

WORLD VISION®

December 1996 / January 1997

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GLOBAL BINGE

BY BARBARA R. THOMPSON

As a young boy growing up in Eastern Uganda, Paul Odongo* was beaten routinely by his alcoholic father. His mother turned much of the family's millet crop into a potent home brew, and Paul was forced to scavenge for food. At the age of 8, he went to live with an alcoholic uncle, who treated him as the family slave.

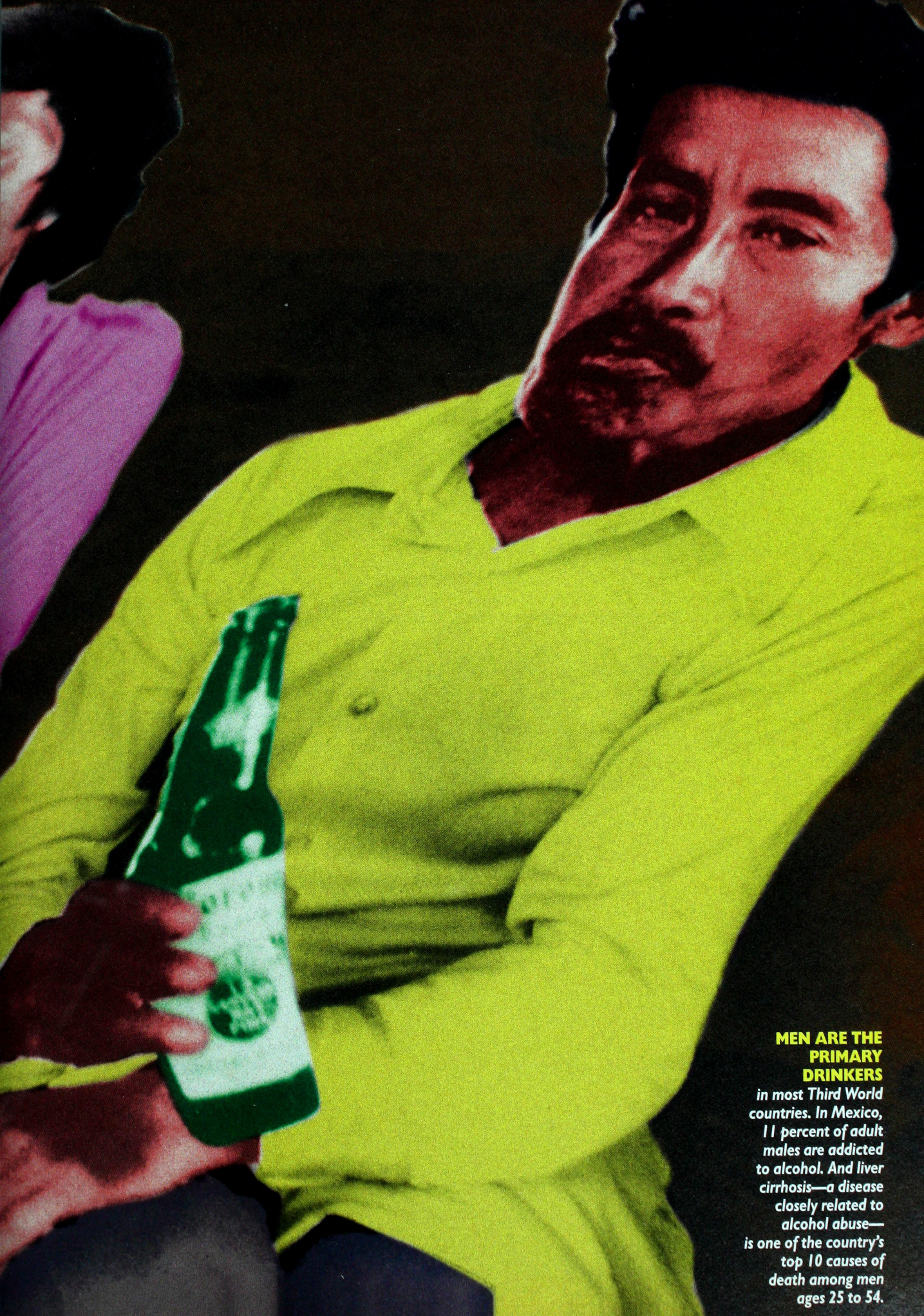
Despite his traumatic home life, Paul went to school and eventually graduated from teacher's college. He became a devout Christian, married, and raised nine children. Neither he nor his wife ever drank alcohol. "I don't want to see my children suffer like I did," Paul told a friend.

In the mid-1980s, while on a church mission, Paul was killed by drunken soldiers. Over the next decade, four of his children became alcoholics. Two daughters were infected with AIDS because of alcohol-related promiscuity, and both

DIGITAL MANIPULATION OF A PHOTO BY L. TAYLOR / WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

*Names and minor details have been changed to protect confidences.





**MEN ARE THE
PRIMARY
DRINKERS**

in most Third World countries. In Mexico, 11 percent of adult males are addicted to alcohol. And liver cirrhosis—a disease closely related to alcohol abuse—is one of the country's top 10 causes of death among men ages 25 to 54.



RAPID URBANIZATION, the marketing of factory-made alcohol, and the introduction of cash into rural economies has transformed drinking from occasional events and sacred rituals to a recreational pastime. In some regions of Africa, up to 44 percent of the average per-capita income is spent on alcohol.

gave birth to children with fetal alcohol syndrome. By 1996, more than 30 of Paul's grandchildren were growing up in alcoholic homes.

Around the world millions of people like Paul and his children suffer from problems related to the abuse of

alcoholic beverages. The problems include addiction, chronic poor health, physical and sexual abuse, premature death from accidents, violent crimes, and AIDS. "For all the focus on illegal drugs, the number one cause of the spread of AIDS is alcohol," says

Michelle B., a recovering addict and neighborhood activist from Charlotte N.C. "Get drunk, get stupid, get AIDS."

The World Health Organization calls abuse of alcoholic beverages "one of the most serious public health problems in the world." With the exception of drunk-driving accidents, however, the high cost of alcohol abuse remains largely invisible. Unlike cocaine and heroin, alcohol is legal almost everywhere, and the majority of people who drink do so without serious problems. For a substantial and persistent segment of society, however, alcohol always will be associated with hardship and tragedy.

WORLD VISION LEADS A VILLAGE OUT OF ALCOHOL

In the village of Tilivi, Ecuador, 400 families suffered the ravages of alcoholism for more than 10 years. In the 1970s, more than 2,600 gallons of alcohol arrived each month from a neighboring village. Many families started small businesses selling alcohol. Often both husbands and wives were alcoholics.

Three alcohol wholesalers exerted economic control over the village, growing rich at the community's expense. When villagers did not have enough money to buy alcohol, they were forced to sell their farm animals and small land holdings. As a result, more than 1,000 children suffered from malnutrition, and many died each year. The children also suffered violence at the hands of their parents.

In the 1980s, World Vision began community development and evangelization projects in the region. Eventually village leaders, including the three main wholesalers of alcohol, received Jesus Christ. The suppliers smashed their alcohol warehouses in front of the villagers as a testimony to their conversion.

Within a few years, Tilivi's alcohol distribution centers were closed and the community became an evangelization center for the region. At a World Vision conference, the mayor of the province's capital city said:

"I want to thank you personally, in the name of all the people of our province and for the children who now have healthy skin, cheerfulness in their hearts, and no parasites in their bodies. Most of all, they have the presence of the gospel. Its message of peace and love changed the lives of people who for many years lived in a state of marginalization and poverty because of alcohol." —Jose Vasquez, World Vision Ecuador

ALCOHOL PLAGUE

"Drinking is the same all over the world." This was the informed judgment of a European alcoholism expert until he visited Gallup, N.M. There, on the border of a Navajo reservation, he found a town literally covered with alcoholics. Drunken people passed out on the street were almost as common as empty beer bottles scattered along the roadside. "There is something horrifying about the look of Navajo drinking in Gallup," wrote journalist Calvin Trillin. "Something that makes it less like big-city skid-row drinking than like a medieval epidemic."

THE POOREST OF THE POOR USE ALCOHOL TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER, COLD, ILLNESS, AND BOREDOM.

For reasons unknown, indigenous groups such as American Indians, Eskimos, and New Zealand's Maori people suffer disproportionate consequences from the use and abuse of alcohol. However, Western industrialized countries are also at high risk of severe alcohol-related problems. France has one of the highest rates of cirrhosis of the liver in the world. In Canada, 9 in 10 violent crimes are committed under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The United States spends \$58 billion a year on alcohol-related problems. And despite media attention given to crack cocaine, alcohol remains the number one drug problem in the United States among all ethnic groups.

Nowhere are alcohol-related problems more dire than in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Faced with social chaos and sudden poverty, Russians now are the leading consumers of alcohol in the world. The result: a dramatic rise in alcohol-related deaths, violent crimes, street children, and birth defects.

CHEAPEST CALORIES

It's early Monday morning in a factory in Lithuania, and workers are busy lubricating machinery on an assembly line. They also are drinking vodka and will continue drinking throughout the day.

"The Soviets took away much of what made life worth living for Lithuanians and replaced it with vodka," reports Barbara Bush, a substance abuse coordinator for Catholic Social Services in Atlanta, Ga. At the request of Lithuanian church leaders, Bush recently held seminars on chemical dependency in Lithuania.

Bush estimates that 80 percent of Lithuanians are alcohol-dependent. "Now that they have to compete in a free market, Lithuanians can't sell goods manufactured by inebriated workers. They are trapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of poverty and drunkenness. The country is rapidly spiraling toward bankruptcy but, ironically, with food prices at record-high levels, vodka provides the cheapest calories in town."

