment is returning. Exports are way up, while imports from the United States are 11 percent above pre-NAFTA levels. And NAFTA itself emerged unscathed, confirming Mexico's place in the greater North American trading market.

Mexicans, however, still feeling the pinch, remain cautious. Zedillo's friends rate him as clever, determined, and honest. The public, however, sees him as too hesitant and uncertain to force reforms needed for a stable future. Also official claims of economic recovery regularly have proven full of funny numbers, fanning skepticism.

Says Manuel Hernández, a 45-year-old architect who lost his job of 15 years, "I keep looking for work, but my perspective on the country's future is that it's going bankrupt."

## RECOVERY QUESTIONABLE

The nation's Finance Secretariat soberly warns that coming years will see only modest recovery. Mexican economic analyst Abel Beltran del Rio says pre-devaluation conditions can't be expected before the end of the century. Meanwhile, Harvard historian John Womack suggests that Mexico's crisis condition, far from being a bump in the road, might turn out to be the new status quo.

Womack and other careful analysts look beyond economics in forming their conclusions. Though

## WORLD VISION IN MEXICO

**M**exico's current economic crisis, the worst in 50 years, ironically helped World Vision's program in the country. With the peso's devaluation in December 1994, funds from donors in other lands nearly doubled in value. World Vision staff was able to replace ramshackle cars and purchase computers to help their work. More important, they had more money to help many thousands of desperately poor people left all the poorer by lost jobs and rising prices.

World Vision began work in Mexico in 1963, sponsoring children and helping improve orphanages. In 1968, 1973, and 1988, the agency brought together clergymen from isolated areas of the country as part of a worldwide program of pastors' conferences.

Today from an office in Mexico City, World Vision's staff of Mexican nationals operates projects throughout the country.

World Vision provided emergency relief after a 1983 hurricane and flood, a 1984 natural gas explosion, and a major earthquake in 1985. The agency also helped people through the aftermath of other hurricanes and floods in 1988 and 1993 and a quake in rural Guerrero in 1995.

Most of World Vision Mexico's 127 projects aim for lasting development. Their work includes:

- health care
- health and vocational training
- housing improvement
- well drilling
- poultry raising
- agricultural improvement
- support for small businesses
- primary and secondary education
- counselling, shelter, and education for street children in Mexico City.

In 1996, World Vision sponsored 37,325 Mexican children, with donors in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Mexico.

Readers can help the poor of Mexico weather their nation's crisis by sponsoring a child there. A monthly donation of \$20 can help secure good nutrition, medical care, and continued schooling for not only the child but the child's whole community.

For more information, please phone (800) 448-6437.

**A World Vision store  
helps barrio dwellers.**





**A government food subsidy costing \$650 million annually long has insured cheap tortillas to prevent mass hunger in Mexico. The present government recently tested subsidized credit cards for the poor.**

Mexico's present pains are fiscal, the country's root problems are political and social.

The 67-year-old political system, though retaining a formidable grip on power, is crumbling at its foundations. The personal, family, and party loyalties that bound it together are archaic and dying. Meanwhile, according to Jorge Castañeda, a prominent Mexican political scientist, "an enormous portion of the population [is]... simply fed up with the [party] and the government." Some opposition politicians compare the present to a decade of chaos that followed the 1910 revolution.

Mexico might cling to its outworn system until it collapses, Castañeda speculates. Viewing this option, pessimists murmur about the possibility of more assassinations, a military coup, and guerrilla warfare from an isolated left. Some observers envision worse: "What's impressed me over the years," says Sidney Weintraub, a Mexico specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., "is the fact that the place doesn't explode."

### MAJOR REFORMS NEEDED

An alternative choice for the country is a risky leap forward into major political and social reforms. As Mexicans clamor for more democracy, Zedillo wants to devolve power away from his office toward congress and the 31 Mexican states. The president also is heeding a popular hunger for law and order as corruption plagues the country and lack of effective law enforcement leaves the risk of getting caught in crime virtually nil.

Zedillo surprised everyone by arresting Raul Salinas, brother of the ex-president, on charges of masterminding the assassination of the prominent politician Massieu, who also was Raul's former brother-in-law. Raul additionally is charged with what Mexicans call "inexplicable enrichment" for accumulating an illicit fortune of some \$120 million while holding government office. Meanwhile, the president promised to overhaul Mexico's notoriously crooked legal and judicial system and establish the rule of law.

Zedillo also is brandishing the law against the flourishing Mexican drug trade, which transports 70 percent of the cocaine brought into the United States. At any one time, Mexico's dealers stockpile 70 to 100 tons of the drug—enough to provide a fix for every person on earth.

Facing the rebellion in Chiapas, which is not a revolution seeking power but an armed call for democratic reform and rights for oppressed indigenous peoples, the administration has promised negotiations and land for *campesino* farmers.

### REBUILDING THE COUNTRY

The main tasks of rebuilding a workable country, however, remain ahead. Growth of democracy stands highest on the agenda. Mexico's lack of democratic process is not merely a political deficiency. It's a leading cause of vast social, ethnic, and regional inequalities and injustice that have lacerated the country for 500 years.

Distribution of wealth in Mexico, for example, reaches startling extremes. The richest 10 percent of the population garners more than 40 percent of the

nation's income; the poorest 40 percent get a mere 13 percent. About one in every five Mexicans enjoys First-World living standards. Another one in five is poor even by Third-World measures. Similar gaps in wealth, education, and worldview separate city and country people, northerners and southerners, white *criollos*, tan *mestizos*, and marginalized indigenous peoples.

Mexico's chasms of social inequality can be bridged only by translating future economic growth into human development. This includes major improvements in housing, health care, education, and alleviation of poverty. To this list, Castañeda adds an end to state paternalism and the nurture of groups and organizations that reflect the nation's immense diversities.

### THE SECOND REVOLUTION?

While Mexico watchers worry mainly about the country's pervasive and growing instability, this also can be seen as a new fluidity eroding centuries-old traditional ways. Interior Minister Emilio Chuayffet might have been right when in 1995 he declared, "This is the second revolution."

Yet most Mexicans are as unsure as Alvaro Flores of what this might mean. The owner of a bookstore in Mexico City for more than 30 years, he finds sales down 60 percent and the price of books up 20 to 40 percent. He doesn't like to consider the future.

"The Mexican lives on hope," he said. "We hope the system will change. It doesn't change. We hope that things will get better. They don't get better. But the Mexican still lives on hope." ☉

# MEGACITIES



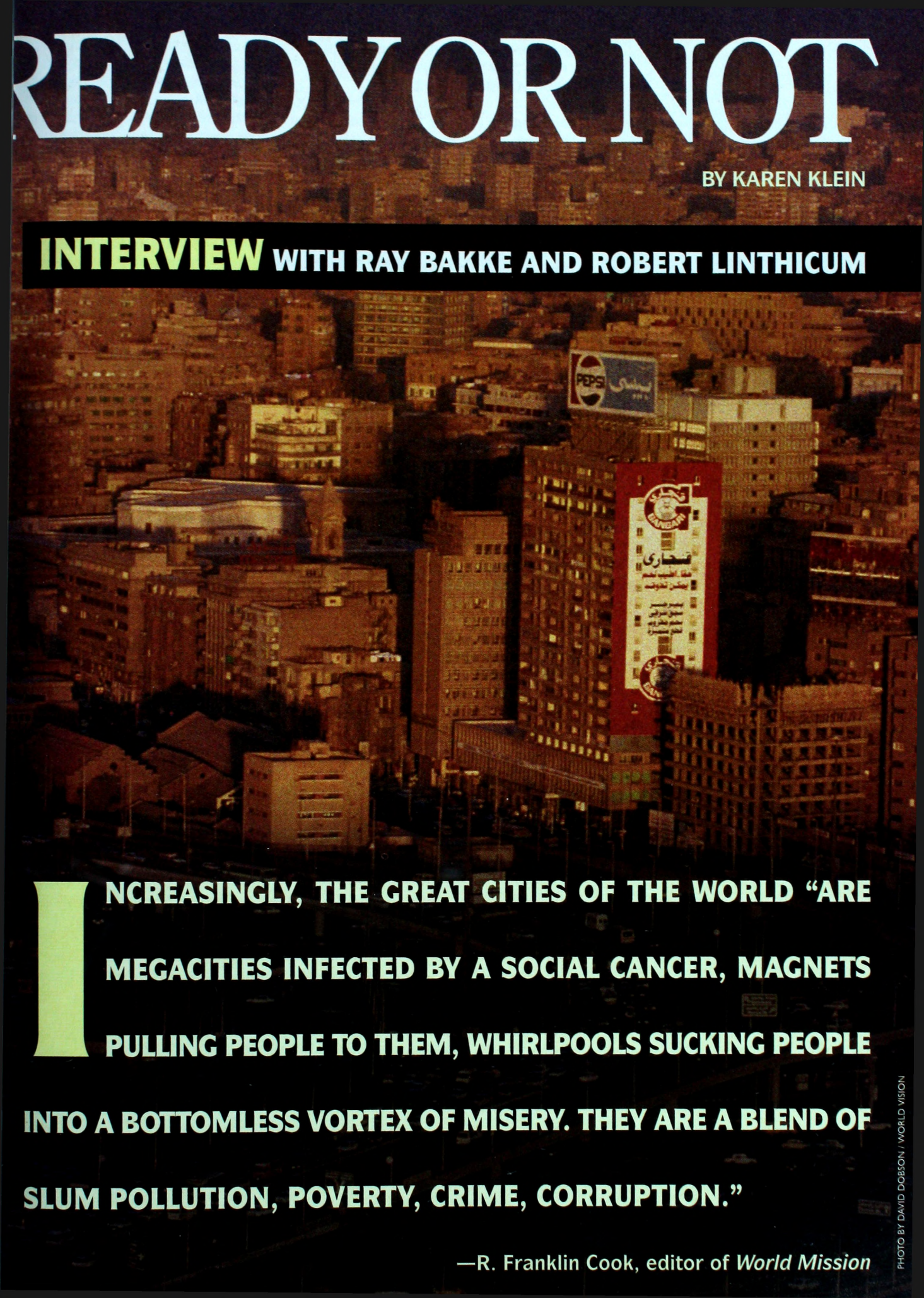
CAIRO



# READY OR NOT

BY KAREN KLEIN

**INTERVIEW** WITH RAY BAKKE AND ROBERT LINTHICUM

An aerial photograph of a densely packed city at night, likely Tehran, Iran. The buildings are illuminated with warm lights, and several large billboards are visible. One prominent billboard features a Pepsi logo and Persian text. Another billboard is for 'Tangari' (Tangarine) with a portrait of a man and Persian text. The overall scene depicts a sprawling urban landscape.

**I** NCREASINGLY, THE GREAT CITIES OF THE WORLD “ARE MEGACITIES INFECTED BY A SOCIAL CANCER, MAGNETS PULLING PEOPLE TO THEM, WHIRLPOOLS SUCKING PEOPLE INTO A BOTTOMLESS VORTEX OF MISERY. THEY ARE A BLEND OF SLUM POLLUTION, POVERTY, CRIME, CORRUPTION.”

—R. Franklin Cook, editor of *World Mission*



RANDY MILLER / WORLD VISION

## BANGKOK

**O**ver the past 100 years, on every populated continent of the world, people have been leaving rural areas in record numbers and seeking refuge in the city. For the first time in history, more than half of the world's population now lives in cities. Instead of finding refuge, however, many of these people find misery. More than 30 percent of the people living in the world's 50 largest cities are poor, powerless, and dying in urban slums—and the numbers are increasing.

Dr. Ray Bakke and Dr. Robert Linthicum are leading experts on Christian ministry in the inner cities. Bakke is the executive director of International Urban Associates, a nonprofit consulting group for church and mission agencies worldwide. Linthicum is the founder of World Vision International's Office of Urban Advance and has led urban ministry and community organizing training events in 53 cities throughout the world. He currently works as a consultant and operates an urban-ministry training organization, Partners in Urban Transformation, in Los Angeles, Calif.

**BAKKE**



**LINTHICUM**



## BOTH OF YOU HAVE FOCUSED YOUR LIFE'S WORK ON CITIES. HOW DO YOUR APPROACHES DIFFER?

**LINTHICUM:** I tend to stress what I call the work of the church *with* the city instead of *to* the city. The church tends to do good things for the city—that is, to discern what the issues are and then develop solutions for those issues. If you're talking about empowerment, however, you have to come alongside the poor, identify with them, cast your lot with them, and then work with them in addressing the issues.

**BAKKE:** My call is the bigger picture and Bob is putting it together. I'm challenging the church to face the city. To some extent, I'm calling for a worldview shift, a bias toward the city. The Bible contains 1,250 texts that mention the word "city." The city is an important theme, because the world is urbanizing at an enormous rate and we're just not ready.

## IN LIGHT OF THIS GLOBAL URBANIZATION, WHAT ARE YOU TELLING CHURCHES AND CHURCH LEADERS?

**BAKKE:** We're seeing the greatest migration of people in human history, a migration of hemispheric proportion. More than 30 million people are wandering around the world without a home—and over half of them are Africans migrating in search of bread. The cities are the catch basins of these folks. The frontier of world mission is no longer geographically distant. It's culturally distant and geographically right next door. It reminds me of Psalm 107, which is filled with images of people looking for a city to dwell in. In the Bible the city was a place of hope. If we really start reading Psalm 107 and other scriptures again, we'll gain a whole new perspective on what our cities need to look like as the catch basins of hope.

## IS YOUR WORK PRODUCING REAL CHANGES FOR URBAN POOR PEOPLE?

**LINTHICUM:** God is making significant political, social, economic, and spiritual changes in regard to the poor. In Madras, India, for example—a city with over 8 million people and something like 1,000 slums—World Vision is working in five slums, organizing churches and missions agencies and nongovernmental organizations to work together with the people. In five years, World Vision invested \$34,000 in bringing these groups together. The result was, we got the government to build 2,000 homes, to deed land to 2,000 poor families, to build and open three schools and a library, to install adequate public toilets, to asphalt

roads, and to put in street lighting, house wiring, and sewer lines—which cost the government \$1.5 million. So \$34,000 was leveraged into \$1.5 million.

**BAKKE:** The point is not to focus on the needs of poor communities, but to see their capacities and begin to work from strength.

**LINTHICUM:** Right—to call that strength forth! The \$1.5 million and the government's capacity to use it was there all the time. All we did—through community organization—was get everybody together and get them mobilized. The result is five reborn communities and a growing indigenous church.

## WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOU SEE IN THE MAJOR CITIES OF THE UNITED STATES?

**BAKKE:** Four new trends in the past decade or so have really increased the problems for urban people: first, a massive growth in the HIV epidemic; second, a massive shift in the drug and alcohol problem to crack cocaine, which is instantly addictive, immediately available, and cheap; third, a massive increase in assault weapons; and fourth, the change in the homeless population from mostly single males to mostly women and children.

In addition, the cities have large black populations that originally migrated to the north and to urban areas earlier this century, when cotton farming was mechanizing in the south. Just when they got to the cities, however, the jobs fled, leaving massive numbers of disaffected people living in cities around this country who have no opportunity other than entry-level service jobs.

To make matters worse, in the 1960s—when Congress changed the civil rights act, passed the voting rights act, and changed the immigration laws—Asians, Latinos, and Africans started coming in large numbers to the United States. These immigrants came with nothing but an enormous sense of destiny—like Americans had 100 years ago. So the cities have populations that are growing in color, half of which are spiraling downward and half of which are spiraling upward. That has complicated urban ministry dramatically.