DEVELOPING-WORLD BINGE

Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, Ali, a Muslim teenager, begins his day with a drink of homemade wine. Despite his Islamic convictions, which forbid alcohol, he is a heavy drinker. Ali's father recently quit drinking, but only after the family had disintegrated. None of Ali's six brothers received formal education, and Ali has dropped out of school. Despite his middle-class background, he sees his future in the faces of beggars on the street.

His fall is repeated in many countries of the developing world. The emerging middle class represents a lucrative market for American and European alcohol companies. Aggressive advertising has linked Western-style drinking habits with success and sex appeal. The result: skyrocketing

rates of alcoholism and an exponential increase in social problems related to alcohol abuse.

At the same time, the poorest of the poor in developing countries continue to use alcohol to alleviate hunger, cold, illness, and boredom. In Ecuador drinking rates are highest among expendable weekly workers. "The money does not reach their homes, because they drink it up on payday," reports Gustavo Balarezo, a World Vision staff member in the South American country.

Ironically, alcohol is a source of income for many families, as well as a source of poverty. For personal consumption and to supplement meager wages, families dip into limited supplies of food like rice and millet to produce home brews. In Botswana, 30 percent of rural households and 50 percent of urban households produce alcohol for income. In East Africa, mothers routinely pay children's school fees with money from the sale of home brew. At the same time, it is often the children who go hungry when food supplies are exhausted.

Despite the high price young people pay for adult drinking, youth in developing countries are drinking at increasingly earlier ages. This trend is largely due to advertising that targets young people. "Many Kenyan youth start drinking at age 12 or 13 to appear grown up and become the great people alcohol advertisements talk about," says Charles Maingi, a World Vision staffer in Kenya.

Ads imply that drinkers are successful people with beautiful bodies and enormous sex appeal. "That's the opposite of what we see in medicine," reports Dr. Robert Fisher, an expert on substance abuse and a consultant for the World Health Organization. "We see young professionals with rock-hard livers who need transplants to survive."

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Whatever their age, heavy drinkers in developing countries, as in the West, wreak havoc on their families. "There is scarcely any case of a man who beats his wife or daughter without, in the hours before, having drunk more than usual," reports Altamir Teiseira

FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

- Russians drink an average of 15.3 quarts

of pure alcohol per capita per year. The World Health Organization warns that 4.75 quarts constitute a health risk.

- Ten percent of drinkers consume an estimated 60 to 70 percent of all alcohol. Without problem drinkers, the profits of the alcohol industry would plummet.

- In countries where alcohol is legal but advertising it is not, drinking rates stand 30 percent lower.

- In Chile, 70 percent of job absenteeism is alcohol-related.

- In South Africa, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence estimates that 1 in 3 urban males is addicted to alcohol.

- In Canada, more than half of all deaths among Native Americans are alcohol-related.

- In Papua New Guinea, more than 85 percent of all fatal road accidents involve drivers or pedestrians who are drunk.

- In the United States, someone is killed by a drunk driver every 24 minutes.

ALCOHOL PROBLEMS INCLUDE ADDICTION, POOR HEALTH, PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE, AND PREMATURE DEATH.

of World Vision Brazil.

Women in developing countries who suffer from alcohol-related abuse and even torture are unlikely to leave their husbands or ask for legal protection. Social supports are minimal and few have the job skills or self-confidence to survive outside of marriage. For many Hindu women, the sense of helplessness is reinforced by fatalistic religious beliefs. "An Indian woman normally puts up with an alcoholic husband," says Sam Moses of World Vision India. "She believes that it is her *thalai eluthu*, the fate written on her head by the gods."

GOVERNMENT ADDICTION

Despite severe social and economic problems from alcohol, few countries attempt to regulate its consumption.

Many governments have a vested interest in increasing drinking rates. Some own or subsidize breweries. Meanwhile, taxes on alcohol often are an essential part of state income. Indonesia's largest brewery, for example, recently paid \$70 million in taxes in one year.

In wartorn Burundi, a brewery jointly owned by the government and a European brewing firm is the only game in town. "Nothing else works, and the government has no other source of income," reports Susan Hutton of World Vision's staff there. "There is a lot of profit, and no beer truck has ever been hit by a grenade or mine."

Ironically, in Burundi, as in Rwanda, Chechnya, Bosnia, and other countries at war, the majority of war crimes are committed by armed men and children acting under the influence of alco-

hol. The connection is not accidental. Alcohol acts on the cerebrum to depress inhibitions. Heavy drinkers can violate their inner moral code in ways incomprehensible even to themselves.

OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Few regions have succeeded in reducing the supply or use of alcohol. In the Pacific-island country of Western Samoa, where traditionally only men drink, a group of women came together to oppose construction of a brewery. "The women felt they already had enough problems with alcohol," reports Dr. Fisher. "But with largess from the brewery, the men voted for construction."

In the former Soviet Union, a 1980s effort initiated by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to curtail alcohol consumption likewise met with massive resistance. As in the Prohibition era in the United States, it opened the door for organized crime to take over production and distribution of alcohol. At the same time, however, there was a dramatic decline in alcohol-related problems. Life expectancy for men jumped three years, and 1 million fewer people died from alcohol-related causes.

RESPONSIBLE DRINKING?

Reacting to increasing pressures against excessive drinking in the United States and elsewhere, the alcohol industry has launched a program to encourage responsible consumption. Their ideal is a world where almost every adult drinks but does so in moderation. To promote this, industry spokesmen hold up recent research suggesting that moderate daily drinking helps prevent heart disease. For assurance that widespread use of alcohol can be safe, they point to countries like Italy and Greece, where problems related to alcohol are lessened by longstanding traditions governing drinking.

In such a world, the industry would be sensitive to cultural differences, says Marcus Grant, president of the industry-sponsored International Center for Alcohol Policies. "In Papua New Guinea, for example, tradition requires drinkers to finish a bottle once it's opened. This

DIFFERENT PATHS TO SOBRIETY

People addicted to alcohol in the developing world face an uphill battle. Medical resources, where they exist, usually are stretched thin. "And there's not great treatment for alcoholism anywhere in the world," says Dr. Robert Fisher, a consultant to the World Health Organization. "There's no magic pill or wand to wave."

For addicts able to participate in a group setting, Alcoholics Anonymous provides a free, 12-step program for recovery. AA has over 2 million members in 145 countries, and its Big Book has sold 15 million copies in 30 languages.

Some countries, like India, support nonprofit organizations that provide professional treatment. But even where such help is available, it often is ignored.

In Romania, the reluctance of addicts and their families to seek help is rooted in decades of communist oppression. "They are afraid they might be speaking to members of the secret police," says Karen Homer, formerly of World Vision Romania. "In any case, most psychiatrists here have little training in treating addiction."

Hesitation to reveal personal secrets is likewise found in many developing countries. Dr. Fisher remembers a secretary in the Pacific island group of Micronesia whose father was sexually abusing her under the influence of alcohol.

"She came to me in tears, and I didn't know what to do," he recalls. "There was an Alcoholics Anonymous group in the city, but that was mostly for expatriates. In her culture, it was taboo to share intimate secrets with a stranger."

Fisher sought help from a local doctor, who spent a day with the woman's father mending nets. The doctor told the father that, as a young man, he often lost control of himself while drinking, hurting his family in ways that were shameful.

"The doctor never directly addressed the father's behavior," Fisher adds, "but they both knew what he was talking about. The father was able to curtail his drinking and the secretary told me that her problem had been solved." —Barbara R. Thompson



YOUTH WORLDWIDE are drinking at increasingly earlier ages. Alcohol is associated with all the leading causes of death among teenagers: automobile accidents, homicides, and suicides. It is also a major factor in unplanned pregnancies and the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS. Six thousand young people die each year in the U.S. from alcohol-related causes.

means we should not be delivering alcohol there in two-liter bottles.”

Many substance abuse experts, however, accuse the alcohol industry of trying to maximize profits by “normalizing” drinking. They point to studies showing that one in ten social drinkers becomes an alcoholic, and that problem drinkers imbibe 70 percent of all alcohol consumed. The risk of addiction, such experts claim, far outweighs any medical benefits from drinking.

EXPANDING MARKETS

In part because of the growing number of social drinkers, substance abuse experts predict a continued worldwide increase in alcohol abuse. More women and young people are drinking. For physiological reasons, such as body weight, these groups stand at a higher risk of addiction than men. In Germany, for example, the number of new women addicts is growing at twice the rate for men.

Coinciding with the rise in at-risk drinkers is increasing social disruption on a global scale. Decline in traditional cultures and values puts entire countries at risk for alcohol abuse and addiction. At the same time, the alcohol industry has targeted the developing world, Eastern Europe, and the former

Soviet Union in energetic expansion efforts. The industry spends billions of dollars to sell alcohol to countries that can least afford to buy it or bear the social consequences. This pays off in millions of new drinkers every year.

BEYOND DENIAL

In the face of the enormous and complex problems of alcohol abuse, how can the church respond? The first step, experts say, is to accept the scope of the problem. “Since we see an increasing number of pastors and church leaders with a drinking problem, no one wants to talk about it,” says Hanna Bangert of World Vision Germany.

By moving beyond denial, the church can serve as a healing influence in a variety of ways. “This plague is worldwide, and countries everywhere are ready for the church to play a meaningful role,” says Dr. Anderson Spickard, co-author of *Dying for a Drink* (Word, 1985) and head of a \$50 million community-based substance abuse program developed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

“But pastors and church leaders need to do more than merely reflect the attitudes of their congregations, which may not be adequately informed about

abuse and addiction issues. They need to take the lead in understanding addiction as a disease that impacts the total person: physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.”

Spickard urges churches to collaborate with community groups to address issues of abuse and addiction. A program known as Fighting Back, for example, has enabled 14 communities in the United States, including Gallup, N.M., to develop comprehensive, community-wide strategies for prevention and treatment of substance abuse. Churches have participated in all stages of this program, including addressing factors like poverty and unemployment.

At the same time, Spickard believes that Christians have a special role in ministering spiritually to addicts and their families. “The uniqueness of the church is its ability to address the issues of shame and guilt, which are at the heart of addiction,” Spickard says. “In communicating the love and forgiveness found in Jesus Christ, churches can point the way to profound inner healing—not just for addicts, but for society as a whole.” ☉

Barbara R. Thompson is a free-lance writer living in Decatur, Ga.

LIBERIA

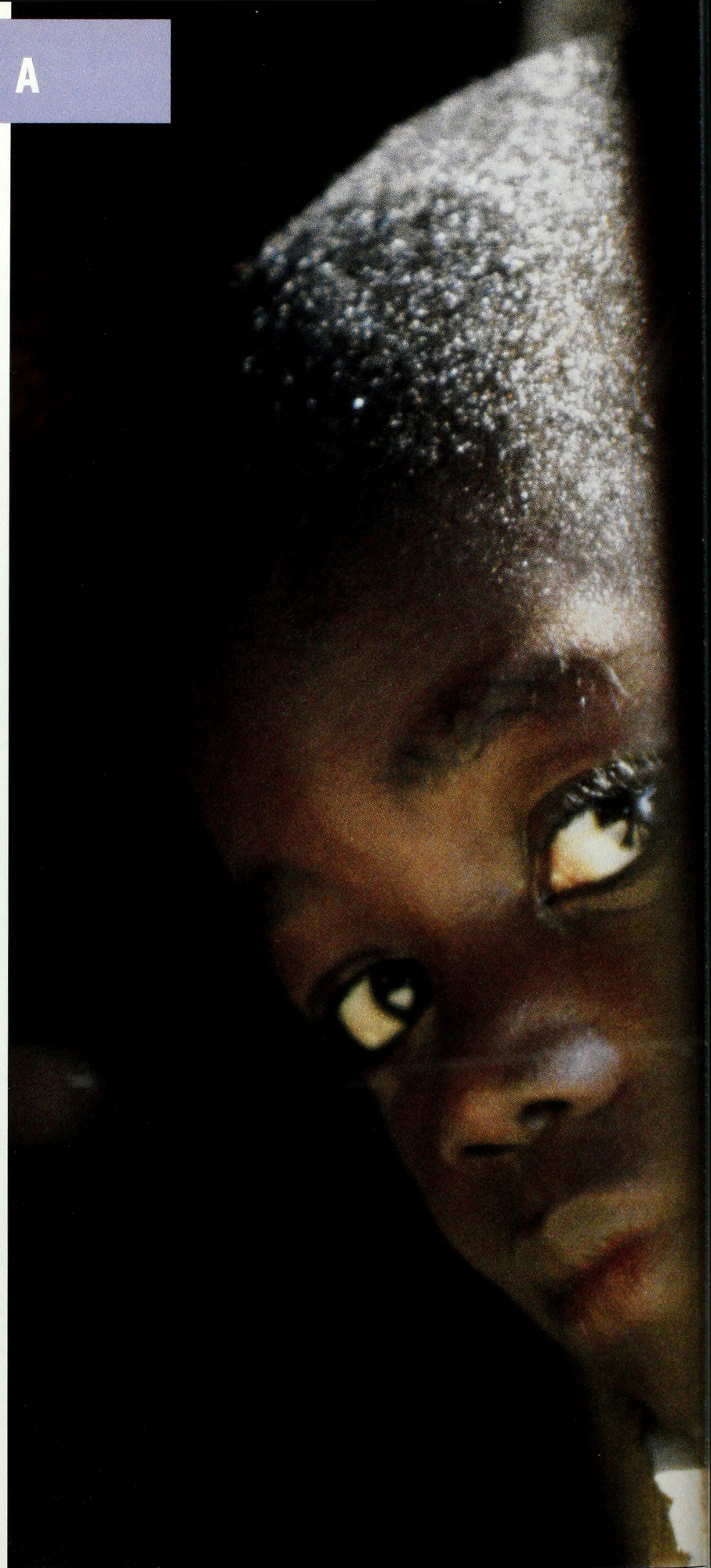
PHOTOS BY NATHAN JONES

After six years of brutal and bewildering civil war, Liberia is struggling to survive. The often aimless conflict between rebel groups displaced two-thirds of the West African country's 2.5 million people from their homes, killed an estimated 150,000, destroyed civic facilities, and devastated the entire national economy.

Liberia was founded in 1821 by U.S. philanthropists to resettle freed black slaves in Africa. The colony became the continent's first independent republic in 1847. A lush tropical climate, abundant mineral resources, and major foreign investment made it one of the richest nations in Africa.

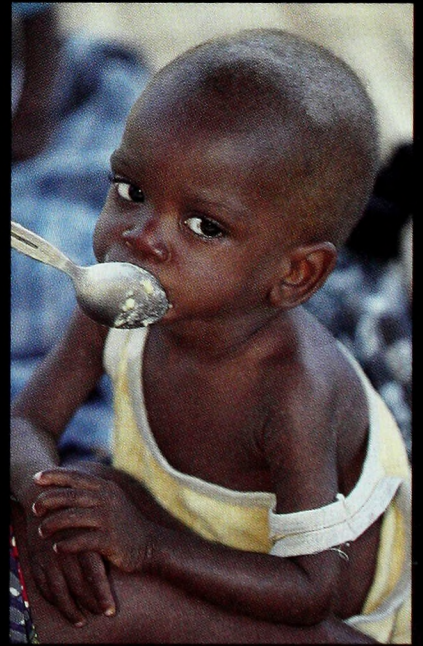
A long period of stability ended when a bloody military coup in 1980 installed an army sergeant, Samuel Doe, as president. Rebel groups overthrew him in 1989. The chaotic civil war followed. One-quarter of the 60,000 combatants were under age 15. One faction had a "small boys unit" for children under 12, who tend to be more brutal than older fighters because their conscience is not fully formed. Many of the soldiers go into battle drunk on alcohol or drugged, making them especially ruthless.

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FACES OF SURVIVAL

SHATTERED
BY WAR,
LIBERIA HAS
BECOME A
COUNTRY OF
SURVIVORS.



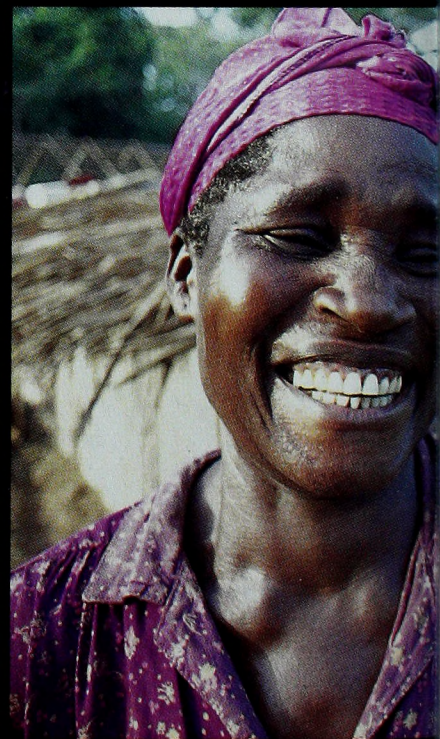
Left and center: With Liberia's educational system devastated, children flock to schools set up by humanitarian agencies. Right: A child who faced starvation finds food and medical care at a World Vision center.



Above: The smiles of survivors of Liberia's civil war belie perils they face in their future.



Left: Jude, 7, who watched his parents being killed, now lives in a Christian orphanage in Liberia. Nathan Jones, who took these photographs, has made adoption plans that will bring Jude and his five siblings to Washington state.



Right: A war refugee returns to her home, where World Vision aid helps her family reestablish their farm.

World Vision was one of the first humanitarian agencies to return to Liberia in the final stages of the war. Late in 1995, Dr. Titus Angi of World Vision's staff was dropped by helicopter into the ruined jungle town of Zwedru, 174 miles southeast of the capital, Monrovia. There he worked alone among starving and dying people. One soldier said of his presence: "A doctor! Very precious! Very precious!"

In April, World Vision began emergency food shipments to the capital. Last autumn, Dr. Angi and 20 Liberian staff members began emergency therapeutic feeding among 4,000 severely malnourished children in the town of Tubmanburg in western Liberia. Staff members reported children dying in their parents' arms and adults falling dead as they waited in line for food rations.

One Liberian aiding his country's survival is the Rev. T. Edward Kofi, founder of African Christian Fellowship International, which established tuition-free schools and orphanages in Monrovia for thousands of children. Kofi knows firsthand the horrors of the war. In 1990, his 13-year-old daughter was kidnapped, raped, and held for two years at a military base. In 1996, Kofi's 17-year-old son was executed by rebels as he attempted to rescue a group of blind boys.

Is he tempted to bitterness? Yes, he admits. "These soldiers are heartless." Yet, he adds, "They don't understand.

They are driven by demonic forces. So from a spiritual standpoint, it is hard to be bitter toward them. We can only pray that the Lord will miraculously open their hearts and their minds so that there can be... repentance. There is no weapon that can win this war," he adds. "Only forgiveness."