A black woman friend of mine said the other day, with tears in her eyes, that on the right we seem to have a white male population in the United States that is angry because of the loss of entitlements and privileges of being white and male. On the left, she said, is the rising frustration of black males at the loss of hope. She was talking about how Christians should take a stand of reconciliation, in the middle, between the hatred on the right and hatred on the left. I agree with that.

**LINTHICUM:** It's always easy to find scapegoats for our cities' problems. Currently, the country's political agenda concerning our cities involves attempting to scapegoat, and it's picking the most vulnerable and powerless and marginalized people in society to do that scapegoating on.

Take the welfare debate, for example. If you ask typical Americans what percentage of the federal budget is spent on welfare, they'd probably say about 20 percent. They think we can save money in the budget by cutting back on welfare. Further, one of the basic principles in welfare reform is that you have to stop giving away so much money to people who are on welfare because they don't deserve it. The argument goes that we middle-class people have to go out and work hard for our money. Then we just give it away to poor people through programs like Aid to Dependent Children. So, the argument says, all these programs ought to be abolished.

But if welfare is eliminated, who will this affect? It's going to affect the most vulnerable people in our society. The typical person on welfare is a woman with two children who has no means of support, no capacity for income, little education, and can't get work. There are no jobs out there for a person like that. And if a job was available, it would take her away from raising her children. So she's extremely vulnerable and totally dependent on that aid.

The truth is, we won't save significant amounts of money by cutting back on welfare. In reality, less than one percent of the national budget goes for welfare. The amount of money actually spent on welfare is so minimal that it is

impossible to reform it significantly without actually eliminating it as an effective tool. A 1 percent change in the federal budget is not going to profoundly affect the budget.

**PROBLEMS IN U.S. INNER CITIES STILL SEEM TO BE LARGELY IGNORED BY PEOPLE LIVING OUTSIDE THOSE AREAS. WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE A GOOD FIRST STEP IN HELPING US BRING RECONCILIATION AND HEALING IN OUR INNER CITIES?**

**BAKKE:** We have to start bringing ourselves together again by drawing more parallels. I am a former rural person, and I always try to show people that we've got common issues here. We have to show that poor people in the cities are not the only ones benefitting from federal aid. Electrical power is cheaper in my home state of Washington because the federal government controls the Bonneville Power Co., which controls 30 dams, and is really a subsidized electrical base that allows cheaper farming and dairy operations. But we don't call it Aid to Dependent Farmers.

**LINTHICUM:** We must begin to understand that their problem is my problem. That the issue I wrestle with as a white, upper middle-class, suburban American is the same issue an African-American, working-class person wrestles with in the inner city. In essence, we are victims of the same global forces that are simply manifesting themselves in different ways in our respective situations.

The thing we have in common is powerlessness. We are not in control of our own lives. A black poor person, marginalized from the main thrust of

American society, knows that he or she is powerless and has learned to cope with that. As a white middle-class person working for some giant industry, my standard of living is due to the fact that I have sold, and keep on selling, my skills and abilities to the company for financial security. As the song puts it, "I've sold my soul to the company store."

I am in a very vulnerable and powerless position, because only so long as the company needs my skills are they going to employ me. When they decide I no longer make that contribution, I become what organizations euphemistically call "redundant." Then I'm laid off, and I'm as powerless as those poor people in the inner city who don't have a job.

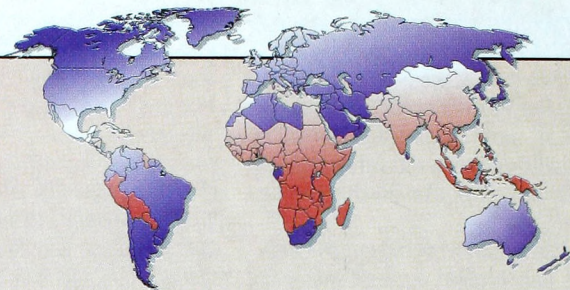
Yet when I begin to realize that my problem is their problem, and their problem is my problem, and that my future depends upon their future, and their future depends upon my future, then we can begin to work together. But as long as we see the suburbs and inner city areas as separate from each other, and against each other, we are playing into the hands of a system that wants to maintain and control all the power.

When I begin to realize that we cannot talk about the inner city and the suburbs, but that we're talking about one massive economically linked metropolitan area, that our problems are essentially the same, and that every one of us has to be concerned with the good of the entire metropolitan area, then there's a future for us and for our city. ☺

*Karen Klein, a free-lance journalist in Monrovia, Calif., recently interviewed these two pioneers in modern urban ministry for World Vision magazine.*



SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION



## WV ARRANGES RELEASE OF CHILD LABORERS

A gift of \$425 from a U.S. donor recently bought freedom for 11 child laborers in southern India. The children were bonded as cigarette-makers in the Rengampatti area 134 miles west of Madras, where World Vision operates a community development project.

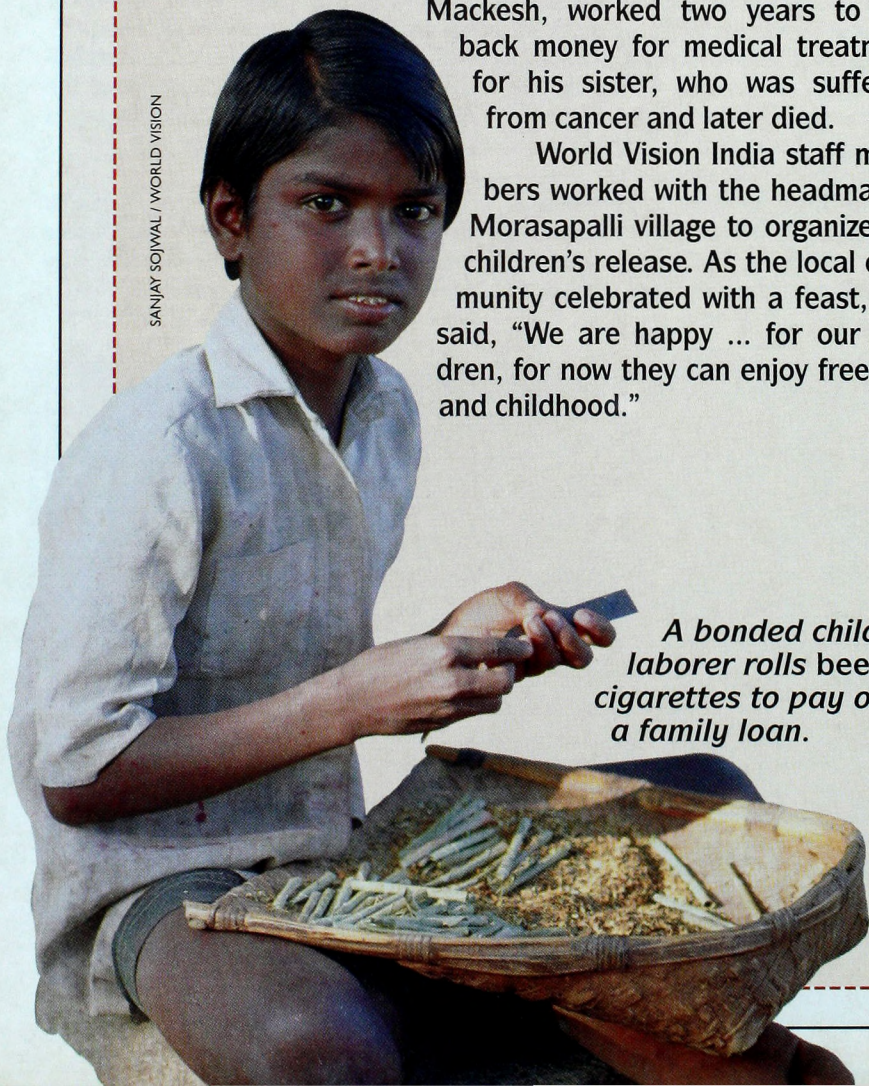
The children rolled tobacco into locally popular *beedi* cigarettes for as long as 14 hours a day to pay off loans granted to their parents. High interest rates can keep bonded workers laboring for years for as little as 71 cents a week.

One of the released children, 9-year-old Nageena, was bonded when her mother borrowed \$28 to pay for hospital expenses during childbirth. Another, Alah Mackesh, worked two years to pay back money for medical treatment for his sister, who was suffering from cancer and later died.

World Vision India staff members worked with the headman of Morasapalli village to organize the children's release. As the local community celebrated with a feast, one said, "We are happy ... for our children, for now they can enjoy freedom and childhood."

*A bonded child laborer rolls beedi cigarettes to pay off a family loan.*

SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION



## AIDS EDUCATION OFFERED FOR ZAIRE SOLDIERS

World Vision has extended AIDS education in Zaire from the general community to soldiers of the Central African country.

The agency routinely offers information about preventing the spread of sexually transmitted disease in many parts of the world. In Zaire, programs are designed for church leaders, health workers, parents, school children, and prostitutes.

This year, Dr. Magazani Kamba, chief officer of the health division of World Vision Zaire, brought a two-week information campaign to nine military camps in southern Zaire. In many areas of the continent, soldiers have registered a high incidence of AIDS and are generally considered a high-risk group. Some of the military men attending the campaign asked that a similar session be held for their wives.

## FORMER WV-AIDED CHILDREN FIND SUCCESSFUL CAREERS

Three decades of World Vision's assistance for orphans and poor children on the Indonesian island of Bali is helping many grow up to lives of success, reports the agency's office in the country's capital, Jakarta.

In the early 1960s, World Vision founder, Bob Pierce, traveled to Bali to assess the needs of victims of a major volcanic eruption on the fabled tropical island. Subsequently, World Vision helped start several orphanages and instituted a child sponsorship program there.

"Many of the first children helped by World Vision have gone on to achieve remarkable success," says Hendro Suwandi of the agency's staff in Indonesia. "On Bali, former sponsored children are now working as university lecturers, doctors, church ministers, hotel and travel agents."

## NICARAGUAN GRADUATES THANK DONORS

Two agronomists, five doctors of general medicine, and 15 nurses in Nicaragua expressed their gratitude for a World Vision scholarship program that helped them graduate from institutions in the Central American country.

"Taking part in this program, receiving support from a person I do not know, and gaining my degree in medicine is the best thing that ever happened to me," said Dr. Clemente Rodriguez, 23.

Dr. Alejandro Martinez Ulloa, 24, who also received a medical degree, said, "I will always carry deep in my heart my gratitude for the support World Vision provided for me so that I can serve my country. Someday I will help another young person who needs support in the same way World Vision supported me. I dedicate my university degree to my sponsor."

Currently the program helps 50 students of medicine and agriculture who otherwise could not afford to attend their universities.

managers and owners, businessmen, and civil servants." Others hold prominent positions in other parts of the island nation, Suwito adds.

One former sponsored child, Ketut Suarthaanaare, who spent many years in an orphanage aided by World Vision, now owns hotels and a network of tourism management institutes. The institute in Bali's capital, Denpasar, currently is training some 1,200 students. Suarthaanaare has provided scholarships to poor students, including 20 for children of his fellow orphans.

## ENTREPRENEURS HELPED IN EX-SOVIET GEORGIA

Small business is the focus of a World Vision project in the former Soviet state of Georgia.

According to Roger Schrage, of Duarte, Calif., the agency's director for Georgia and its southern neighbor, Armenia, decades of communism sapped local people of the initiative they need to function in their newly free economy. Schrage responded by offering training in small enterprise development.

The program provides lectures and practical exercises in business planning, marketing, and record keeping. Graduates of the course then prepare plans for their own small businesses. For the more promising entrepreneurs, World Vision provides business grants, currently amounting to \$300.

Since the project began in 1994, more than 300 grants have allowed former students to produce and market pastries, fruit preserves, lamps, ceramic

jewelry, woodcraft, dolls, and clothing for children and adults. Many of the students are women and members of families displaced by civil war.

## GLOBAL EFFORT COMBATS SEX TRADE IN CHILDREN

A child trafficker can sell an attractive 15-year-old virgin to a brothel in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for \$450. Her first customer will hand over \$400 to the brothel owner. The transaction complete, another innocent youngster joins a trade in child prostitutes that generates an estimated \$4 billion annually in major cities throughout Asia.

Evidence like this will emerge at the World Congress on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children to be hosted by the government of Sweden in Stockholm from Aug. 27 to 31. The congress aims to

increase global awareness of the tragedy of child prostitution in Asia and elsewhere and combat the concept of children as marketable commodities. One thousand delegates from some 80 countries are expected to attend.

Tony Culhane, an Australian who established a World Vision center for street children in Cambodia, one of many such centers around the world, says child trafficking is highly organized and linked with the drug trade. He cites urban growth, civil wars, and marginalization of indigenous peoples as influences leading to child exploitation.

During the past seven years, churches, relief and development agencies, and other concerned groups have been working to bring the child sex trade to world attention. Meanwhile, governments have passed laws against sex tourism. The international police agency, Interpol, has stationed an officer in Bangkok, Thailand, to work against the trade. And the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by 189 countries, has given special attention to victims of child abuse and exploitation.

*Child prostitutes in Vietnam cater to international clients as groups around the world organize to stem the sex trade.*



MIKEL FLAHERTY / WORLD VISION



**R**anda Sousou Janho, 2 a social worker, vis the Abu Ragabeh fam in the Arab quarter Jerusalem's walled C City. Right to left are: mother Nabia 40; Elias, 3; Petros, 11; Iesa, Johnny, 6; Nabiah's sister, Ma 37; and Flora, 18 days. The children's father (not shown), w suffers from a heart conditio



works part-time as a gardener. The family shares one main room, a small kitchen, and a bathroom, where the parents have lived for 14 years.

A World Vision-assisted program provides the family with powdered milk, rice, sugar, and butter, also assisting them with medical care and, for the children, school fees and registration to

summer camp. The children attend St. Dimitri's Orthodox School in Jerusalem, which also is supported by World Vision.

Janho, who was trained in sociology and psychology at the West Bank's Bir Zeit University, works out of St. Benedictos Polyclinic. The medical center in Jerusalem's Old City is operated by the Arab Orthodox Society, a char-

itable group of Christian laypeople, and assisted by World Vision. Janho visits the families of children sponsored by World Vision donors to determine their needs. World Vision sponsors 887 needy children in Jerusalem's Old City through this program, and a total of 6,237 children in Israel and Palestinian Arab territory. 🌐

*World Vision Photo by Bruce Brander*

# “WE’VE WORKED HARD, WE DESERVE IT.”

TEXT AND PHOTO BY DAVID RAMSDALE

**W**e’re hearing much about values these days in the United States. Television advertising, of course, is a powerful conveyer of values—many of them negative. Consider this ad recently shown on U.S. television: “We have to buy this car, honey. It’s so beautiful,” says the woman to her dressed-for-success husband. Her hands rub the smooth, shiny surface. “Besides, we’ve worked hard. We deserve it.” He nods in happy agreement as they slip into the luxurious leather seats. They are a U.S. success story, about to buy the American Dream.

Watching the commercial, I’m drawn in, imagining what it would be like to own such a beautiful new car. I picture myself driving down the road, the envy of onlookers. My ego swells. Then I remember a family I know in another part of the world.