Today the people of Liberia struggle to remain human in the face of massive

inhumanity. These pictures show some of the survivors of the blighted country: 🌐

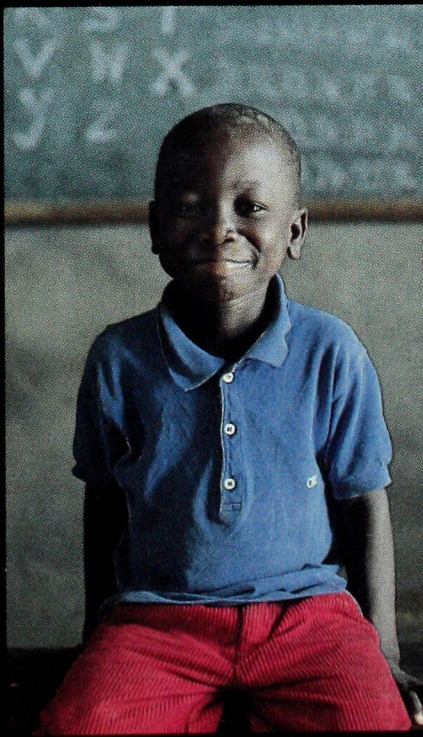
Nathan Jones, a free-lance photo-journalist from Woodland, Wash., visited Liberia twice in 1996. During one assignment, he arranged for the adoption of six orphaned children of war among his family and friends.



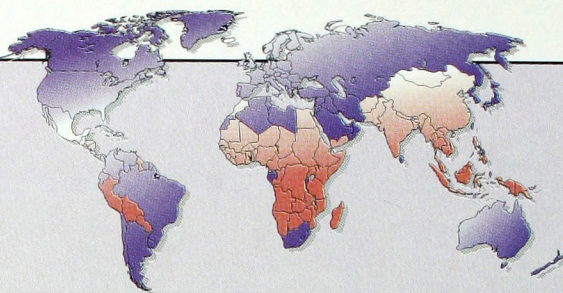
Above: A 10-year-old soldier is among 15,000 under 15 who fought in the war. Uniformed randomly in castoff army fatigues, satin dresses, even stolen choir gowns, child troopers commonly are assigned to control road checkpoints and loot buildings abandoned by fleeing citizens.



Left: A child finds care at an orphanage in Monrovia. Humanitarian agencies are planning residential facilities, education, and trauma treatment for orphans of the war.



WORLD VISION NEWS



OVERSEAS AID CUT WHILE NEED GROWS

Governments of the world's prosperous countries have cut assistance to poor countries to an average of 0.27 percent of their gross domestic product, reports the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This is the lowest proportion in 20 years.

Between 1994 and 1995, the drop amounted to 9.3 percent in real terms. More will be cut in 1997.

The United States has led the way, slicing types of aid by 22 percent to more than 30 percent, though food aid has been retained. The country now provides less overseas assistance than France, which along with Britain and Germany is cutting back too.

Meanwhile, humanitarian aid agencies are struggling to alleviate lasting disasters in collapsed states like Liberia, Rwanda, and Somalia. With these crises faded from television screens but still raging, donations for their work are proving insufficient.

"Rarely have we needed private donations as much as we do now to help the poor and the hurting," says Cary Paine, World Vision's vice president of development. "For many thousands of people, it's literally a matter of life or death."

A young girl covers her head against drizzling rain in a makeshift camp for 72,000 people displaced by civil war in the Central African country of Rwanda.

TERRI OWENS / WORLD VISION

ASIA'S MALNUTRITION HIGH, UN AGENCY REPORTS

Half the world's malnourished children are found in only three countries, reports UNICEF.

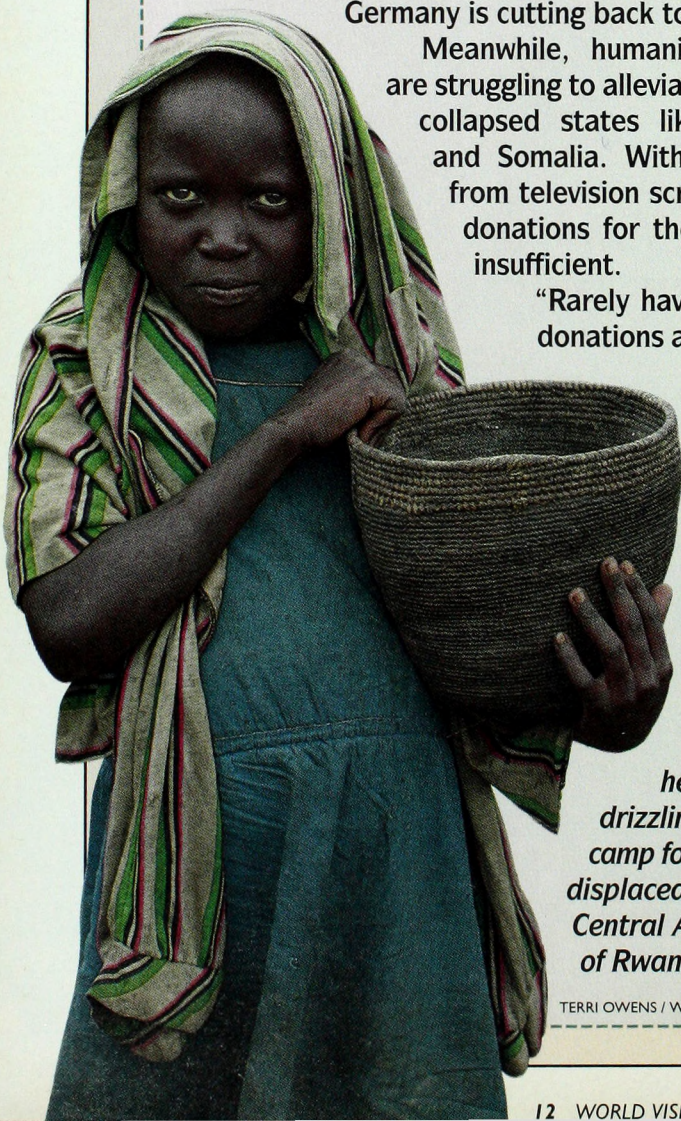
According to the agency, 67 percent of the children in Bangladesh and 60 percent in India are poorly nourished. Malnutrition also is soaring among the children of Pakistan.

Overall the child malnutrition rate in South Asia is more than 50 percent. In Africa, the malnutrition rate among the young is 30 percent.

Urban Jonsson, UNICEF's South Asia regional director, says the traditional assumption that poverty and government neglect are to blame is invalid. "Girls and women in South Asia seem to be generally less well cared for by their families, their partners, and their societies," he says. Consequently, many Asian women are dangerously undernourished during pregnancy and deliver babies with low birth weight. The other major factor in child malnutrition is the "appalling sanitary conditions" in overcrowded South Asian slums, Jonsson adds.

World Vision India's national director, Dr. Radha Paul, says, "We have persisted with education. Where we have done this we have found that things such as infant survival rates have greatly improved."

Many government programs have proved insufficient because of the scale of the problem and difficulties reaching isolated areas, Paul believes. She says World Vision India is meeting the problem by shifting its focus from institutional child care to community development. Millions of children in villages across India already are benefiting from community projects promoting health, nutrition, immunization, and hygiene, she adds.



ORGANIZED 'FAMINES' HELP FEED HUNGRY

More than 250,000 teenagers across the United States went hungry during World Vision's 30 Hour Famine in 1996 to raise over \$4 million for work among the needy in 101 countries. The annual program included young people from 14,000 church and youth groups, community organizations, and schools.



Globally, more than 1 million participants in 21 countries joined World Vision's 1996 organized famines, simulating the chronic hunger that afflicts many millions of people who live with drought, poverty, and warfare. The events worldwide have raised as much as \$21.5 million in a single year. The length of the famines varies from eight hours for elderly Hong Kong residents to 40 hours for Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans.

The next 30 Hour Famine is scheduled for Feb. 21-22, 1997. For information, call (800) 7-FAMINE.

IV WORKERS BRAVE TRIFE IN BURUNDI

As all-out civil war threatened Burundi during many tense months of 1996, World Vision staff continued assisting people displaced by outbreaks of fighting in the Central African country.

By September, at least 150,000 people had been killed since 1993 in sporadic warfare between the majority Hutu tribe and the Tutsi minority, which controlled the country's 16,500-strong army. As many as 700,000 people in a population of 6.1 million were displaced at any one time. Governments of the world long feared a repetition of the bloodbath that washed over neighboring Rwanda during three months of 1994.

At several sites in the troubled country, World Vision distributed relief goods, provided trauma counseling, and gave medical care to displaced people and orphans of both the Tutsi and Hutu tribes. The agency also assisted refugees who fled Burundi into neighboring Tanzania.

BOSNIANS RECEIVE VARIOUS ASSISTANCE

World Vision distributed clothing, blankets, mattresses, stoves, and kitchen sets to Bosnian families suffering in the aftermath of four years of civil war that ended in December 1995.

Meanwhile, the agency extended psycho-social counseling for Bosnian children to four major areas of the

country. Experts say 100 percent of Bosnia's young people are counted as severely traumatized by enduring long-term shelling, dodging sniper fire on the way to school, and seeing parents and neighbors die. If left untended, the emotional scarring could handicap their future lives.

World Vision also is rebuilding schools and helping people launch small businesses in the crippled Balkan country.

TREES DISTRIBUTED TO HAITI FARMERS

A World Vision land protection project in the Caribbean island coun-

try of Haiti delivered 151,000 young trees to subsistence farmers in 35 communities during 1996. World Vision staff previously had trained the farmers in tree care and harvesting. All of them are residents of La Gonave island, about 30 miles northwest of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The tropical island of 83,000 people is a vestige of the pre-technology world, with no public electricity, water, or telephones. Impoverished residents over the years cut once-abundant timber to make charcoal for sale. Eventually the island was stripped of 90 percent of its trees.


The World Vision project aims to reverse the deforestation and its effects. Forest trees, including fast-growing bamboo, casuarina, and leucena, will halt loss of fertile topsoil and alleviate drought and flash flooding. Food-bearing trees, including papaya, citrus, breadfruit, coconut, and almond, will provide additional sources of food and income for islanders. The World Vision tree distribution is an annual event.

Tree seedlings in rich potting soil are thinned three months before planting at a World Vision tree nursery on La Gonave Island in Haiti.



BRUCE BRANDER / WORLD VISION





Travis (Kody) Armstrong, 17 months, of the south-central area of Los Angeles, beams appreciation for a wool blanket delivered to him by World Vision's Project Home Again.

Operating in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Washington state, and other parts of the United States, the project trains church volunteers to assist homeless people toward self-

sufficiency. The volunteers help families locate and furnish homes. They also help breadwinners find jobs and provide guidance in financial planning.

Since 1989, the project has resettled more than 2,500 families throughout the country. Some 75 percent of its clients attain self-sufficiency.

To help meet the basic needs of poor people in more than 100 countries, World Vision distributes more than \$100 million in goods annually from businesses, government agencies, and individual contributors. Kody's blanket was one of 65,500 that the U.S. Department of Defense donated under a 1987 homeless assistance act. The blankets were transported in 25 trucks to World Vision distribution centers around the United States. 🌐

World Vision Photo by Randy Miller

SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR
HELPING OTHERS
IN THE NAME
OF CHRIST

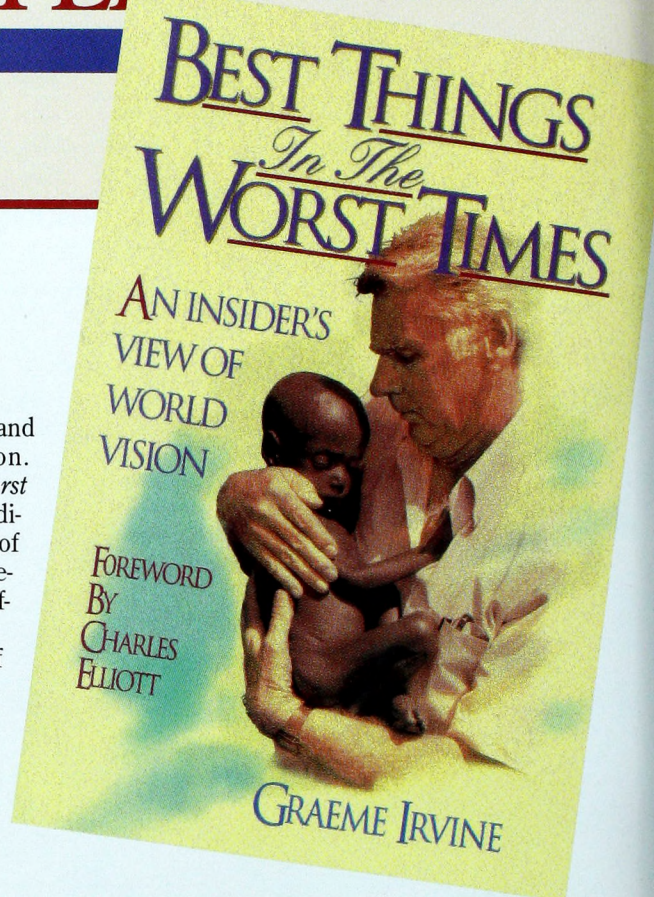
BEST THINGS IN THE WORST OF TIMES

You can't celebrate life in one part of the world, while ignoring suffering in another. We are one human family, sharing a common humanity," states Graeme Irvine, retired president of World Vision International, in his new book *Best Things in the Worst Times*.

The book, based on Irvine's 28 years of service with the Christian humanitarian agency, explains World Vision's mission and how his life

has been inspired and shaped by its vision. *Best Things in the Worst Times* presents a credible and clear picture of how World Vision alleviates poverty and suffering worldwide.

To obtain a copy of Irvine's book, contact Book Partners, Inc. at (503) 682-9821.

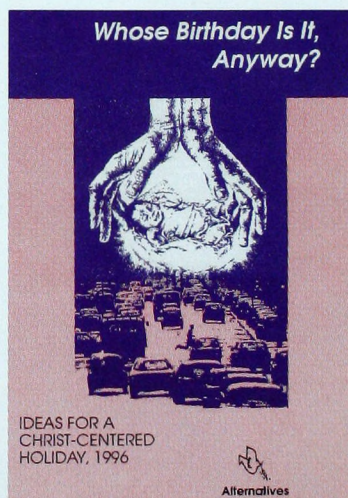


CHRISTMAS ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives for Simple Living challenges people to handle their money wisely so that they can give to the poor. This non-profit organization offers a wide range of resources to help people simplify life, spend less, and give more to needy people at Christmas and throughout the year.

While Christmas tends to be a time of stressful activities—scurrying, shopping, and worrying—author Tom Sine suggests alternative themes—waiting, preparing, anticipating, walking, receiving, living, and sharing—in the 1996 edition of *Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway?* The booklet also offers Advent Scripture readings, ways to celebrate activities, such as trimming the tree, and suggestions for remembering those in need.

For more information on Alternatives or its resources, contact Gerald Iversen at (800) 821-6153.



NEW FOCUS

New Focus, a nationwide Christian nonprofit organization, helps people get off welfare. Formed in 1994 through World Vision's domestic ministry, the group trains churches to help current or former welfare recipients toward independence.

Church families learn to show effective compassion to the whole person by considering physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

Resources include *Heart House*, a self-evaluation guide that explains the gospel, and a Bible study geared to low-income households.

For more information on New Focus, or on how to help a welfare recipient through your church, call (616) 895-5356.

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B729 --

URBANA '96

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship will celebrate five decades of challenging students to become involved in missions during the 18th annual Student Mission Convention at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The convention, Dec. 27-31, is primarily for high school seniors, college students, and graduates.

More than 270 mission organizations, seminaries, and graduate schools will be represented. World Vision's 30 Hour Famine program will benefit from a lunch-hour fast and prayer meeting for attendees. Lunch savings will be donated to several organizations.

More than 17,000 students, young professionals, and church workers are expected to attend.

For more information, you may contact the Urbana '96 web site at <http://www.gospelcom.net/iv/> or call (608) 274-7995.

“ We are all God's children so it is important to share His gifts. Do not worry about why problems exist in the world—just respond to people's needs. **”**

—Mother Teresa

compiled and written by Stephanie Stevenson

WORLD VISION SOUTH AFRICA



WORLD VISION'S DIRECTOR FOR SOUTH AFRICA, SHELDON RANKIN, SPOKE WITH WRITER ANN HUDOCK ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S TRANSFORMATION AND WORLD VISION'S WORK THERE.

In April 1994, Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first-ever black president. Though South Africans and the world see great hope for the country's future, it is clear that reversing apartheid's legacy of inequality and poverty will take a long time.

Today, more than 70 percent of all South Africans live in poverty. Of these 31 million poor people, 95 percent are black. The majority of the poor live in rural areas.

Twelve million households in South Africa do not have access to safe drinking water. Violent crime threatens internal stability and jeopardizes the country's valuable tourist industry. Students protest inadequate educational facilities, often vandalizing or even destroying schools in the process.

How is South Africa facing its many challenges?

Q HOW HAS SOUTH AFRICA CHANGED SINCE MANDELA'S ELECTION?

A There definitely was a sense of euphoria during pre- and post-election times. There was also a fear of right-wing violence and the possibility of anarchy. All that has changed dramatically, given the strength of liberation for all, both black and white.

Apartheid had so skillfully and successfully set a barrier between people that, although we're brothers in the same land, we really didn't participate

S O U T H

ANN C. HUDOCK

BUILDING
A NEW
NATION

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW FLAG reflects the national motto, "Unity is Strength," in diverse lines converging into a single direction. Its six colors recall other flags in the country's nearly 350-year history.

in one another's world. The miracle of the election was that it drove home for the first time that we were one. There was a sense of acceptance. The former negative talk has really been quashed.

Nelson Mandela probably has been the single greatest advocate for reconciliation. He has settled white people's fears, has lowered barriers, and has in fact promoted the really important thing, which is not just sharing the notion of being one nation but integrating our space.

A poignant example of this was a young black girl I saw walking down the street wearing a school uniform that a year ago had been worn exclusively by white children. It really brought home to me that changes were happening in a very powerful way.

A clear indication of the new order is the extent to which people have embraced Mandela as their president. There is a sense of relief that there wasn't the collapse or anarchy that people feared.

The new South African flag also has become a symbol that everyone loves. At rugby matches you are more likely to see the new flag than the white Afrikaner flag, though rugby matches once were the domain of Afrikaners. Now Afrikaners are as comfortable as anyone with this symbol of the new South Africa.

South Africa is very much a new land and there are still tremendous challenges to be met. People hope the government will deliver a new society. That is very much the challenge in this country. Changes might not happen as fast as people would like, but a clear sense of hope is there.

THE ELECTIONS PROMISED PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE BLACK POOR. WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, AND WHAT IS YET TO BE REALIZED?

Our expectations were very high, and probably there's a sense of disappointment. Many black people expected a job, a house, and education instantly. There is a sense of disillusionment now that this hasn't happened. At the same time, with the honeymoon period over, people are taking the initiative and positive changes are happening.