**DOES MY HARD WORK REALLY MEAN I DESERVE  
SO MANY THINGS? BY ANY SANE STANDARD,  
I AM INCREDIBLY WEALTHY. SURE, I WORK HARD,  
BUT SO DOES VALERIO—JUST TO SURVIVE.**

*Valerio, Maria, and their child*

**ON A DARK, WINDSWEPT HILLSIDE IN THE PERUVIAN ANDES, VALERIO AND HIS WIFE MARIA** sit on a dirt floor, huddled under a blanket. Maria throws a piece of wood on a smoky fire. A cold breeze blows through the slats of their simple thatched-roofed hut, blowing swirls of ash into the air. A feverish baby suckles fitfully at Maria's breast. They've never heard of baby aspirin. The only doctor is a jungle shaman.

Valerio went hunting today with no success. He shoots only if it is a sure kill. One shell costs a day's wages. There isn't much game in these mountains anyway. Land invaders have nearly wiped out the animals' forest habitat, a culture clash reminiscent of the United States a century ago, now repeated on the native people's land in South America.

Valerio and the other Pajonal Campa Indians of his village have maintained a constant vigil against the colonists. They've faced an even more dangerous foe, the fierce Shining Path guerrillas, whose strategy is to kill village leaders like Valerio and impose Maoist dogma on communities. Although guerrilla activity has waned since the Shining Path's leader was captured, isolated violence still plagues these peaceful mountain people. The Pajonales don't ask much—just to be left alone to live on the land they have inhabited for hundreds of years.

Maria hands Valerio his supper—two boiled bananas and some termites she scraped out of a rotting log. They give thanks to God for this simple meal.

I wonder about our American belief that hard work merits wealth. I drive a decent car. I own a home. I also work

hard. Does my hard work really mean I deserve so many things? By any sane standard, I am incredibly wealthy. You could put all of Valerio and Maria's belongings in the trunk of my Volvo and there would still be room left over.

Some years back, I spent a few weeks in Valerio's village and accompanied him one day on a hunting trip. I remember the excited and joyful yelling that erupted in the village as Valerio walked out of the woods with a small, bloody deer draped across his shoulders. What did he do with this precious, seldom-available meal? He did what anyone in his tribe would do: He shared it with the entire village—and with me.

I have no answer for the disparity between the haves and the have-nots of this world. I'm not suggesting a wealth-redistribution scheme. I know only that I was born in the United States with undeserved wealth and resources. Sure, I work hard, but so does Valerio—just to survive. And for millions of others like him, no amount of hard work will lift the burden of poverty from their shoulders. It doesn't seem fair. What if I was in his place? Does it all come down to mere geography?

Valerio, a poor man, shared what little he had with his community and with me—a foreigner. Should I do less? Couldn't I do more?

Jesus, who shared his very life for me, said in Luke 12:48: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." ☉

*David Ramsdale is a free-lance writer in Waxhaw, N.C.*



# SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR  
HELPING OTHERS  
IN THE NAME  
OF CHRIST

## MUSTARD SEED HARVEST

**W**orld Vision's Mustard Seed Award Program honors innovative, church-based ministries with cash grants of \$1,000 to \$5,000.

### 1995 Mustard Seed Award Winners:

**Step Foundation** of Greater Washington, D.C., (Strategies to Elevate People out of Poverty) works with local churches to break the cycle of poverty for people in public housing projects. Step provides tutoring, mentoring, and a Bible club for children. (202) 829-8989.

**Seeds of Hope Ministry** in Casa Grande, Ariz., is a collaboration of 12 churches helping socially endangered children. Programs help juvenile offenders complete court-required community service, provide hot meals to homeless children and their families, and host clubs for children in high-risk neighborhoods. (520) 836-6335.

**Mending Hearts Ministry** is a support group providing practical help and biblical counseling for low-income pregnant women and single mothers. Located in Edmonds, Wash., the group pro-

vides women with clothing, nursery furniture, maternity and baby clothes, and a variety of services, from food banks to legal aid. The women also attend a Bible study and a Christian support group. (206) 712-8862.

**San Francisco Rescue Mission** workers preach the gospel in the Bay area through Bible studies and Sunday worship services in Cantonese, Mandarin, and English. The mission serves food weekly to 25,000 children, teens, and adults, and sponsors a local thrift store. (415) 292-1770.

**Wise Choice Transitional Home** of Philadelphia, Pa., sponsored by Calvary Gospel Chapel, provides homeless women with secure housing, a mentoring program, and Bible studies. Professionals teach women entrepreneurial skills and offer advice on raising children, managing a budget, and cooking. (215) 386-8236.



*Dr. Ted Engstrom (left), president emeritus of World Vision, presents the Mustard Seed Award to Leah Gallardo of the Lord's Lighthouse and Dr. Doug Millham, interim pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood.*

**The Lord's Lighthouse**, operated by Hollywood Presbyterian church in Hollywood, Calif., helps homeless and poor people, including children, by providing hot meals, clothing, medical help, and spiritual aid. (818) 764-0198.

For more information about the Mustard Seed Award Program or for an application, contact Lauralee Dyche at World Vision, (206) 815-2596. Applications are due Sept. 6, 1996.



*Co-founders of RFKC, Wayne and Diane Tesch*

## ROYAL FAMILY KIDS CAMPS

**R**oyal Family Kids' Camps (RFKC) offers training and resources to help local churches start camps to meet the unique needs of abused children. RFKC hopes to mobilize 200 churches by the year 2000.

Children ages 7 to 11 are referred to the camps by a church, a social service agency, or foster home. Camps maintain a ratio of one counselor to two campers. A surrogate grandpa

and grandma on staff provide love, affirmation, and self-esteem.

According to Wayne Tesch, who founded RFKC with his wife, Diane, "One week in the cathedral of the outdoors, surrounded by compassionate, caring adults, creates a memory that lasts a lifetime."

For more information or a free video about RFKC call Wayne or Diane Tesch at (714) 556-1420.

compiled and written by Stephanie Stevenson

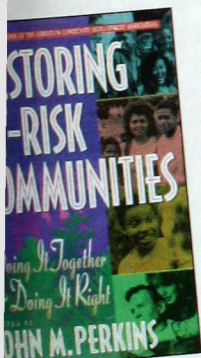
## RESTORING AT-RISK COMMUNITIES

The book *Restoring At-Risk Communities* edited by John Perkins, explains how ordinary Christians can help transform America's impoverished inner cities by living among the poor to further reconciliation, and empowering the poor by contributing skills and resources.

Editor John Perkins' contribution comes out of his years of living among the poor. He writes, "The desperate problems in America's inner cities will not be resolved without strong commitment and risky action on the part of ordinary Christians with heroic faith."

Perkins believes more people are needed on the inner cities' front lines who are willing to give up their personal ambitions, give their time and skills, and even risk their lives to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor.

For more information or to obtain a copy of *Restoring At-Risk Communities*, call your local Christian bookstore or Baker Book House at (800) 877-2665.



“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

—NIV John 15:13

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# MOZAMBIQUE: PEACE AND PROMISE

TEXT BY JANE SUTTON  
PHOTOS BY ALASTAIR CROMBIE



Phillipa

**P**HILLIPA LOUISE'S LIFE IS GOOD AGAIN IN HER VILLAGE OF MUNHACUA, NOT FAR INLAND FROM MOZAMBIQUE'S NORTHERN COAST. HER *MACHAMBA*, OR FARM, THRIVES WITH CASSAVA, RICE, SWEET POTATOES, MAIZE, AND SUGAR CANE, THE RESULT OF FOUR YEARS OF WORLD VISION'S AGRICULTURAL HELP. HER FOUR CHILDREN PLAY WITHOUT FEAR OF THE SOUND OF GUNS. TWO HUNDRED FAMILIES PEACEFULLY LIVE AND FARM HERE, WHERE TERROR ONCE REIGNED.

DURING A 17-YEAR CIVIL WAR THAT DEVASTATED THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN COUNTRY ALMOST FROM THE TIME IT GAINED INDEPENDENCE FROM PORTUGAL IN 1975, REBELS PERIODICALLY ATTACKED MUNHACUA. THEY KILLED EVEN CHILDREN AND ELDERLY PEOPLE, DESTROYED CROPS, AND HACKED DOWN COCONUT TREES. VILLAGERS FLED TO THE BUSH—PHILLIPA, 15 AND PREGNANT, AMONG THEM—LEAVING THE COMMUNITY DESERTED.



Today, Munhacua is resettled. "Peace is good," says Phillipa's husband, Bernardo Antonio Saide, a former government soldier. "It doesn't matter which side you fought on, [the war] is over, and now we are together."

This forgive-and-forget attitude in the wake of Mozambique's brutal war is central to the country's recovery. Jonathan White, World Vision national director for Mozambique, says, "The high degree of reconciliation after such a traumatic period, with Mozambicans working together, putting the war behind them and building a new future, shows tremendous potential."

Just 10 years ago, Mozambique's conflict seemed yet another unsolvable crisis on a continent mired in misery. The war had killed hundreds of thousands of Mozambicans, displaced an estimated 5 million rural people, and shattered the economy and infrastructure.

While Mozambique is still one of the poorest countries in the world, it is



*"I am happy to be back in the place of my birth," says Phillipa, whose family (pictured) and entire community were displaced by rebel violence during the war.*

assuredly on the mend. A 1992 peace accord between the warring Frelimo government and Renamo rebels brought the conflict to an end. The country's first multiparty elections in October 1994 laid foundations for a stable democratic society. Governments, international corporations, and nongovernmental organizations joined the recovery effort, to the tune of \$780 million in loans and grants in 1995. Mozambique's government proved itself worthy of the support by demobilizing and repatriating soldiers, removing landmines, and helping families return to their homes.

### TURBULENT HISTORY

Mozambique's recovery is all the more remarkable considering the turmoil this nation of 18 million people endured.

Portugal controlled Mozambique for 400 years, exploiting the country's gold and ivory, enslaving local people, and dominating valuable trade routes linking

landlocked nations and the Indian Ocean. Most jobs went to the Portuguese colonists. Africans were barred from commerce, and the education system was so poor that, at independence, there were fewer than 1,000 high school graduates in the whole country. While other African nations gained independence in the 1960s, Portugal only tightened its stranglehold on Mozambique.

Nationalist Mozambicans retaliated in 1964 by forming Frelimo—the *Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique*—and waging guerrilla warfare against the colonists. After a decade-long struggle, a coup in Portugal hastened Frelimo's victory in 1975. Almost 90 percent of the Portuguese colonists left Mozambique, but not before destroying records, machinery, and livestock. They even poured concrete down the

elevator shaft of an unfinished tourist hotel—a parting shot to ensure completion of the building would be impossibly expensive.

Frelimo then faced the daunting task of unifying a nation of mostly illiterate and unskilled people. The communist government hoped to turn Mozambique around by promoting widespread education and health care, nationalizing industries, and increasing agricultural production through communal state farms. But the plans were too ambitious for an underdeveloped country twice the size of California and created unrest among the largely rural population.

The novice government also made enemies. Frelimo supported liberation forces opposing white governments in neighboring Rhodesia and South Africa. In reaction, Rhodesia founded Renamo—*Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana*—to spy on Rhodesian rebels hiding in Mozambique and to destabilize the government. Renamo might have petered out after Rhodesia achieved independence in 1980 and became Zimbabwe, but South Africa's apartheid government stepped in and turned Renamo guerrillas into a rebel force that nearly toppled Mozambique's government.

### FEAR AND FAMINE

The war between Frelimo and Renamo had no fronts. Rural dwellers suffered most as Renamo attacked villages, sabotaged highways and rail lines, and destroyed health clinics and schools. A 1988 U.S. State Department report confirmed Renamo atrocities committed against thousands of innocent people. The strategy? "To spread fear," said 22-year-old Julieta Mbiana, a victim of rebel violence when Renamo soldiers occupied her village.

World Vision began working in Mozambique in 1984. Drought and the inability to transport food by land had led to chronic famine, causing widespread starvation. World Vision brought in food by airlift and provided emergency medical care to the malnourished. In 1986, the agency began supplying agricultural kits, tools, and training to 2,600 displaced families.

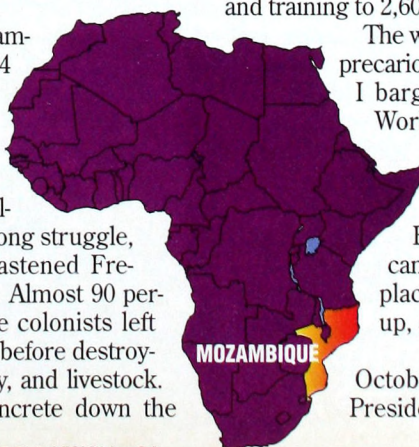
The work sometimes proved precarious. "This is more than I bargained for," admitted

World Vision agronomist

Mauro Netto in 1989 after several close calls with bandits.

But he explained, "We can't stop now. ... The displaced people don't give up, so why should we?"

Peace finally came in October 1992 when Frelimo President Joaquim Alberto



Chissano signed an accord with Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama. Having renounced communist ideology years before, Mozambique's government was open to Western businesses, which quickly came, hastening economic recovery.

But problems persisted in the crippled country, from land mines to food shortages. The Mozambicans suffered through another famine in 1992-93. Hundreds of people a day flocked to World Vision feeding centers. Makeshift towns, populated by emaciated people waiting for food, sprung up wherever relief was available.

### PEACE IS HOLDING

Today millions of refugees are returning to their villages, many finding nothing left. For Mozambicans, 90 percent of them farmers, normalcy begins with successful crops. World Vision's agricultural programs, among the finest in Africa, have served up to 4 million people, providing tools and new seed varieties, yielding better crops.

To combat Mozambique's high infant mortality rate, child survival projects monitor mothers' and children's health and teach families preventative health measures. World Vision offers people food in exchange for their help in



**World Vision agricultural kits have assisted 785,000 Mozambican farm families in the past three years.**

rebuilding roads, schools, clinics, and irrigation systems. To boost microenterprise, World Vision provides farmers with skills and start-up materials to begin food processing businesses.

"We can have a huge impact," says Jonathan White. "We can take Mozambique from being the poorest country in the world to quite a prosperous country. That's a challenge that should not go unconquered." 🌐

*With Jonathan White in Mozambique and Alastair Crombie in Kenya.*

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### NEXT TO THE LAST WORD

**S**ix American church leaders—Presbyterian, Baptist, and Church of God—recently visited Bosnia with World Vision President Bob Seiple. The depth to which they were touched is best heard through their own comments.

"Nowhere is the trauma of war more destructive than in its impact on children, for they represent the future."

"I was struck with the number of fresh graves. One had the name of a young woman, born in 1969 and killed in 1993. At that moment, 250,000 deaths became personalized in that one young life."

"I believe Christians have a vital part to play. They have the gift of encouragement that an exhausted and battered people need."

"We really don't know about tomorrow. But today we have been given the opportunity to be of use to God as he heals the broken people of Bosnia."

Please join us in that healing process through prayer for reconciliation and funds for reconstruction. Informative church bulletin inserts can be provided. Call me at 206 815-2300.

—Terry Madison

## WORLD VISION

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# BY THEIR ROOFS YOU WILL KNOW THEM

**W**hat are you going to name your child?" I asked our Croatian driver. Mario's wife was expecting their first child in August. His reply said much about the culture in the states of the former Yugoslavia, for better or for worse.

"If it's a boy, I have only two choices: either the name of my father or my grandfather. It's expected for the firstborn. I can't break the tradition. It's been that way for a thousand years."

Mario is loyal to tradition. After all, it's part of who he is. It's his identity, and in the Balkan states identity means everything. A name will distinguish Croat from Muslim and Muslim from Serb. The alphabet used to spell the name also discriminates. Muslims use the Latin alphabet, while Serbs follow the Cyrillic form of writing.

Spiritual expressions differentiate as well. A Catholic crosses himself with two fingers, left to right. An Orthodox Serb will make the sign of the cross using three fingers, right to left.

Catholics build their churches on a north-south axis. Orthodox believers construct theirs east to west. Even without a sense of direction, you can see differences in domes, spires, and minarets.

Then there are the roof lines of older homes. Croat houses have a single gable roof. The Muslim roofs come from four different sides, emerging as a single point at the top. All this is part of registering identity, and it's all taken very seriously.

The war in Bosnia is all about identity. This intranational, post-communist war has been described as a classic identity conflict. The identity has very little to do with ideology or citizenship. It has a great deal to do with fear and the perceptions fear creates, especially when one's identity is that of a minority.

A simple principle governs behavior in such a situation: No one wants to be part of a minority in a hostile environment. The environment might become hostile through nationalism, power, or greed.

Identity wars, however, become horrific because of fear. "Do it to them before they do it to you!" Cleanse the other identity from your midst. Claim all for your own identity. Diversity can do you in. So the tools of discrimination are put to work: names, alphabets, traditions, methods of crossing oneself, and roof lines.

This is the new tribalism emerging at the end of the 20th century.

It has been argued that the next world war will take place between civilizations, not nations. Bosnia helps make that case. East meets West. Muslims battle Christians. A protracted identity conflict prepares the soil for major conflagration.

Does our Lord have any relevance in such situations? More specifically, how might Christ's followers intervene in a positive way? Interestingly, the theme of identity is both powerful and persistent



TERRY MADISON / WORLD VISION

with Jesus. He claimed to exist before the patriarch Abraham. He told his disciples he was one with the Father. He announced his kingdom and left no doubt that the king and the kingdom were one and the same.

During his trial before the crucifixion, one of the few times he spoke was when his identity was questioned. "Are you really the Christ?" Christ's identity was sure, the answer positive, and crucifixion quickly followed. Jesus preferred to die rather than compromise the divinity that made him supremely different.

As the ultimate act of grace, Christ's identity has become ours. "You are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." We share the same family tree! We're kissin' cousins. We come out of the same traditions. The God of history and the Christ of Calvary are related, and they are related to us. We share their identity!

We need to share their values as well. We have been asked to bear fruit. We will be known by that fruit. We need to demonstrate love, for example, that reduces the hostility of the Bosnian environment. We need to be good neighbors 7,000 miles away, so the people of Bosnia might see neighbors across their streets in a new light. We need to respect the diversity we encounter so Bosnian differences might be affirmed as well.

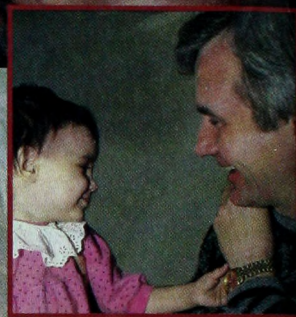
It has been said, "You might be the only Jesus that someone will ever see." Challenging words! An awesome responsibility.

Bosnia presents an incredible opportunity for the children of God to offer an incarnational witness to the power and promises of God. It's time for us to respond as our namesake wants us to respond. ☉

Croat houses have a single gable roof. The Muslim roofs come from four different sides, emerging as a single point at the top.

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August / September 1996

# WORLD VISION®

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## MEXICO: THE CRISIS NEXT DOOR





IS MEXICO POISED FOR A NEW REVOLUTION—  
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL?

# MEXICO: THE

KEVIN MCKIERNAN





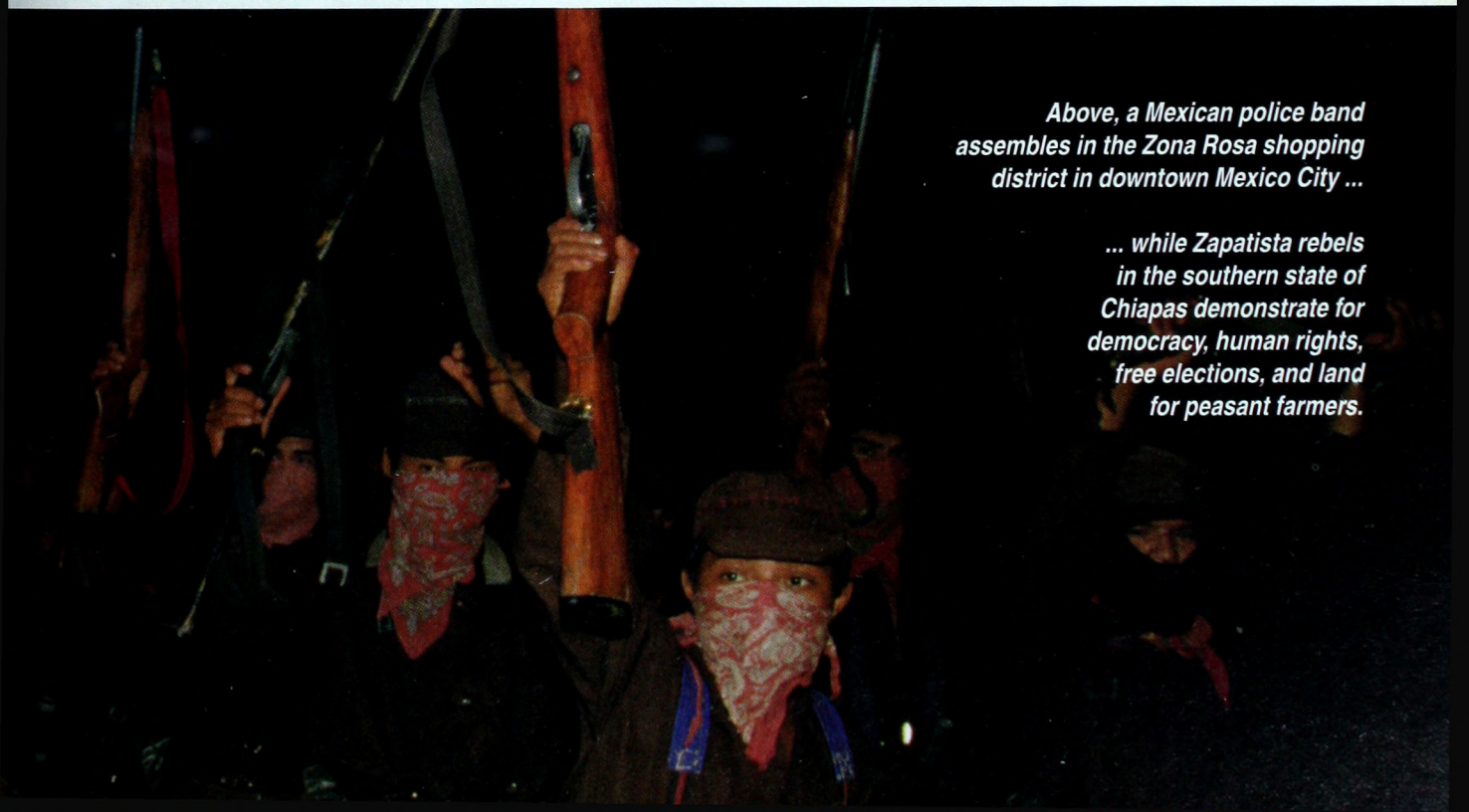
BRUCE BRANDER / WORLD VISION

BY BRUCE BRANDER

# CRISIS NEXT DOOR

*Above, a Mexican police band assembles in the Zona Rosa shopping district in downtown Mexico City ...*

*... while Zapatista rebels in the southern state of Chiapas demonstrate for democracy, human rights, free elections, and land for peasant farmers.*



# IN THE BACKWASH OF MEXICO'S WORST ECONOMIC RECESSION SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1910, THE RICH GROW RICHER, THE MIDDLE CLASS LIES DEVASTATED, AND THE POOR ARE POORER THAN EVER

In the Nueva Area *barrio* on a bleak mountainside one hour's drive north of central Mexico City, Filomena Jimenez Ojeda seeks hope. With her husband Mario, she came to the slum settlement in 1973 from the southern state of Oaxaca to escape poverty. Now they live with four children in a shanty of sticks covered with milk-cartons for walls. They have electric light, but no telephone, plumbing, or sewage.



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Filomena

"My husband Mario is a mason's assistant," says Filomena. Like millions of his countrymen, he lost his job soon after Mexico's economy collapsed in December 1994. "I wash people's clothes for a little income," she added. "We used to have meat once a week, and milk, but now we can't afford that." The family lives mainly on corn tortillas and beans. She hopes that someday she and her husband will find steady employment. She also hopes their children will continue school.

Jaime D. Berebichez, general director of a construction company and a member of Mexico's middle class, is not going hungry but has lost his dreams. Last year he laid off 24 of his 30 employees and scrapped plans to build a 522-unit housing development. "We have no idea whether our sacrifice will last six months or six years," he said. "We don't harbor any hope of emerging from this crisis. It's as if we're dead."

"Crisis?" exclaimed a waiter at the plush Pacific beach resort of Ixtapa, where Mexico's young and rich come to play away the weekends. "What crisis? You won't find it here." To be sure, the country's elite feel unnerved by their nation's fiscal collapse and growing political unrest. But with an economic structure that protects them almost as effectively as it holds down the poor, few among the wealthy suffer in their daily circumstances.

In the backwash of Mexico's worst economic recession since the revolution of 1910, the rich grow richer, the middle

class lies devastated, and the poor are poorer than ever. This is the Mexican crisis that has taken the world's attention. Yet the fiscal failure and its varied consequences are only the start of upheavals shaking the country from top to bottom.

A government recovery program highlighting higher taxes and rising prices imposes hair-shirt austerity and creates unrest among a large majority of Mexico's 91 million people. Meanwhile, the reform-minded President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León treads on well-shod toes and hones dangerously sharp resentments. First he took to enforcing the law upon a political elite accustomed to blanket immunity. Then he declared legal war on at least four powerful drug cartels that invest huge sums in narco-politics.

Zedillo's Institutional Revolutionary Party—the world's longest ruling political group since the demise of communism—has dominated the country by hook or crook for 67 years. Yet the 44-year-old president, though holding an office with centralized power reminiscent of an Aztec emperor's, preaches democracy. Meanwhile, wealthy and powerful conservatives in his party, known as *dinosaurios* for their resistance to change, watch upstart candidates from previously impotent opposition parties push their stalwarts out of state and local office and maneuver to snatch the presidency in the year 2000.

In the far south, a popular mini-insurgency with a ski-masked spokesman known as *subcomandante* Marcos makes up for its arsenal of World War II rifles and gun-shaped sticks with witty messages to the mass media and appeals for support on the global Internet.

Add to that endemic bribery and corruption plus a running series of political assassinations and you can hardly wonder that some Mexico-watchers suffer nervous nightmares about impending anarchy south of the border.

So do some Mexicans.

## A MODEL OF STABILITY

For much of this century, their country shone forth as a model of stability amid the odd disorder of other Latin American lands. Mexico is no democracy. Its government is conducted by an unelected bureaucratic elite accountable only to the president. Yet the dominating party of businessmen, organized labor, and peasants piloted the country with enviable steadiness from its beginning in

1929 until recent years. Economically Mexico enjoyed regular and rising expansion from the 1940s to the early 1980s.

No wonder that the first cracks in the national structure came as a surprise. In 1982, rising overseas debt and tumbling oil prices sank the country into virtual bankruptcy. But that seemed only an aberration. Tough government measures including tax reform, debt restructuring, sale of state-run industries, and a lot of painful austerity for almost everyone—lured Mexico out of that crisis very nicely.

As recently as the closing months of 1994, Mexico seemed a sunny land, plenty wisely managed by its then-president, Harvard-educated Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and a circle of savvy ministers with post-graduate degrees in economics from America's best universities. A burgeoning economy fed by overseas investment nurtured 24 billionaires. A fattening middle class bought television sets, imported automobiles, and other luxuries. The poor—perhaps 40 percent of the population—still waited for the benefits of growth but found hope in the progress of the other 60 percent. Salinas frosted the cake of success by confidently proclaiming that Mexico was ascending from the Third World into the First.

Meanwhile, encouraged speculators—mostly North Americans—reaped fortunes as Mexico's stock market soared to 120 times its 1982 value. From 1991 to 1993, foreign investment, mainly from United States banks and pension and mutual funds, poured into Mexico. The country absorbed between \$15 billion and \$25 billion per year more than it was earning from exports.

## PROSPERITY UNSTABLE

That, of course, was overdoing it again. With debt expanding much faster than the economy, the "Mexican miracle" was made of all imports and no internal growth. Yet blithe economic days might have lasted, but for a thundering herd of investors suddenly wanting their money back.

Major crises usually have earlier tremors. Mexico's economic collapse did too. Almost a year earlier, on Jan. 1, 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), conceived by President Salinas to boost trade between Mexico, the United States, and Canada, went into effect. That was good news. But bad news befell the same day when a well-organize



*Carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and other tradesmen left unemployed by economic crisis offer their services in Mexico City's central plaza.*

band of Indians began a bloody uprising in the remote southern highlands of Chiapas state. That shook investors, as well as the triumphant government.

A sharper shock came on March 23, when the president's hand-picked successor, Luis Donaldo Colosio, was shot to death at a campaign rally. Salinas found a replacement readily enough in Zedillo, his education minister. But in September the ruling party's number-two man, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, also was assassinated.

Yet euphoria persisted and Salinas left office in November 1994 hailed as a visionary reformer. Yale-educated Zedillo won what was called the cleanest election race in Mexican history. And few people foresaw the stunning developments that soon would devastate the country's economy and send Salinas fleeing into exile, first to Connecticut then to parts unknown, as a virtual fugitive.

### DEVALUATION TRIGGERS CRASH

The economic crash began on Dec. 20, 1994, triggered by a bungled devaluation of the peso. Not always is devaluation of a country's currency a misfortune. Such a move can stimulate exports and put an overvalued pound or lira or peso back into proportion with other currencies. According to Kathleen Heaney, head of Latin American equity research at Bankers Trust, financiers had been wanting to see the Mexican peso devalued for a year. "But the way it was done," she added, "really freaked people out."

First, Mexican Finance Minister Jaime Serra Puche said the peso would remain stable. A few days later, it was allowed to lose value. Money managers

in the United States, accustomed to being warned about Mexico's financial policies, were stunned.

In a computerized world, where bundles of money can zip across borders with hasty keyboard taps, billions of dollars fled the country in a few panicky days. The International Monetary Fund's Managing Director Michael Camdessus labeled the crash "the first financial crisis of the 21st century," since it pointed up dangerous volatility in the new world of free global capital flow.

Mexico's stock market tumbled by almost 50 percent in dollar terms by Jan. 10. The nation's bank shares sank like stones. The peso plunged 44 percent against the dollar.

The economic earthquake threatened to rumble around the world. With Mexico unable to afford its normal import diet—87 percent of it from the United States—what might \$20 billion in lost income do to the jobs of thousands of Americans? How would California, Texas and other U.S. states where some 10 percent of all Mexicans already live handle more work-seeking migrants mobbing over the 1,936-mile border? If Mexico failed to pay its debts, wouldn't nervous investors pull out of other developing economies in Argentina, Brazil, Eastern Europe? Central bankers briefly feared for the stability of the world's financial system.