The chief vehicle by which change and transformation were to occur, the Reconstruction and Development Program, unfortunately is not assuming the prominence it once had. That is the sobering reality of the limits of what this economic system is capable of producing. You can't undo 350 years of injustice overnight.

Most people recognize that education is the primary vehicle for redistributing wealth, and integration is happening there. Black parents are busing their children to white schools. That is a very significant indicator of change.

Housing is the second area where there have been changes. These too probably are not as great as expected, but a subsidy scheme helps make home ownership a possibility for the black population.

An area where we have seen significant improvement is in the promotion of black entrepreneurship. There is an expansion of black business, with a focus on microenterprises in order to broaden the country's economic base.

SOUTH AFRICA'S TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

BY ANN C. HUDOCK

The new South African government's Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to

investigate human rights abuses committed during the era of apartheid—or official separation of the country's races—that extended from 1948 to 1991. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who in 1984 won the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the struggle against apartheid, heads the commission.

On his appointment to the position in November 1995, Tutu said: "I hope that the work of the commission, by opening wounds to cleanse them, will thereby stop them from festering. We cannot be facile and say bygones will be bygones, because they will not be bygones and will return to haunt us. True reconciliation is never cheap, for it is based on forgiveness, which is costly. Forgiveness in turn depends on repentance, which has to be based on an acknowledgement of what was wrong, and therefore on disclosure of the truth."

TRAVELLING COURT

Since its first hearing in April 1996, the commission has operated like a travelling court, moving around the country listening to victims' stories. There is no shortage of these. During the 1980s alone, between 55,000 and 75,000 people were detained without trial in South Africa, and a large number of them were

abused, tortured, or killed.

Most of the harrowing tales presented to the commission come from ordinary people who summon the courage to speak of the past in order to get on with the future. Women tell of police raids, armored cars, and husbands disappearing in the night. Some people were forced to watch while spouses and children were tortured or killed. Women were brutally raped in front of their husbands. Most witnesses find the exercise in truth searing.

GRANTS AMNESTY

While the commission does not hold prosecution powers, it can grant amnesty to people who testify to crimes they committed for political and non-personal reasons. The commission will spend two years reviewing atrocities committed from 1960 until December 1993, when a multiracial transitional committee was formalized in advance of the April 1994 elections.

Many people do not ask for reparation. One woman asked for a tombstone for her dead husband. Most want only answers about what happened to their loved ones, and explanations as to why some were taken from them. Other people just want to tell their stories. At one point in a Truth Commission hearing in the coastal city of East London, accounts of atrocities became too stark even for Tutu, who laid his head on a table and wept uncontrollably.



There also are changes in employment practices—and without state intervention. We are seeing black men promoted, and also black women, in the public and private domain. These changes are occurring voluntarily.

HAVE SOUTH AFRICA'S BROADER POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL CHANGES AFFECTED THE LIFE OF THE AVERAGE BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN?

Absolutely, although that is not to say our problems have come anywhere near to being solved. As I said, enthusiasm and expectations for economic changes were greater than anything that could be realized quickly.

The challenge that faces us is to create a just society and an economic base where everyone who works hard has a chance to prosper. Government and international aid is not enough to accomplish this. The South African public must willingly give some of its own resources. World Vision can support and lead that process.

We have beneficiaries who don't want charity. They want to give something back to the program that has helped them. That shows a readiness to change and grow. It speaks of a transformation that all South Africa needs to undergo. World Vision is well placed to facilitate and lead such a challenge.

WHAT ROLE HAVE NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS GENERALLY—AND WORLD VISION SPECIFICALLY—PLAYED IN SHAPING THE COUNTRY?

Previously, NGOs offered the only sector where the black voice could be heard, other than in outright protest. NGOs promoted a culture of democracy and a vision of an alternative society.

World Vision contributed to this by providing a safety net assisting 32,000 children at any one time. We worked towards the development of local communities, which involved building schools and water programs. World Vision has a 29-year history in South Africa working among the poorest of the poor.

In recent years, we have changed our focus to emphasize building relationships among South Africans. We are using our child sponsorship program to facilitate this. It is truly remarkable the number of local South African sponsors that are really getting to know their sponsored children. In the past this wasn't possible. Our newsletters also have educated the South African public about opportunities to build relationships. This has transformed many people's thinking and brought about reconciliation.

CRITICS OF PRESIDENT MANDELA HAVE CHARGED THAT, TO FURTHER CENTRALIZED POWER AND CONTROL, HE HAS LIMITED THE RESOURCES OF NGOS, THE VERY ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUSTAINED POLITICAL RESISTANCE OVER THE YEARS. IS IT TRUE THAT NGOS ARE STARVING FOR LACK OF SUPPORT?

I certainly understand this analysis but I disagree with it. It is important to understand the life cycle and evolution of the NGO sector in South

WORLD VISION SOUTH AFRICA



WORLD VISION VOCATIONAL TRAINING in weaving, sewing, and knitting enables this woman to create sleeping mats from shopping bags. Other students sew school uniforms, factory overalls, and T-shirts, while one copies dresses from fashion magazines.

Africa. Under former international sanctions against the country, NGOs were the only legitimate means by which most overseas money for development aid could be channeled. This created a hothouse for growth in the NGO sector.

This was money that the South African government otherwise would have received through bilateral aid. So the first thing our new government did was to channel these funds away from the NGO sector directly to the government.

World Vision has responded by increasing our local fund raising capacity and, in fact, our budget has increased. Meanwhile, World Vision's relationship with the government is very positive. We have developed programs and taken them to the government where they were endorsed at the highest level.

WHAT HAS BEEN WORLD VISION'S MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, AND ITS GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Our challenge is to transform our program to make it immediately relevant to all South Africans. We are recruiting more black child-sponsors. They previously did not support the program because it was not directly about political transformation. Now that this objective has been achieved, people want to focus on other concerns.

Our greatest achievement has been in local fund raising for development and self-help. We have 6,000 South African sponsors now, and most sponsor more than one child.

I'm quite proud of what we've done already, but our hope over the next two years is that our programs will be expanded. However, these efforts are limited since World Vision's program needs are greater than the amount of money we are able to raise.

WHAT IS WORLD VISION'S HOPE FOR THE FUTURE?

World Vision's expectation is for children to have a full life—not just black children but white chil-

dren too. Children here have suffered abuse, violent crime, political assassination. They need and deserve better lives.

We also want to see the development of full human beings. We want to encourage people to value all life, especially where that value didn't exist before.

In a finite world, how do you create more? You do that by giving away, by active service and Christ-centered love. We want to encourage society to do that so that we can create a better life for all people.

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT AND RECONCILIATION IF PRESIDENT MANDELA CEASES TO LEAD IT?

The ANC [African National Congress] has considered this, and a successor [Thabo Mbeki] has been chosen. As a country, we understand that we have Nelson Mandela only for a short time. The consensus is that he probably will work until 1999. Then, when we see the next set of elections, he will run and win but retire. Then his successor will take over.

We have avoided the personality cult that sometimes forms around popular leaders. This speaks of a fairly mature democracy, where we understand our strengths and weaknesses. It displays a vibrant democracy, and the presence of healthy debate.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU SAID THAT ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA MEAN THAT "CHURCHES CAN GET BACK TO BEING CHURCHES." WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT AND RECONCILIATION?

The church's role is to preach the gospel. I believe the gospel is about the total transformation of human beings. You must address the whole human condition. This means that people in South Africa need to regain a sense of dignity, pride, wholeness, and the security of a personal relationship with God. The development of the community depends on the transformation of every single individual.

Right now, the church needs to direct people to God. I think that's what Tutu meant. He pointed out that the church's role before was narrower, since it emphasized the need for political transformation. Now the churches must go back to addressing the whole picture. The church must advocate reconciliation and healing.

Ann C. Hudock is a writer on international development. She lives in Brighton, England.

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NEXT TO THE LAST WORD

There is a life-affirming story behind the photo feature by Nathan Jones that appears on pages 8 to 11.

The Woodland, Wash. photo-journalist visited Liberia twice during 1996. He fell in love with six orphans from the same family—four boys and two girls ranging in age from 6 to 10. The children had been taken for safety to a missionary compound where he was lodging.

Nathan discovered that the youngsters had fled for their lives after the brutal murder of their parents. During their ordeal, one of the boys, Galima, 7, was held to the ground with a machine gun to his head. The children went without food for 10 days, and generally had little to eat.

Nathan, his three sisters, and a close friend, with their spouses, have banded together to adopt all the children. These caring couples live within minutes of each other in the Washington state countryside.

Nathan does more than take pictures; he moves mountains.

—Terry Madison

WORLD VISION

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HOMECOMING PREPARATIONS

The question softly and timidly asked from the back of the room made the required seven-week church membership course worthwhile.

"Do you mean He's coming back?" Bewildering and exciting at the same time, the question came from a brand new Christian. Our membership colleague was an Iranian woman, a recent émigré from that country and a recent convert to Jesus. The spiritual void that she had once felt, a need tied to her humanity more than her national origin, was in the process of being filled.

Her life had taken on new meaning. There was a freshness about her. The smile was easy, constant, infectious. Something new had begun within her. She would never be the same again. Her enthusiasm was irrepressible.

But she was indeed brand new to the faith. As the pastor covered the historic verities of the faith, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus—and his promised return—her eyes grew wider and wider.

"He's coming back! I didn't know that."