### \$50 BILLION OR "ARMAGEDDON"

Paul Luke, an analyst at the British investment bank Morgan Grenfell, claims emerging markets were threatened with "Armageddon" and the developing world with catastrophic consequences. To avert

that—and to defuse an explosive situation on its southern border—the United States organized a gigantic \$50 billion international rescue fund.

That gave Mexico breathing space. Zedillo, saying he did not want to be a popular president, promised the Mexican people sharp price and tax increases, tight credit, and cuts in government spending. Meanwhile his new finance minister, Guillermo Ortiz, put forth a stabilization plan that guaranteed the people recession, unemployment, and overall personal hardship.

### HARD TIMES HIT

Many Mexicans would rather forget what happened then. Living standards plunged. Gasoline prices shot up one-third. The cost of electricity, meat, and disposable diapers climbed 20 percent. Credit card interest rates ran 80 percent and rising, while bank interest hit a startling 92 percent. Annual inflation ballooned above 50 percent.

"Prices keep climbing and we just can't keep up," said 21-year-old Vicente Robles, who washed car windshields on Mexico City streets, competing for small change with street jugglers, fire-eaters, and chewing gum vendors.

Take-home income dropped at least one-quarter, with the sharpest declines among lower-paid workers. More than 1 million Mexicans lost their jobs in the first five months of 1995, according to conservative Labor Ministry estimates, and more still after that. Their plight is magnified by lack of unemployment insurance and no welfare system.

Whole industries, such as construc-

## THOUGH MEXICO'S PRESENT PAINS ARE FISCAL, THE COUNTRY'S ROOT PROBLEMS ARE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL

tion and truck-building, virtually shut down. Store aisles emptied. Restaurants lost as much as 40 percent of their business in the first quarter of 1995.

Great masses of the country's middle-income earners faced foreclosures on delinquent auto and home loans. Doctors and engineers were out of work. Teachers cut class to peddle flowers and shoes on the streets. Children dropped out of school; an estimated 8 to 11 million under the age of 15 now work in factories and sweatshops, on farms and streets. Thousands of farmers lost their lands to bank repossession. The number of billionaires fell from 24 to 10. Crime in the sprawling capital soared to the highest rates in history.

"We don't know what to do. We don't

have anything to eat now," said Julia Morales Chona, 49, who works her family's cornfield with her husband and five children on the tropical Pacific coastline south of Acapulco. Milk is too costly. Beans are hard to get. Cooking oil long ago went up 40 percent. People simply buy less, she said, citing genuine hunger in the region.

"It's like an illness," said one small businessman about the plunging economy. "Everybody talks about it all the time, every day."

Yet the talk isn't bad for quite everyone. The cautious rich who stashed money out of the country before the collapse could nearly double their pesos by bringing it back. Tourists travel happily, the devaluation making Mexico a bargain destination. *Maquiladora* factories along the border,

which receive raw material and parts from U.S. and overseas companies and ship finished goods back under special tariff waivers, are busier than ever churning out television sets, machine tools, computer keyboards, cassette tapes, and aircraft insulation for wages ranging from \$1.06 down to 35 cents per hour. Meanwhile the United States was spared the much-feared flood of illegal immigrants as border controls were firmed up and those who made it to *el otro lado*, or the other side found jobs scarce in a cool U.S. economy.

### VIEW OF FUTURE CAUTIOUS

As Mexicans move through their second year of economic crisis, most view the future nervously at best. As early as August 1995, Zedillo proclaimed the country "on the threshold of recovery." The general response was only: Perhaps...

To be sure, the peso has steadied. Foreign investment is returning. Exports are way up, while imports from the United States are 11 percent above pre-NAFTA levels. And NAFTA itself emerged unscathed, confirming Mexico's place in the greater North American trading market.

Mexicans, however, still feeling the pinch, remain cautious. Zedillo's friends rate him as clever, determined, and honest. The public, however, sees him as too hesitant and uncertain to force reforms needed for a stable future. Also official claims of economic recovery regularly have proven full of funny numbers, fanning skepticism.

Says Manuel Hernández, a 45-year-old architect who lost his job of 15 years, "I keep looking for work, but my perspective on the country's future is that it's going bankrupt."

### RECOVERY QUESTIONABLE

The nation's Finance Secretariat soberly warns that coming years will see only modest recovery. Mexican economic analyst Abe Beltran del Rio says pre-devaluation conditions can't be expected before the end of the century. Meanwhile, Harvard historian John Womack suggests that Mexico's crisis condition, far from being a bump in the road, might turn out to be the new status quo.

Womack and other careful analysts look beyond economics in forming their conclusions. Though

### WORLD VISION IN MEXICO

**M**exico's current economic crisis, the worst in 50 years, ironically helped World Vision's program in the country. With the peso's devaluation in December 1994, funds from donors in other lands nearly doubled in value. World Vision staff was able to replace ramshackle cars and purchase computers to help their work. More important, they had more money to help many thousands of desperately poor people left all the poorer by lost jobs and rising prices.

World Vision began work in Mexico in 1963, sponsoring children and helping improve orphanages. In 1968, 1973, and 1988, the agency brought together clergymen from isolated areas of the country as part of a worldwide program of pastors' conferences.

Today from an office in Mexico City, World Vision's staff of Mexican nationals operates projects throughout the country.

World Vision provided emergency relief after a 1983 hurricane and flood, a 1984 natural gas explosion, and a major earthquake in 1985. The agency also helped people through the aftermath of other hurricanes and floods in 1988 and 1993 and a quake in rural Guerrero in 1995.

Most of World Vision Mexico's 127 projects aim for lasting development. Their work includes:

- health care
- health and vocational training
- housing improvement
- well drilling
- poultry raising
- agricultural improvement
- support for small businesses
- primary and secondary education
- counselling, shelter, and education for street children in Mexico City.

In 1996, World Vision sponsored 37,325 Mexican children, with donors in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Mexico.

Readers can help the poor of Mexico weather their nation's crisis by sponsoring a child there. A monthly donation of \$20 can help secure good nutrition, medical care, and continued schooling for not only the child but the child's whole community.

For more information, please phone (800) 448-6437.

**A World Vision store  
helps barrio dwellers.**



BRUCE BRANDER / WORLD VISION



**A government food subsidy costing \$650 million annually long has insured cheap tortillas to prevent mass hunger in Mexico. The present government recently tested subsidized credit cards for the poor.**

Mexico's present pains are fiscal, the country's root problems are political and social.

The 67-year-old political system, though retaining a formidable grip on power, is crumbling at its foundations. The personal, family, and party loyalties that bound it together are archaic and dying. Meanwhile, according to Jorge Castañeda, a prominent Mexican political scientist, "an enormous portion of the population [is]... simply fed up with the [party] and the government." Some opposition politicians compare the present to a decade of chaos that followed the 1910 revolution.

Mexico might cling to its outworn system until it collapses, Castañeda speculates. Viewing this option, pessimists murmur about the possibility of more assassinations, a military coup, and guerrilla warfare from an isolated left. Some observers envision worse: "What's impressed me over the years," says Sidney Weintraub, a Mexico specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., "is the fact that the place doesn't explode."

### MAJOR REFORMS NEEDED

An alternative choice for the country is a risky leap forward into major political and social reforms. As Mexicans clamor for more democracy, Zedillo wants to devolve power away from his office toward congress and the 31 Mexican states. The president also is heeding a popular hunger for law and order as corruption plagues the country and lack of effective law enforcement leaves the risk of getting caught in crime virtually nil.

Zedillo surprised everyone by arresting Raul Salinas, brother of the ex-president, on charges of masterminding the assassination of the prominent politician Massieu, who also was Raul's former brother-in-law. Raul additionally is charged with what Mexicans call "inexplicable enrichment" for accumulating an illicit fortune of some \$120 million while holding government office. Meanwhile, the president promised to overhaul Mexico's notoriously crooked legal and judicial system and establish the rule of law.

Zedillo also is brandishing the law against the flourishing Mexican drug trade, which transports 70 percent of the cocaine brought into the United States. At any one time, Mexico's dealers stockpile 70 to 100 tons of the drug—enough to provide a fix for every person on earth.

Facing the rebellion in Chiapas, which is not a revolution seeking power but an armed call for democratic reform and rights for oppressed indigenous peoples, the administration has promised negotiations and land for *campesino* farmers.

### REBUILDING THE COUNTRY

The main tasks of rebuilding a workable country, however, remain ahead. Growth of democracy stands highest on the agenda. Mexico's lack of democratic process is not merely a political deficiency. It's a leading cause of vast social, ethnic, and regional inequalities and injustice that have lacerated the country for 500 years.

Distribution of wealth in Mexico, for example, reaches startling extremes. The richest 10 percent of the population garners more than 40 percent of the

nation's income; the poorest 40 percent get a mere 13 percent. About one in every five Mexicans enjoys First-World living standards. Another one in five is poor even by Third-World measures. Similar gaps in wealth, education, and worldview separate city and country people, northerners and southerners, white *criollos*, tan *mestizos*, and marginalized indigenous peoples.

Mexico's chasms of social inequality can be bridged only by translating future economic growth into human development. This includes major improvements in housing, health care, education, and alleviation of poverty. To this list, Castañeda adds an end to state paternalism and the nurture of groups and organizations that reflect the nation's immense diversities.

### THE SECOND REVOLUTION?

While Mexico watchers worry mainly about the country's pervasive and growing instability, this also can be seen as a new fluidity eroding centuries-old traditional ways. Interior Minister Emilio Chuayffet might have been right when in 1995 he declared, "This is the second revolution."

Yet most Mexicans are as unsure as Alvaro Flores of what this might mean. The owner of a bookstore in Mexico City for more than 30 years, he finds sales down 60 percent and the price of books up 20 to 40 percent. He doesn't like to consider the future.

"The Mexican lives on hope," he said. "We hope the system will change. It doesn't change. We hope that things will get better. They don't get better. But the Mexican still lives on hope." ☉

# MEGACITIES



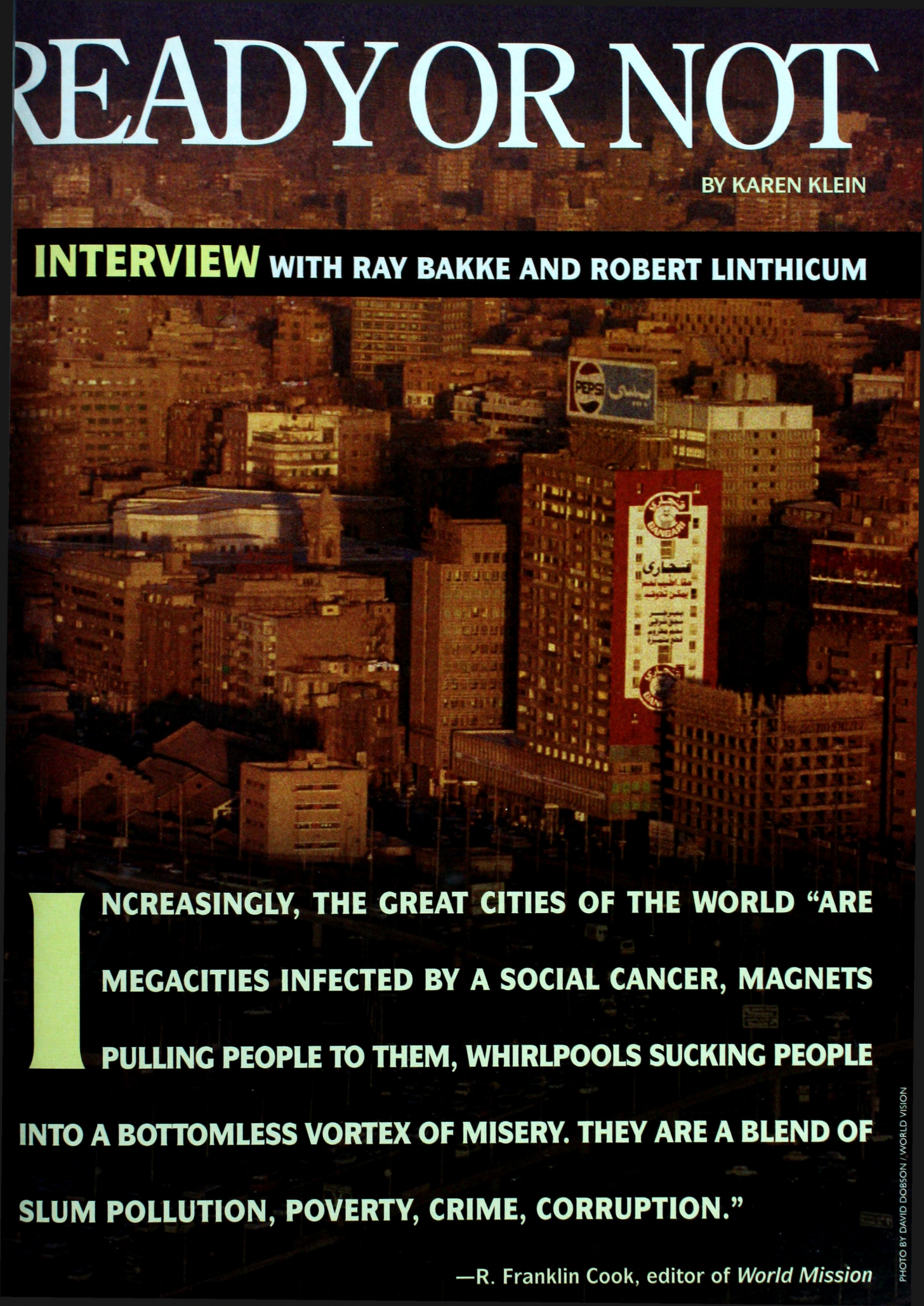
CAIRO



# READY OR NOT

BY KAREN KLEIN

**INTERVIEW** WITH RAY BAKKE AND ROBERT LINTHICUM

An aerial photograph of a densely packed city at night, likely Cairo, Egypt. The buildings are illuminated with warm lights, and several large billboards are visible, including a prominent one for 'BANGSI' (a brand of Egyptian cigarettes) and a 'PEPSI' billboard. The city's layout is a mix of modern high-rises and older, more traditional structures.

**I** NCREASINGLY, THE GREAT CITIES OF THE WORLD “ARE MEGACITIES INFECTED BY A SOCIAL CANCER, MAGNETS PULLING PEOPLE TO THEM, WHIRLPOOLS SUCKING PEOPLE INTO A BOTTOMLESS VORTEX OF MISERY. THEY ARE A BLEND OF SLUM POLLUTION, POVERTY, CRIME, CORRUPTION.”

—R. Franklin Cook, editor of *World Mission*



RANDY MILLER / WORLD VISION

## BOTH OF YOU HAVE FOCUSED YOUR LIFE'S WORK ON CITIES. HOW DO YOUR APPROACHES DIFFER?

**LINTHICUM:** I tend to stress what I call the work of the church *with* the city instead of *to* the city. The church tends to do good things for the city—that is, to discern what the issues are and then develop solutions for those issues. If you're talking about empowerment, however, you have to come alongside the poor, identify with them, cast your lot with them, and then work with them in addressing the issues.