Would that each of us could live in such a way that our spiritual eyes, and the accompanying excitement, would grow bigger and bigger day by day. Unfortunately, far too many of us have our spiritual identity anchored in the event of evangelism rather than in the process of discipleship, that growing, nurturing, deepening experience with "the author and finisher of our faith." For some of us, the testimony ends with conversion, and it seems that God has not done a single new thing within us for a long, long time.

Others have sought to invest their spiritual energies in fine-tuning doctrinal differences. A legitimate exercise in the process of spiritual maturation, but sadly, many are sidetracked by the doctrinal battles. Theological purity becomes more important than Christian unity. We'd rather fall on our doctrinal swords than bear witness to the incomprehensible love of a savior who promises to return. This movement to a modern-day Pharisaism can inoculate many against a gospel that is always bigger than our individual understandings.

Our Iranian friend was highlighting a potential problem with our faith. Each of us has been drawn to Jesus by a need that encouraged a commitment. Perhaps our need for a friend in time of trouble, for a reconciler in relationships, for One who would shoulder our burden of sin, for a father figure, for an exclusive king with an inclusive kingdom, for the promise of heaven and the expectation of life eternal—it's all there, and more!

But our original conversion quite possibly was not dependent on the whole of the gospel. The Good News, as we understood it then, was good enough. Gratefully, the Good News, in all of its sacred wholeness and holiness, is more than we will ever be able to comprehend fully, this side of glory.

From this enormous position of strength, we continue to work out our faith. Our faith deepens. Our relationships take on new meaning. The community of faith becomes more important to us, and the application of our faith, given the increasing complexity of our world, becomes more challenging and more necessary.

Our world certainly challenges us, but I continue to believe that this difficult decade of the 90s harbors some of the greatest opportunities for the church. The world is hurting. Genocide, ethnic cleansing, the widespread cheapening of human life have created a sense of intractability regarding humanity's problems. The loss of an ethical focus to our collective actions, the erosion of common values, the abandonment of moral courage have left the world in a bewildering mess. Governments have failed, ideologies have shattered, leaders have come up short. The felt need for a transcendent solution is huge.

We live in a world that desperately wants a path toward faith, to believe in something higher and stronger than itself, something better on which to anchor the present and reduce the future's uncertainty. Very simply, the world wants something that works.

A faith whose basic premise is a permanently restored relationship with a sovereign God is something that works. It is indeed a position of strength.

Our faith, holistically presented, contains a cross and an empty tomb. Calvary makes our faith credible. The remission of sin is accomplished through the sacrificial shedding of blood. The resurrection makes our faith relevant. Death is no longer victorious. Calvary speaks to an identification with a suffering humanity. The resurrection points to the ultimate end of that suffering. Calvary legitimizes the presentation of faith to a world in need. Innocence, willingly sacrificed for needs others can't overcome, will always have an audience. The resurrection makes all of our hopes for the world eternally tangible.

Whether at the grave site of a loved one or witnessing the genocidal hatred of a world in its death throes, nothing short of divine intervention will do. Nothing else makes sense. Nothing else works.

But a sovereign God did intervene. He "so loved the world that he gave." He gave all. He gave enough. Someday we will understand the totality of that gift. For now, it is enough to know that the "windows of heaven have been opened and a blessing poured out such that we cannot contain it."

If we can't contain it, why not give it away? If the News is so good, why not share it? We are stewards of the event that took place in our individual lives: our conversion to the God of history and the Christ of Calvary. We are humbled by the magnificence of this gift freely bestowed. We are challenged by our inability to comprehend it fully.

But we also should be motivated to share what we know—God's inseparable love affair with this world. Two thousand years ago, he felt compelled to intervene with his son. He continues to intervene through those of us who have chosen to follow his footsteps, until he does return. ☉

*If the
News is
so good,
why not
share it?*



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of a World
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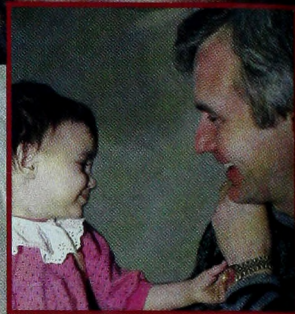
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GLOBAL BINGE

BY BARBARA R. THOMPSON

As a young boy growing up in Eastern Uganda, Paul Odongo* was beaten routinely by his alcoholic father. His mother turned much of the family's millet crop into a potent home brew, and Paul was forced to scavenge for food. At the age of 8, he went to live with an alcoholic uncle, who treated him as the family slave.

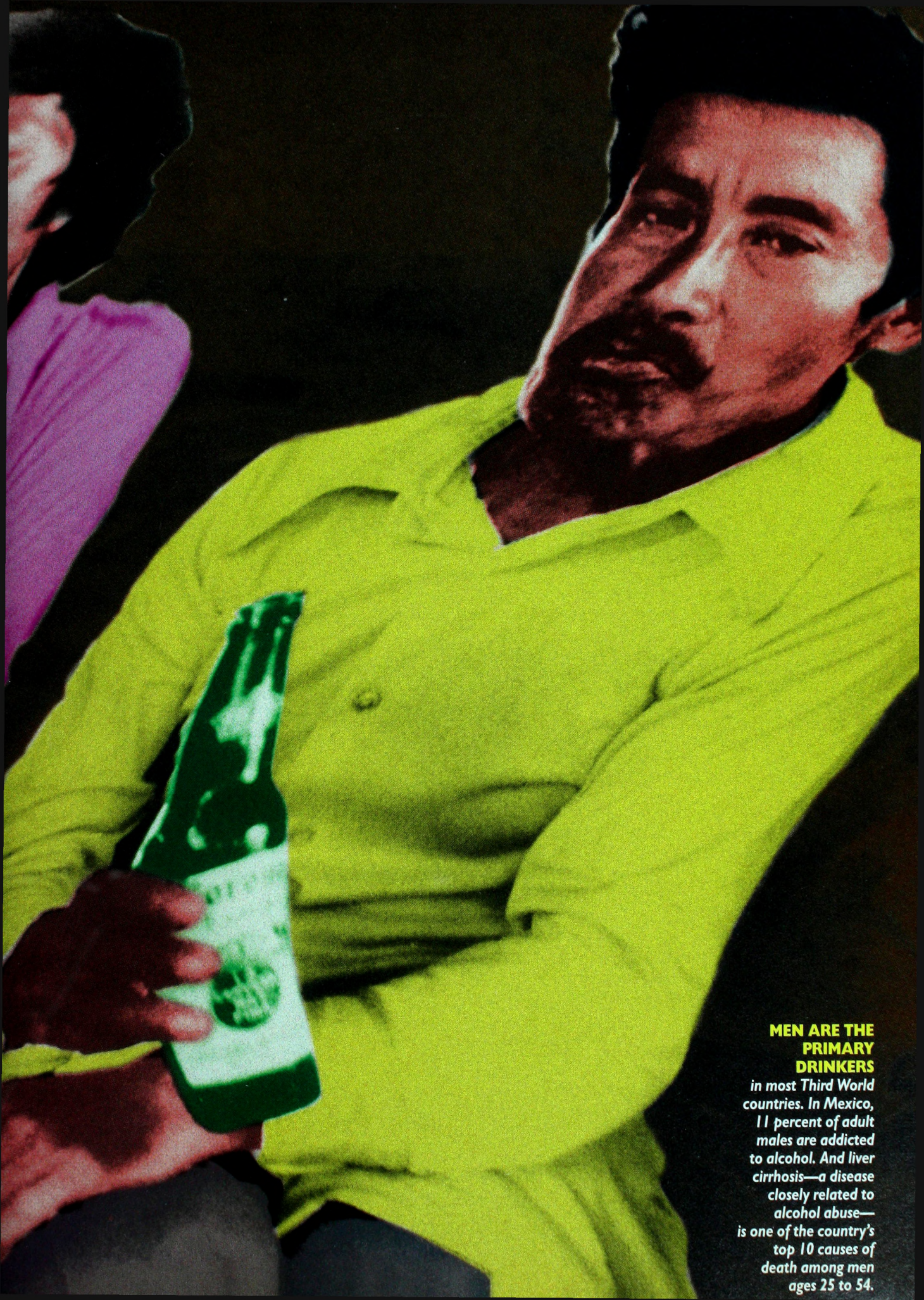
Despite his traumatic home life, Paul went to school and eventually graduated from teacher's college. He became a devout Christian, married, and raised nine children. Neither he nor his wife ever drank alcohol. "I don't want to see my children suffer like I did," Paul told a friend.

In the mid-1980s, while on a church mission, Paul was killed by drunken soldiers. Over the next decade, four of his children became alcoholics. Two daughters were infected with AIDS because of alcohol-related promiscuity, and both

DIGITAL MANIPULATION OF A PHOTO BY L. TAYLOR / WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**Names and minor details have been changed to protect confidences.*





**MEN ARE THE
PRIMARY
DRINKERS**

in most Third World countries. In Mexico, 11 percent of adult males are addicted to alcohol. And liver cirrhosis—a disease closely related to alcohol abuse—is one of the country's top 10 causes of death among men ages 25 to 54.



RAPID URBANIZATION, the marketing of factory-made alcohol, and the introduction of cash into rural economies has transformed drinking from occasional events and sacred rituals to a recreational pastime. In some regions of Africa, up to 44 percent of the average per-capita income is spent on alcohol.

gave birth to children with fetal alcohol syndrome. By 1996, more than 30 of Paul's grandchildren were growing up in alcoholic homes.

Around the world millions of people like Paul and his children suffer from problems related to the abuse of

alcoholic beverages. The problems include addiction, chronic poor health, physical and sexual abuse, premature death from accidents, violent crimes, and AIDS. "For all the focus on illegal drugs, the number one cause of the spread of AIDS is alcohol," says

Michelle B., a recovering addict and neighborhood activist from Charlotte, N.C. "Get drunk, get stupid, get AIDS."