**BAKKE:** My call is the bigger picture and Bob is putting it together. I'm challenging the church to face the city. To some extent, I'm calling for a worldview shift, a bias toward the city. The Bible contains 1,250 texts that mention the word "city." The city is an important theme, because the world is urbanizing at an enormous rate and we're just not ready.

## IN LIGHT OF THIS GLOBAL URBANIZATION, WHAT ARE YOU TELLING CHURCHES AND CHURCH LEADERS?

**BAKKE:** We're seeing the greatest migration of people in human history, a migration of hemispheric proportion. More than 30 million people are wandering around the world without a home—and over half of them are Africans migrating in search of bread. The cities are the catch basins of these folks. The frontier of world mission is no longer geographically distant. It's culturally distant and geographically right next door. It reminds me of Psalm 107, which is filled with images of people looking for a city to dwell in. In the Bible the city was a place of hope. If we really start reading Psalm 107 and other scriptures again, we'll gain a whole new perspective on what our cities need to look like as the catch basins of hope.

## IS YOUR WORK PRODUCING REAL CHANGES FOR URBAN POOR PEOPLE?

**LINTHICUM:** God is making significant political, social, economic, and spiritual changes in regard to the poor. In Madras, India, for example—a city with over 8 million people and something like 1,000 slums—World Vision is working in five slums, organizing churches and missions agencies and nongovernmental organizations to work together with the people. In five years, World Vision invested \$34,000 in bringing these groups together. The result was, we got the government to build 2,000 homes, to deed land to 2,000 poor families, to build and open three schools and a library, to install adequate public toilets, to asphalt

roads, and to put in street lighting, house wiring, and sewer lines—which cost the government \$1.5 million. So \$34,000 was leveraged into \$1.5 million.

**BAKKE:** The point is not to focus on the needs of poor communities, but to see their capacities and begin to work from strength.

**LINTHICUM:** Right—to call that strength forth! The \$1.5 million and the government's capacity to use it was there all the time. All we did—through community organization—was get everybody together and get them mobilized. The result is five reborn communities and a growing indigenous church.

## WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOU SEE IN THE MAJOR CITIES OF THE UNITED STATES?

**BAKKE:** Four new trends in the past decade or so have really increased the problems for urban people: first, a massive growth in the HIV epidemic; second, a massive shift in the drug and alcohol problem to crack cocaine, which is instantly addictive, immediately available, and cheap; third, a massive increase in assault weapons; and fourth, the change in the homeless population from mostly single males to mostly women and children.

In addition, the cities have large black populations that originally migrated to the north and to urban areas earlier this century, when cotton farming was mechanizing in the south. Just when they got to the cities, however, the jobs fled, leaving massive numbers of disaffected people living in cities around this country who have no opportunity other than entry-level service jobs.

To make matters worse, in the 1960s—when Congress changed the civil rights act, passed the voting rights act, and changed the immigration laws—Asians, Latinos, and Africans started coming in large numbers to the United States. These immigrants came with nothing but an enormous sense of destiny—like Americans had 100 years ago. So the cities have populations that are growing in color, half of which are spiraling downward and half of which are spiraling upward. That has complicated urban ministry dramatically.

A black woman friend of mine said the other day, with tears in her eyes, that on the right we seem to have a white male population in the United States that is angry because of the loss of entitlements and privileges of being white and male. On the left, she said, is the rising frustration of black males at the loss of hope. She was talking about how Christians should take a stand of reconciliation, in the middle, between the hatred on the right and hatred on the left. I agree with that.

Over the past 100 years, on every populated continent of the world, people have been leaving rural areas in record numbers and seeking refuge in the city. For the first time in history, more than half of the world's population now lives in cities. Instead of finding refuge, however, many of these people find misery. More than 30 percent of the people living in the world's 50 largest cities are poor, powerless, and dying in urban slums—and the numbers are increasing.

Dr. Ray Bakke and Dr. Robert Linthicum are leading experts on Christian ministry in the inner cities. Bakke is the executive director of International Urban Associates, a nonprofit consulting group for church and mission agencies worldwide. Linthicum is the founder of World Vision International's Office of Urban Advance and has led urban ministry and community organizing training events in 53 cities throughout the world. He currently works as a consultant and operates an urban-ministry training organization, Partners in Urban Transformation, in Los Angeles, Calif.

**BAKKE**



**LINTHICUM**



**LINTHICUM:** It's always easy to find scapegoats for our cities' problems. Currently, the country's political agenda concerning our cities involves attempting to scapegoat, and it's picking the most vulnerable and powerless and marginalized people in society to do that scapegoating on.

Take the welfare debate, for example. If you ask typical Americans what percentage of the federal budget is spent on welfare, they'd probably say about 20 percent. They think we can save money in the budget by cutting back on welfare. Further, one of the basic principles in welfare reform is that you have to stop giving away so much money to people who are on welfare because they don't deserve it. The argument goes that we middle-class people have to go out and work hard for our money. Then we just give it away to poor people through programs like Aid to Dependent Children. So, the argument says, all these programs ought to be abolished.

But if welfare is eliminated, who will this affect? It's going to affect the most vulnerable people in our society. The typical person on welfare is a woman with two children who has no means of support, no capacity for income, little education, and can't get work. There are no jobs out there for a person like that. And if a job was available, it would take her away from raising her children. So she's extremely vulnerable and totally dependent on that aid.

The truth is, we won't save significant amounts of money by cutting back on welfare. In reality, less than one percent of the national budget goes for welfare. The amount of money actually spent on welfare is so minimal that it is

impossible to reform it significantly without actually eliminating it as an effective tool. A 1 percent change in the federal budget is not going to profoundly affect the budget.

**PROBLEMS IN U.S. INNER CITIES STILL SEEM TO BE LARGELY IGNORED BY PEOPLE LIVING OUTSIDE THOSE AREAS. WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE A GOOD FIRST STEP IN HELPING US BRING RECONCILIATION AND HEALING IN OUR INNER CITIES?**

**BAKKE:** We have to start bringing ourselves together again by drawing more parallels. I am a former rural person, and I always try to show people that we've got common issues here. We have to show that poor people in the cities are not the only ones benefitting from federal aid. Electrical power is cheaper in my home state of Washington because the federal government controls the Bonneville Power Co., which controls 30 dams, and is really a subsidized electrical base that allows cheaper farming and dairy operations. But we don't call it Aid to Dependent Farmers.

**LINTHICUM:** We must begin to understand that their problem is my problem. That the issue I wrestle with as a white, upper middle-class, suburban American is the same issue an African-American, working-class person wrestles with in the inner city. In essence, we are victims of the same global forces that are simply manifesting themselves in different ways in our respective situations.

The thing we have in common is powerlessness. We are not in control of our own lives. A black poor person, marginalized from the main thrust of

American society, knows that he or she is powerless and has learned to cope with that. As a white middle-class person working for some giant industry, my standard of living is due to the fact that I have sold, and keep on selling, my skills and abilities to the company for financial security. As the song puts it, "I've sold my soul to the company store."

I am in a very vulnerable and powerless position, because only so long as the company needs my skills are they going to employ me. When they decide I no longer make that contribution, I become what organizations euphemistically call "redundant." Then I'm laid off, and I'm as powerless as those poor people in the inner city who don't have a job.

Yet when I begin to realize that my problem is their problem, and their problem is my problem, and that my future depends upon their future, and their future depends upon my future, then we can begin to work together. But as long as we see the suburbs and inner city areas as separate from each other, and against each other, we are playing into the hands of a system that wants to maintain and control all the power.

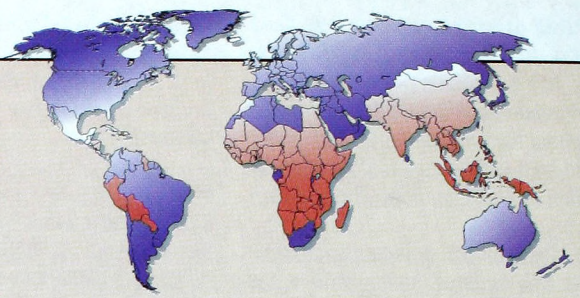
When I begin to realize that we cannot talk about the inner city and the suburbs, but that we're talking about one massive economically linked metropolitan area, that our problems are essentially the same, and that every one of us has to be concerned with the good of the entire metropolitan area, then there's a future for us and for our city. ☉

*Karen Klein, a free-lance journalist in Monrovia, Calif., recently interviewed these two pioneers in modern urban ministry for World Vision magazine.*



SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION

# WORLD VISION NEWS



## WV ARRANGES RELEASE OF CHILD LABORERS

**A** gift of \$425 from a U.S. donor recently bought freedom for 11 child laborers in southern India. The children were bonded as cigarette-makers in the Rengampatti area 134 miles west of Madras, where World Vision operates a community development project.

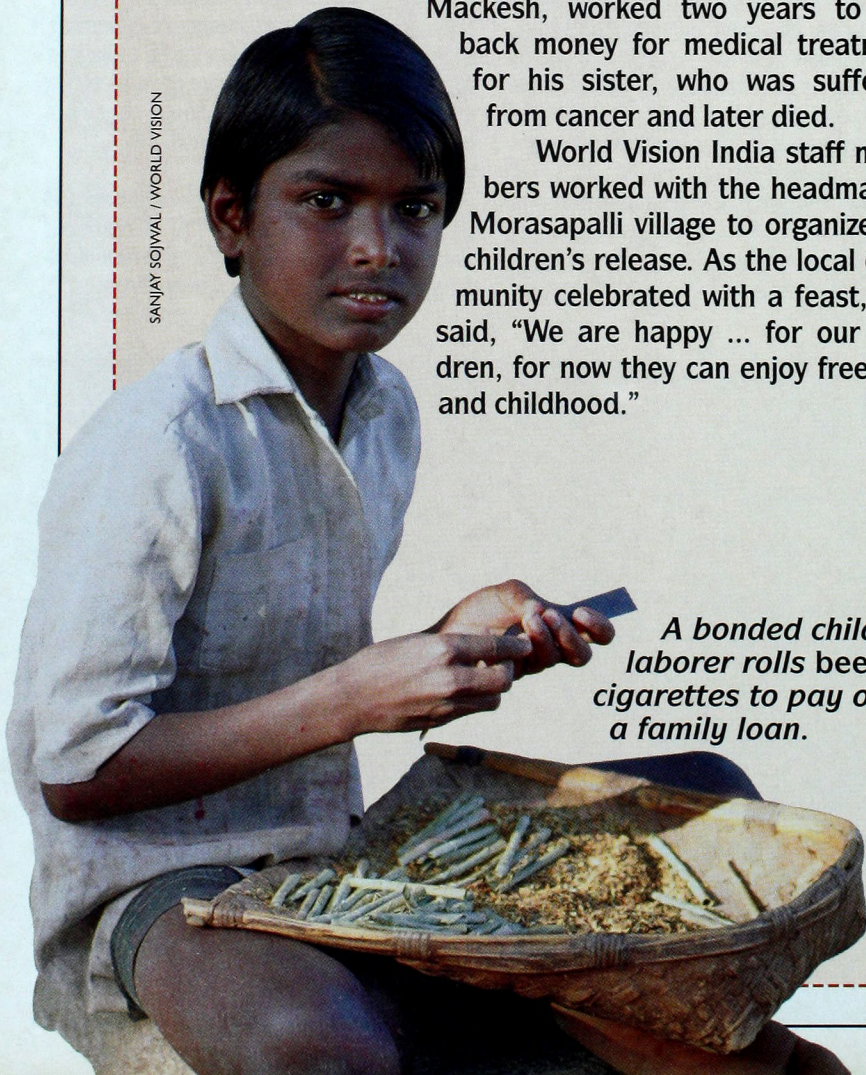
The children rolled tobacco into locally popular *beedi* cigarettes for as long as 14 hours a day to pay off loans granted to their parents. High interest rates can keep bonded workers laboring for years for as little as 71 cents a week.

One of the released children, 9-year-old Nageena, was bonded when her mother borrowed \$28 to pay for hospital expenses during childbirth. Another, Alah Mackesh, worked two years to pay back money for medical treatment for his sister, who was suffering from cancer and later died.

World Vision India staff members worked with the headman of Morasapalli village to organize the children's release. As the local community celebrated with a feast, one said, "We are happy ... for our children, for now they can enjoy freedom and childhood."

*A bonded child laborer rolls beedi cigarettes to pay off a family loan.*

SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION



## AIDS EDUCATION OFFERED FOR ZAIRE SOLDIERS

**W**orld Vision has extended AIDS education in Zaire from the general community to soldiers of the Central African country.

The agency routinely offers information about preventing the spread of sexually transmitted disease in many parts of the world. In Zaire, programs are designed for church leaders, health workers, parents, school children, and prostitutes.

This year, Dr. Magazani Kamba, chief officer of the health division of World Vision Zaire, brought a two-week information campaign to nine military camps in southern Zaire. In many areas of the continent, soldiers have registered a high incidence of AIDS and are generally considered a high-risk group. Some of the military men attending the campaign asked that a similar session be held for their wives.

## FORMER WV-AIDED CHILDREN FIND SUCCESSFUL CAREERS

**T**hree decades of World Vision's assistance for orphans and poor children on the Indonesian island of Bali is helping many grow up to lives of success, reports the agency's office in the country's capital, Jakarta.

In the early 1960s, World Vision founder, Bob Pierce, traveled to Bali to assess the needs of victims of a major volcanic eruption on the fabled tropical island. Subsequently, World Vision helped start several orphanages and instituted a child sponsorship program there.

"Many of the first children helped by World Vision have gone on to achieve remarkable success," says Hendro Suwandi, one of the agency's staff in Indonesia. "On Bali, former sponsored children are now working as university lecturers, doctors, church ministers, hotel and travel agents."

## NICARAGUAN GRADUATES THANK DONORS

Two agronomists, five doctors of general medicine, and 15 nurses in Nicaragua expressed their gratitude for a World Vision scholarship program that helped them graduate from institutions in the Central American country.

"Taking part in this program, receiving support from a person I do not know, and earning my degree in medicine is the best thing that ever happened to me," said Dr. Mente Rodriguez, 23.

Dr. Alejandro Martinez Ulloa, 24, who also received a medical degree, said, "I always carry deep in my heart my gratitude for the support World Vision provided for me so that I can serve my country. Someday I will help another young person who needs support in the same way World Vision supported me. I dedicate my university degree to my sponsor."

Currently the program helps 50 students of medicine and agriculture who otherwise could not afford to attend their universities.

managers and owners, businessmen, and civil servants." Others hold prominent positions in other parts of the island-tion, Suwito adds.

One former sponsored child, Ketut Ira Suarhanaare, who spent many years in an orphanage aided by World Vision, now owns hotels and a network of tourism management institutes. The prostitute in Bali's capital, Denpasar, currently is training some 1,200 students. Suarhanaare has provided scholarships for poor students, including 20 for children of his fellow orphans.

## ENTREPRENEURS HELPED IN EX-SOVIET GEORGIA

Small business is the focus of a World Vision project in the former Soviet state of Georgia.

According to Roger Schrage, of Duarte, Calif., the agency's director for Georgia and its southern neighbor, Armenia, decades of communism sapped local people of the initiative they need to function in their newly free economy. Schrage responded by offering training in small enterprise development.

The program provides lectures and practical exercises in business planning, marketing, and record keeping. Graduates of the course then prepare plans for their own small businesses. For the more promising entrepreneurs, World Vision provides business grants, currently amounting to \$300.

Since the project began in 1994, more than 300 grants have allowed former students to produce and market pastries, fruit preserves, lamps, ceramic

jewelry, woodcraft, dolls, and clothing for children and adults. Many of the students are women and members of families displaced by civil war.

## GLOBAL EFFORT COMBATS SEX TRADE IN CHILDREN

A child trafficker can sell an attractive 15-year-old virgin to a brothel in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for \$450. Her first customer will hand over \$400 to the brothel owner. The transaction complete, another innocent youngster joins a trade in child prostitutes that generates an estimated \$4 billion annually in major cities throughout Asia.

Evidence like this will emerge at the World Congress on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children to be hosted by the government of Sweden in Stockholm from Aug. 27 to 31. The congress aims to

increase global awareness of the tragedy of child prostitution in Asia and elsewhere and combat the concept of children as marketable commodities. One thousand delegates from some 80 countries are expected to attend.

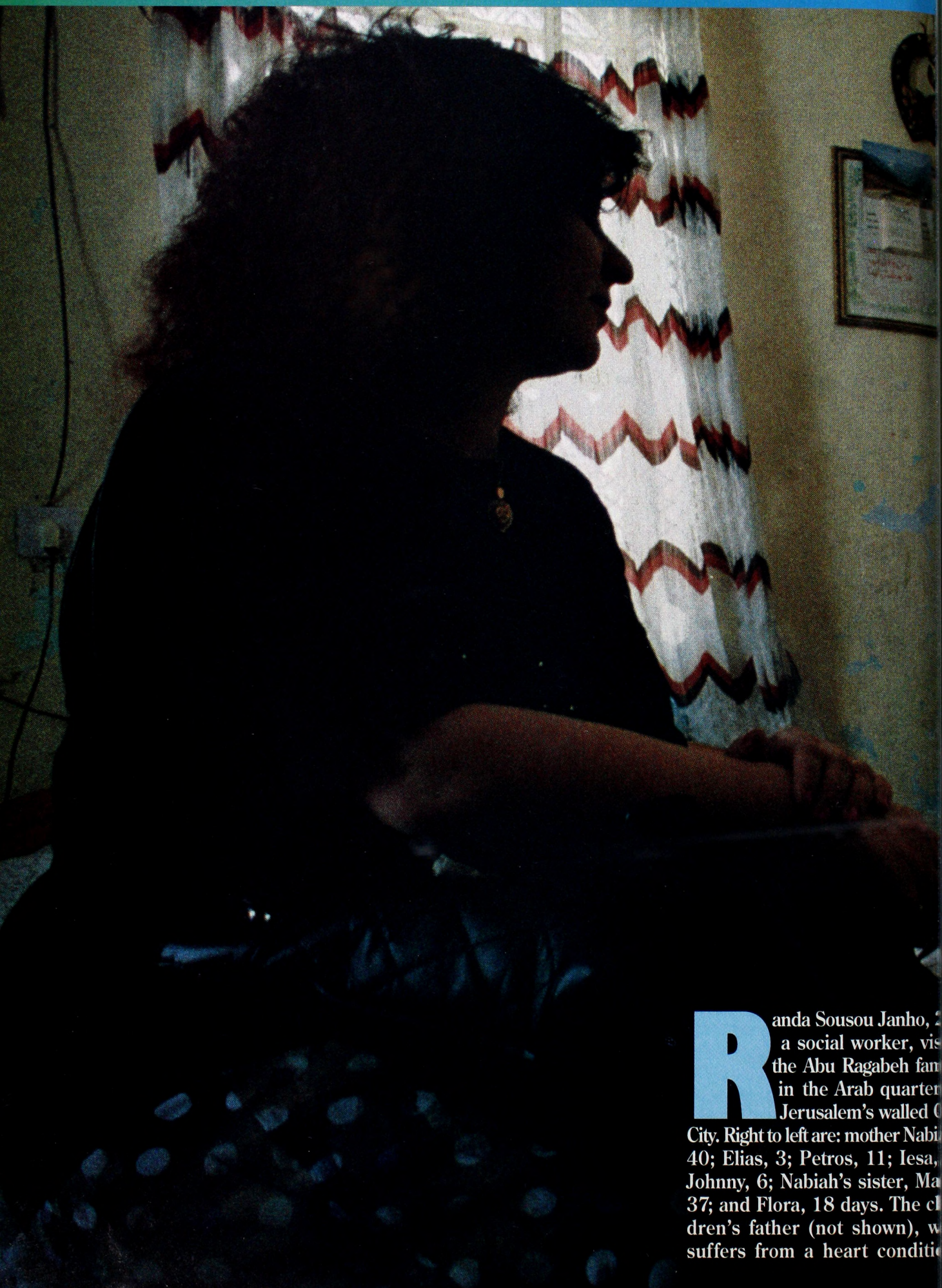
Tony Culhane, an Australian who established a World Vision center for street children in Cambodia, one of many such centers around the world, says child trafficking is highly organized and linked with the drug trade. He cites urban growth, civil wars, and marginalization of indigenous peoples as influences leading to child exploitation.

During the past seven years, churches, relief and development agencies, and other concerned groups have been working to bring the child sex trade to world attention. Meanwhile, governments have passed laws against sex tourism. The international police agency, Interpol, has stationed an officer in Bangkok, Thailand, to work against the trade. And the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by 189 countries, has given special attention to victims of child abuse and exploitation.

*Child prostitutes in Vietnam cater to international clients as groups around the world organize to stem the sex trade.*



MIKEL FLAMMI / WORLD VISION



**R**anda Sousou Janho, 28, a social worker, visits the Abu Ragabeh family in the Arab quarter of Jerusalem's walled Old City. Right to left are: mother Nabiah, 40; Elias, 3; Petros, 11; Iesa, Johnny, 6; Nabiah's sister, Maria, 37; and Flora, 18 days. The children's father (not shown), who suffers from a heart condition,



works part-time as a gardener. The family shares one main room, a small kitchen, and a bathroom, where the parents have lived for 14 years.

A World Vision-assisted program provides the family with powdered milk, rice, sugar, and butter, also assisting them with medical care and, for the children, school fees and registration to

summer camp. The children attend St. Dimitri's Orthodox School in Jerusalem, which also is supported by World Vision.

Janho, who was trained in sociology and psychology at the West Bank's Bir Zeit University, works out of St. Benedictos Polyclinic. The medical center in Jerusalem's Old City is operated by the Arab Orthodox Society, a char-

itable group of Christian laypeople, and assisted by World Vision. Janho visits the families of children sponsored by World Vision donors to determine their needs. World Vision sponsors 887 needy children in Jerusalem's Old City through this program, and a total of 6,237 children in Israel and Palestinian Arab territory. 🌐

*World Vision Photo by Bruce Brander*

# “WE’VE WORKED HARD, WE DESERVE IT.”

TEXT AND PHOTO BY DAVID RAMSDALE

**W**e’re hearing much about values these days in the United States. Television advertising, of course, is a powerful conveyer of values—many of them negative. Consider this ad recently shown on U.S. television: “We have to buy this car, honey. It’s so beautiful,” says the woman to her dressed-for-success husband. Her hands rub the smooth, shiny surface. “Besides, we’ve worked hard. We deserve it.” He nods in happy agreement as they slip into the luxurious leather seats. They are a U.S. success story, about to buy the American Dream.

Watching the commercial, I’m drawn in, imagining what it would be like to own such a beautiful new car. I picture myself driving down the road, the envy of onlookers. My ego swells. Then I remember a family I know in another part of the world.





**DOES MY HARD WORK REALLY MEAN I DESERVE  
SO MANY THINGS? BY ANY SANE STANDARD,  
I AM INCREDIBLY WEALTHY. SURE, I WORK HARD,  
BUT SO DOES VALERIO—JUST TO SURVIVE.**

*Valerio, Maria, and their child*



**ON A DARK, WINDSWEEP HILLSIDE IN THE PERUVIAN ANDES, VALERIO AND HIS WIFE MARIA** sit on a dirt floor, huddled under a blanket. Maria throws a piece of wood on a smoky fire. A cold breeze blows through the slats of their simple thatched-roofed hut, blowing swirls of ash into the air. A feverish baby suckles fitfully at Maria's breast. They've never heard of baby aspirin. The only doctor is a jungle shaman.

Valerio went hunting today with no success. He shoots only if it is a sure kill. One shell costs a day's wages. There isn't much game in these mountains anyway. Land invaders have nearly wiped out the animals' forest habitat, a culture clash reminiscent of the United States a century ago, now repeated on the native people's land in South America.

Valerio and the other Pajonal Campa Indians of his village have maintained a constant vigil against the colonists. They've faced an even more dangerous foe, the fierce Shining Path guerrillas, whose strategy is to kill village leaders like Valerio and impose Maoist dogma on communities. Although guerrilla activity has waned since the Shining Path's leader was captured, isolated violence still plagues these peaceful mountain people. The Pajonales don't ask much—just to be left alone to live on the land they have inhabited for hundreds of years.

Maria hands Valerio his supper—two boiled bananas and some termites she scraped out of a rotting log. They give thanks to God for this simple meal.

I wonder about our American belief that hard work merits wealth. I drive a decent car. I own a home. I also work

hard. Does my hard work really mean I deserve so many things? By any sane standard, I am incredibly wealthy. You could put all of Valerio and Maria's belongings in the trunk of my Volvo and there would still be room left over.

Some years back, I spent a few weeks in Valerio's village and accompanied him one day on a hunting trip. I remember the excited and joyful yelling that erupted in the village as Valerio walked out of the woods with a small, bloody deer draped across his shoulders. What did he do with this precious, seldom-available meal? He did what anyone in his tribe would do: He shared it with the entire village—and with me.

I have no answer for the disparity between the haves and the have-nots of this world. I'm not suggesting a wealth-redistribution scheme. I know only that I was born in the United States with undeserved wealth and resources. Sure, I work hard, but so does Valerio—just to survive. And for millions of others like him, no amount of hard work will lift the burden of poverty from their shoulders. It doesn't seem fair. What if I was in his place? Does it all come down to mere geography?

Valerio, a poor man, shared what little he had with his community and with me—a foreigner. Should I do less? Couldn't I do more?

Jesus, who shared his very life for me, said in Luke 12:48: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." ☉

*David Ramsdale is a free-lance writer in Waxhaw, N.C.*

# SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR  
HELPING OTHERS  
IN THE NAME  
OF CHRIST

## MUSTARD SEED HARVEST

**W**orld Vision's Mustard Seed Award Program honors innovative, church-based ministries with cash grants of \$1,000 to \$5,000.

### 1995 Mustard Seed Award Winners:

**Step Foundation** of Greater Washington, D.C., (Strategies to Elevate People out of Poverty) works with local churches to break the cycle of poverty for people in public housing projects. Step provides tutoring, mentoring, and a Bible club for children. (202) 829-8989.

**Seeds of Hope Ministry** in Casa Grande, Ariz., is a collaboration of 12 churches helping socially endangered children. Programs help juvenile offenders complete court-required community service, provide hot meals to homeless children and their families, and host clubs for children in high-risk neighborhoods. (520) 836-6335.

**Mending Hearts Ministry** is a support group providing practical help and biblical counseling for low-income pregnant women and single mothers. Located in Edmonds, Wash., the group pro-

vides women with clothing, nursery furniture, maternity and baby clothes, and a variety of services, from food banks to legal aid. The women also attend a Bible study and a Christian support group. (206) 712-8862.

**San Francisco Rescue Mission** workers preach the gospel in the Bay area through Bible studies and Sunday worship services in Cantonese, Mandarin, and English. The mission serves food weekly to 25,000 children, teens, and adults, and sponsors a local thrift store. (415) 292-1770.

**Wise Choice Transitional Home** of Philadelphia, Pa., sponsored by Calvary Gospel Chapel, provides homeless women with secure housing, a mentoring program, and Bible studies. Professionals teach women entrepreneurial skills and offer advice on raising children, managing a budget, and cooking. (215) 386-8236.



*Dr. Ted Engstrom (left), president emeritus of World Vision, presents the Mustard Seed Award to Leah Gallardo of the Lord's Lighthouse and Dr. Doug Millham, interim pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood.*

**The Lord's Lighthouse**, operated by Hollywood Presbyterian church in Hollywood, Calif., helps homeless and poor people, including children, by providing hot meals, clothing, medical help, and spiritual aid. (818) 764-0198.

For more information about the Mustard Seed Award Program or for an application, contact Lauralee Dyche at World Vision, (206) 815-2596. Applications are due Sept. 6, 1996.



*Co-founders of RFKC, Wayne and Diane Tesch*

## ROYAL FAMILY KIDS CAMPS

**R**oyal Family Kids' Camps (RKFC) offers training and resources to help local churches start camps to meet the unique needs of abused children. RKFC hopes to mobilize 200 churches by the year 2000.

Children ages 7 to 11 are referred to the camps by a church, a social service agency, or foster home. Camps maintain a ratio of one counselor to two campers. A surrogate grandpa

and grandma on staff provide love, affirmation, and self-esteem.

According to Wayne Tesch, who founded RFKC with his wife, Diane, "One week in the cathedral of the outdoors, surrounded by compassionate, caring adults, creates a memory that lasts a lifetime."

For more information or a free video about RFKC call Wayne or Diane Tesch at (714) 556-1420.

Compiled and written by Stephanie Stevenson

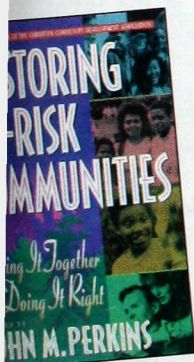
## RESTORING AT-RISK COMMUNITIES

The book *Restoring At-Risk Communities* edited by John Perkins, explains how ordinary Christians can help transform America's impoverished inner cities by living among the poor to further reconciliation, and empowering the poor by contributing skills and resources.

Editor John Perkins' contribution comes out of his years of living among the poor. He writes, "The desperate problems in America's inner cities will not be resolved without strong commitment and risky action on the part of ordinary Christians with heroic faith."

Perkins believes more people are needed on the inner cities' front lines who are willing to give up their personal ambitions, give their time and skills, and even risk their lives to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor.

For more information or to obtain a copy of *Restoring At-Risk Communities*, call your local Christian bookstore or Baker Book House at (800) 877-2665.



“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”  
—NIV John 15:13

*"I created a gift annuity because World Vision is a wonderful charity doing splendid work in the world."*

Martha Morgan Hoess  
Cincinnati, Ohio



“I believe that every time an individual establishes a charitable gift annuity, he or she is greatly helping that charity carry on its God-given work. And World Vision does great work!”

“Giving through a gift annuity is not entirely altruistic,” Mrs. Hoess admits. “It benefits me too. I’m earning an excellent rate with at least half of my earnings tax-free for 8 years. I also like that gift annuities aren’t complicated.”

“I try to give some type of donation on an annual basis to those organizations that I feel meet the needs of the sick and the poor,” Mrs. Hoess concludes. “And World Vision certainly qualifies.”



1-800-426-5753 **WORLD VISION**

**For more information about how you can help the sick and the poor through a World Vision gift annuity, please complete and mail to:**

World Vision  
Gift Planning Department  
P.O. Box 0084  
Tacoma, Washington 98481-0084

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Area) Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

(Area) Business Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

# MOZAMBIQUE: PEACE AND PROMISE

TEXT BY JANE SUTTON  
PHOTOS BY ALASTAIR CROMBIE



Phillipa

**P**HILLIPA LOUISE'S LIFE IS GOOD AGAIN IN HER VILLAGE OF MUNHACUA, NOT FAR INLAND FROM MOZAMBIQUE'S NORTHERN COAST. HER *MACHAMBA*, OR FARM, THRIVES WITH CASSAVA, RICE, SWEET POTATOES, MAIZE, AND SUGAR CANE, THE RESULT OF FOUR YEARS OF WORLD VISION'S AGRICULTURAL HELP. HER FOUR CHILDREN PLAY WITHOUT FEAR OF THE SOUND OF GUNS. TWO HUNDRED FAMILIES PEACEFULLY LIVE AND FARM HERE, WHERE TERROR ONCE REIGNED.

DURING A 17-YEAR CIVIL WAR THAT DEVASTATED THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN COUNTRY ALMOST FROM THE TIME IT GAINED INDEPENDENCE FROM PORTUGAL IN 1975, REBELS PERIODICALLY ATTACKED MUNHACUA. THEY KILLED EVEN CHILDREN AND ELDERLY PEOPLE, DESTROYED CROPS, AND HACKED DOWN COCONUT TREES. VILLAGERS FLED TO THE BUSH—PHILLIPA, 15 AND PREGNANT, AMONG THEM—LEAVING THE COMMUNITY DESERTED.



Today, Munhacua is resettled. "Peace is good," says Phillipa's husband, Bernardo Antonio Saide, a former government soldier. "It doesn't matter which side you fought on, [the war] is over, and now we are together."

This forgive-and-forget attitude in the wake of Mozambique's brutal war is central to the country's recovery. Jonathan White, World Vision national director for Mozambique, says, "The high degree of reconciliation after such a traumatic period, with Mozambicans working together, putting the war behind them and building a new future, shows tremendous potential."

Just 10 years ago, Mozambique's conflict seemed yet another unsolvable crisis on a continent mired in misery. The war had killed hundreds of thousands of Mozambicans, displaced an estimated 5 million rural people, and shattered the economy and infrastructure.

While Mozambique is still one of the poorest countries in the world, it is



*I am happy to be back in the place of my birth," says Phillipa, whose family (pictured) and entire community were displaced by rebel violence during the war.*

assuredly on the mend. A 1992 peace accord between the warring Frelimo government and Renamo rebels brought the conflict to an end. The country's first multiparty elections in October 1994 laid foundations for a stable democratic society. Governments, international corporations, and nongovernmental organizations joined the recovery effort, to the tune of \$780 million in loans and grants in 1995. Mozambique's government proved itself worthy of the support by demobilizing and repatriating soldiers, removing landmines, and helping families return to their homes.

### TURBULENT HISTORY

Mozambique's recovery is all the more remarkable considering the turmoil this nation of 18 million people endured.

Portugal controlled Mozambique for 400 years, exploiting the country's gold and ivory, enslaving local people, and dominating valuable trade routes linking

landlocked nations and the Indian Ocean. Most jobs went to the Portuguese colonists. Africans were barred from commerce, and the education system was so poor that, at independence, there were fewer than 1,000 high school graduates in the whole country. While other African nations gained independence in the 1960s, Portugal only tightened its stranglehold on Mozambique.

Nationalist Mozambicans retaliated in 1964 by forming Frelimo—the *Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique*—and waging guerrilla warfare against the colonists. After a decade-long struggle, a coup in Portugal hastened Frelimo's victory in 1975. Almost 90 percent of the Portuguese colonists left Mozambique, but not before destroying records, machinery, and livestock. They even poured concrete down the

elevator shaft of an unfinished tourist hotel—a parting shot to ensure completion of the building would be impossibly expensive.

Frelimo then faced the daunting task of unifying a nation of mostly illiterate and unskilled people. The communist government hoped to turn Mozambique around by promoting widespread education and health care, nationalizing industries, and increasing agricultural production through communal state farms. But the plans were too ambitious for an underdeveloped country twice the size of California and created unrest among the largely rural population.

The novice government also made enemies. Frelimo supported liberation forces opposing white governments in neighboring Rhodesia and South Africa. In reaction, Rhodesia founded Renamo—*Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana*—to spy on Rhodesian rebels hiding in Mozambique and to destabilize the government. Renamo might have petered out after Rhodesia achieved independence in 1980 and became Zimbabwe, but South Africa's apartheid government stepped in and turned Renamo guerrillas into a rebel force that nearly toppled Mozambique's government.

### FEAR AND FAMINE

The war between Frelimo and Renamo had no fronts. Rural dwellers suffered most as Renamo attacked villages, sabotaged highways and rail lines, and destroyed health clinics and schools. A 1988 U.S. State Department report confirmed Renamo atrocities committed against thousands of innocent people. The strategy? "To spread fear," said 22-year-old Julieta Mbiana, a victim of rebel violence when Renamo soldiers occupied her village.

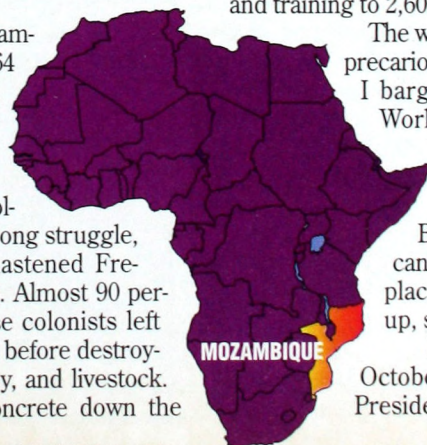
World Vision began working in Mozambique in 1984. Drought and the inability to transport food by land had led to chronic famine, causing widespread starvation. World Vision brought in food by airlift and provided emergency medical care to the malnourished. In 1986, the agency began supplying agricultural kits, tools, and training to 2,600 displaced families.

The work sometimes proved precarious. "This is more than I bargained for," admitted

World Vision agronomist Mauro Netto in 1989 after several close calls with bandits.

But he explained, "We can't stop now. ... The displaced people don't give up, so why should we?"

Peace finally came in October 1992 when Frelimo President Joaquim Alberto



Chissano signed an accord with Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama. Having renounced communist ideology years before, Mozambique's government was open to Western businesses, which quickly came, hastening economic recovery.

But problems persisted in the crippled country, from land mines to food shortages. The Mozambicans suffered through another famine in 1992-93. Hundreds of people a day flocked to World Vision feeding centers. Makeshift towns, populated by emaciated people waiting for food, sprung up wherever relief was available.

### PEACE IS HOLDING

Today millions of refugees are returning to their villages, many finding nothing left. For Mozambicans, 90 percent of them farmers, normalcy begins with successful crops. World Vision's agricultural programs, among the finest in Africa, have served up to 4 million people, providing tools and new seed varieties, yielding better crops.

To combat Mozambique's high infant mortality rate, child survival projects monitor mothers' and children's health and teach families preventative health measures. World Vision offers people food in exchange for their help in



**World Vision agricultural kits have assisted 785,000 Mozambican farm families in the past three years.**

rebuilding roads, schools, clinics, and irrigation systems. To boost microenterprise, World Vision provides farmers with skills and start-up materials to begin food processing businesses.

"We can have a huge impact," says Jonathan White. "We can take Mozambique from being the poorest country in the world to quite a prosperous country. That's a challenge that should not go unconquered." 🌐

*With Jonathan White in Mozambique and Alastair Crombie in Kenya.*

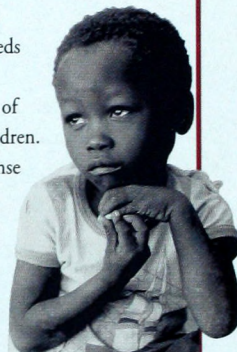
“  
Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God.”

WORLD VISION'S FOUNDER, Bob Pierce, wrote this on the flyleaf of his Bible more than 45 years ago. And today we remain compelled to respond to children's needs worldwide.

I have heard the cries of hungry and hurting children. In every child's face I sense God's call to action and compassion.

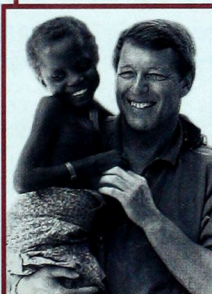
Through your gift of just \$20 a month, you can change a child's life forever with improved health, nutrition, education, and an opportunity to know God's love. Your gifts also will help your sponsored child's family and community become more self-reliant.

Currently, more than 500,000 people sponsor over 1 million children annually. WILL YOU JOIN THEM TODAY? To begin, call or return the coupon below. You will get information and the photo of a child who needs your help.



*Bob Seiple*

Bob Seiple  
President  
World Vision



Yes!

1 800 448 6437

I will sponsor a child for \$20/month. I prefer to sponsor a  boy  girl living in  Africa  Asia  Latin America  Middle East.  
 Enclosed is my first month gift of \$20.  
 Please bill me later.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY/STATE/ZIP.....

PHONE.....

CHILD SPONSORSHIP, P.O. BOX 70050, TACOMA, WA 98481-0050

**WORLD VISION**  
A76WSW

### NEXT TO THE LAST WORD

Six American church leaders—Presbyterian, Baptist, and Church of God—recently visited Bosnia with World Vision President Bob Seiple. The depth to which they were touched is best heard through their own comments.

"Nowhere is the trauma of war more destructive than in its impact on children, for they represent the future."

"I was struck with the number of fresh graves. One had the name of a young woman, born in 1969 and killed in 1993. At that moment, 250,000 deaths became personalized in that one young life."

"I believe Christians have a vital part to play. They have the gift of encouragement that an exhausted and battered people need."

"We really don't know about tomorrow. But today we have been given the opportunity to be of use to God as he heals the broken people of Bosnia."

Please join us in that healing process through prayer for reconciliation and funds for reconstruction. Informative church bulletin inserts can be provided. Call me at 206 815-2300.

—Terry Madison

## WORLD VISION

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# BY THEIR ROOFS YOU WILL KNOW THEM

**W**hat are you going to name your child?" I asked our Croatian driver. Mario's wife was expecting their first child in August. His reply said much about the culture in the states of the former Yugoslavia, for better or for worse.

"If it's a boy, I have only two choices: either the name of my father or my grandfather. It's expected for the firstborn. I can't break the tradition. It's been that way for a thousand years."

Mario is loyal to tradition. After all, it's part of who he is. It's his identity, and in the Balkan states identity means everything. A name will distinguish Croat from Muslim and Muslim from Serb. The alphabet used to spell the name also discriminates. Muslims use the Latin alphabet, while Serbs follow the Cyrillic form of writing.

Spiritual expressions differentiate as well. A Catholic crosses himself with two fingers, left to right. An Orthodox Serb will make the sign of the cross using three fingers, right to left.

Catholics build their churches on a north-south axis. Orthodox believers construct theirs east to west. Even without a sense of direction, you can see differences in domes, spires, and minarets.

Then there are the roof lines of older homes. Croat houses have a single gable roof. The Muslim roofs come from four different sides, emerging as a single point at the top. All this is part of registering identity, and it's all taken very seriously.

The war in Bosnia is all about identity. This intranational, post-communist war has been described as a classic identity conflict. The identity has very little to do with ideology or citizenship. It has a great deal to do with fear and the perceptions fear creates, especially when one's identity is that of a minority.

A simple principle governs behavior in such a situation: No one wants to be part of a minority in a hostile environment. The environment might become hostile through nationalism, power, or greed.

Identity wars, however, become horrific because of fear. "Do it to them before they do it to you!" Cleanse the other identity from your midst. Claim all for your own identity. Diversity can do you in. So the tools of discrimination are put to work: names, alphabets, traditions, methods of crossing oneself, and roof lines.

This is the new tribalism emerging at the end of the 20th century.

It has been argued that the next world war will take place between civilizations, not nations. Bosnia helps make that case. East meets West. Muslims battle Christians. A protracted identity conflict prepares the soil for major conflagration.

Does our Lord have any relevance in such situations? More specifically, how might Christ's followers intervene in a positive way? Interestingly, the theme of identity is both powerful and persistent



TERRY MADISON / WORLD VISION

with Jesus. He claimed to exist before the patriarch Abraham. He told his disciples he was one with the Father. He announced his kingdom and left no doubt that the king and the kingdom were one and the same.

During his trial before the crucifixion, one of the few times he spoke was when his identity was questioned. "Are you really the Christ?" Christ's identity was sure, the answer positive, and crucifixion quickly followed. Jesus preferred to die rather than compromise the divinity that made him supremely different.

As the ultimate act of grace, Christ's identity has become ours. "You are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." We share the same family tree! We're kissin' cousins. We come out of the same traditions. The God of history and the Christ of Calvary are related, and they are related to us. We share their identity!

We need to share their values as well. We have been asked to bear fruit. We will be known by that fruit. We need to demonstrate love, for example, that reduces the hostility of the Bosnian environment. We need to be good neighbors 7,000 miles away, so the people of Bosnia might see neighbors across their streets in a new light. We need to respect the diversity we encounter so Bosnian differences might be affirmed as well.

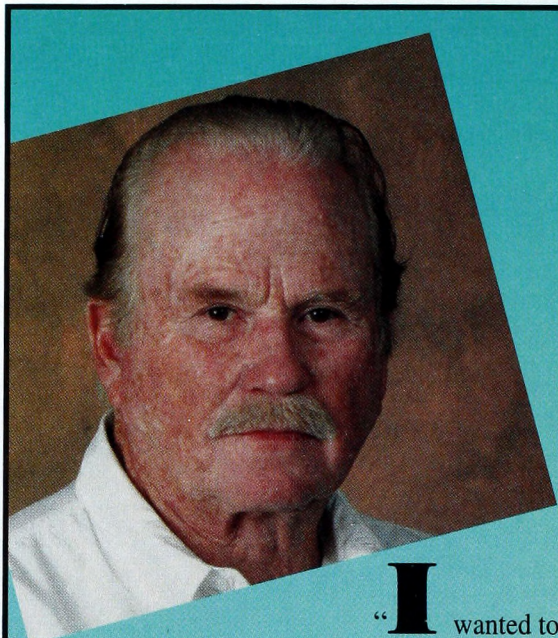
It has been said, "You might be the only Jesus that someone will ever see." Challenging words! An awesome responsibility.

Bosnia presents an incredible opportunity for the children of God to offer an incarnational witness to the power and promises of God. It's time for us to respond as our namesake wants us to respond. 🌐

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*Croat houses have a single gable roof. The Muslim roofs come from four different sides, emerging as a single point at the top.*

If you have any questions, comments, or a change of address, you may call toll-free: 1-800-777-5777

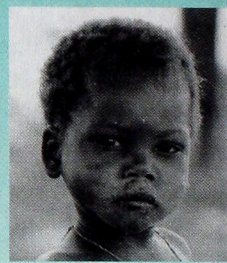


**“I made a bequest to World Vision because I wanted my gift to help many people for years to come.”**

**Fred Smathers  
California**

**I** wanted to help alleviate some of the suffering in the world. I know World Vision does a good job doing that. When I made my bequest, they helped me put together my estate plan.”

A bequest can be an advantageous element in your estate plan. It helps World Vision continue its work into the future as you have full use of your assets during your lifetime. If you already have a will, it's easy to amend it with a codicil to include World Vision as a beneficiary.



“Besides getting help with my estate plan, I became a Host of Hope member because of my bequest,” adds Mr. Smathers. “It was a nice bonus.”



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