The World Health Organization calls abuse of alcoholic beverages "one of the most serious public health problems in the world." With the exception of drunk-driving accidents, however, the high cost of alcohol abuse remains largely invisible. Unlike cocaine and heroin, alcohol is legal almost everywhere, and the majority of people who drink do so without serious problems. For a substantial and persistent segment of society, however, alcohol always will be associated with hardship and tragedy.

WORLD VISION LEADS A VILLAGE OUT OF ALCOHOL

In the village of Tilivi, Ecuador, 400 families suffered the ravages of alcoholism for more than 10 years. In the 1970s, more than 2,600 gallons of alcohol arrived each month from a neighboring village. Many families started small businesses selling alcohol. Often both husbands and wives were alcoholics.

Three alcohol wholesalers exerted economic control over the village, growing rich at the community's expense. When villagers did not have enough money to buy alcohol, they were forced to sell their farm animals and small land holdings. As a result, more than 1,000 children suffered from malnutrition, and many died each year. The children also suffered violence at the hands of their parents.

In the 1980s, World Vision began community development and evangelization projects in the region. Eventually village leaders, including the three main wholesalers of alcohol, received Jesus Christ. The suppliers smashed their alcohol warehouses in front of the villagers as a testimony to their conversion.

Within a few years, Tilivi's alcohol distribution centers were closed and the community became an evangelization center for the region. At a World Vision conference, the mayor of the province's capital city said:

"I want to thank you personally, in the name of all the people of our province and for the children who now have healthy skin, cheerfulness in their hearts, and no parasites in their bodies. Most of all, they have the presence of the gospel. Its message of peace and love changed the lives of people who for many years lived in a state of marginalization and poverty because of alcohol." —Jose Vasquez, World Vision Ecuador

ALCOHOL PLAGUE

"Drinking is the same all over the world." This was the informed judgment of a European alcoholism expert until he visited Gallup, N.M. There, on the border of a Navajo reservation, he found a town literally covered with alcoholics. Drunken people passed out on the street were almost as common as empty beer bottles scattered along the roadside. "There is something horrifying about the look of Navajo drinking in Gallup," wrote journalist Calvin Trillin. "Something that makes it less like big-city skid-row drinking than like a medieval epidemic."

THE POOREST OF THE POOR USE ALCOHOL TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER, COLD, ILLNESS, AND BOREDOM.

For reasons unknown, indigenous groups such as American Indians, Eskimos, and New Zealand's Maori people suffer disproportionate consequences from the use and abuse of alcohol. However, Western industrialized countries are also at high risk of severe alcohol-related problems. France has one of the highest rates of cirrhosis of the liver in the world. In Canada, 9 in 10 violent crimes are committed under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The United States spends \$58 billion a year on alcohol-related problems. And despite media attention given to crack cocaine, alcohol remains the number one drug problem in the United States among all ethnic groups.

Nowhere are alcohol-related problems more dire than in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Faced with social chaos and sudden poverty, Russians now are the leading consumers of alcohol in the world. The result: a dramatic rise in alcohol-related deaths, violent crimes, street children, and birth defects.

CHEAPEST CALORIES

It's early Monday morning in a factory in Lithuania, and workers are busy lubricating machinery on an assembly line. They also are drinking vodka and will continue drinking throughout the day.

"The Soviets took away much of what made life worth living for Lithuanians and replaced it with vodka," reports Barbara Bush, a substance abuse coordinator for Catholic Social Services in Atlanta, Ga. At the request of Lithuanian church leaders, Bush recently held seminars on chemical dependency in Lithuania.

Bush estimates that 80 percent of Lithuanians are alcohol-dependent. "Now that they have to compete in a free market, Lithuanians can't sell goods manufactured by inebriated workers. They are trapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of poverty and drunkenness. The country is rapidly spiraling toward bankruptcy but, ironically, with food prices at record-high levels, vodka provides the cheapest calories in town."

DEVELOPING-WORLD BINGE

Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, Ali, a Muslim teenager, begins his day with a drink of homemade wine. Despite his Islamic convictions, which forbid alcohol, he is a heavy drinker. Ali's father recently quit drinking, but only after the family had disintegrated. None of Ali's six brothers received formal education, and Ali has dropped out of school. Despite his middle-class background, he sees his future in the faces of beggars on the street.

His fall is repeated in many countries of the developing world. The emerging middle class represents a lucrative market for American and European alcohol companies. Aggressive advertising has linked Western-style drinking habits with success and sex appeal. The result: skyrocketing

rates of alcoholism and an exponential increase in social problems related to alcohol abuse.

At the same time, the poorest of the poor in developing countries continue to use alcohol to alleviate hunger, cold, illness, and boredom. In Ecuador drinking rates are highest among expendable weekly workers. "The money does not reach their homes, because they drink it up on payday," reports Gustavo Balarezo, a World Vision staff member in the South American country.

Ironically, alcohol is a source of income for many families, as well as a source of poverty. For personal consumption and to supplement meager wages, families dip into limited supplies of food like rice and millet to produce home brews. In Botswana, 30 percent of rural households and 50 percent of urban households produce alcohol for income. In East Africa, mothers routinely pay children's school fees with money from the sale of home brew. At the same time, it is often the children who go hungry when food supplies are exhausted.

Despite the high price young people pay for adult drinking, youth in developing countries are drinking at increasingly earlier ages. This trend is largely due to advertising that targets young people. "Many Kenyan youth start drinking at age 12 or 13 to appear grown up and become the great people alcohol advertisements talk about," says Charles Maingi, a World Vision staffer in Kenya.

Ads imply that drinkers are successful people with beautiful bodies and enormous sex appeal. "That's the opposite of what we see in medicine," reports Dr. Robert Fisher, an expert on substance abuse and a consultant for the World Health Organization. "We see young professionals with rock-hard livers who need transplants to survive."

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Whatever their age, heavy drinkers in developing countries, as in the West, wreak havoc on their families. "There is scarcely any case of a man who beats his wife or daughter without, in the hours before, having drunk more than usual," reports Altemir Teiseira

FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

- Russians drink an average of 15.3 quarts

of pure alcohol per capita per year. The World Health Organization warns that 4.75 quarts constitute a health risk.

- Ten percent of drinkers consume an estimated 60 to 70 percent of all alcohol. Without problem drinkers, the profits of the alcohol industry would plummet.
- In countries where alcohol is legal but advertising it is not, drinking rates stand 30 percent lower.
- In Chile, 70 percent of job absenteeism is alcohol-related.
- In South Africa, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence estimates that 1 in 3 urban males is addicted to alcohol.
- In Canada, more than half of all deaths among Native Americans are alcohol-related.
- In Papua New Guinea, more than 85 percent of all fatal road accidents involve drivers or pedestrians who are drunk.
- In the United States, someone is killed by a drunk driver every 24 minutes.

ALCOHOL PROBLEMS INCLUDE ADDICTION, POOR HEALTH, PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE, AND PREMATURE DEATH.

of World Vision Brazil.

Women in developing countries who suffer from alcohol-related abuse and even torture are unlikely to leave their husbands or ask for legal protection. Social supports are minimal and few have the job skills or self-confidence to survive outside of marriage. For many Hindu women, the sense of helplessness is reinforced by fatalistic religious beliefs. "An Indian woman normally puts up with an alcoholic husband," says Sam Moses of World Vision India. "She believes that it is her *thalai eluthu*, the fate written on her head by the gods."

GOVERNMENT ADDICTION

Despite severe social and economic problems from alcohol, few countries attempt to regulate its consumption.

Many governments have a vested interest in increasing drinking rates. Some own or subsidize breweries. Meanwhile, taxes on alcohol often are an essential part of state income. Indonesia's largest brewery, for example, recently paid \$70 million in taxes in one year.

In wartorn Burundi, a brewery jointly owned by the government and a European brewing firm is the only game in town. "Nothing else works, and the government has no other source of income," reports Susan Hutton of World Vision's staff there. "There is a lot of profit, and no beer truck has ever been hit by a grenade or mine."

Ironically, in Burundi, as in Rwanda, Chechnya, Bosnia, and other countries at war, the majority of war crimes are committed by armed men and children acting under the influence of alco-

hol. The connection is not accidental. Alcohol acts on the cerebrum to depress inhibitions. Heavy drinkers can violate their inner moral code in ways incomprehensible even to themselves.

OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Few regions have succeeded in reducing the supply or use of alcohol. In the Pacific-island country of Western Samoa, where traditionally only men drink, a group of women came together to oppose construction of a brewery. "The women felt they already had enough problems with alcohol," reports Dr. Fisher. "But with largess from the brewery, the men voted for construction."

In the former Soviet Union, a 1980s effort initiated by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to curtail alcohol consumption likewise met with massive resistance. As in the Prohibition era in the United States, it opened the door for organized crime to take over production and distribution of alcohol. At the same time, however, there was a dramatic decline in alcohol-related problems. Life expectancy for men jumped three years, and 1 million fewer people died from alcohol-related causes.

RESPONSIBLE DRINKING?

Reacting to increasing pressures against excessive drinking in the United States and elsewhere, the alcohol industry has launched a program to encourage responsible consumption. Their ideal is a world where almost every adult drinks but does so in moderation. To promote this, industry spokesmen hold up recent research suggesting that moderate daily drinking helps prevent heart disease. For assurance that widespread use of alcohol can be safe, they point to countries like Italy and Greece, where problems related to alcohol are lessened by longstanding traditions governing drinking.

In such a world, the industry would be sensitive to cultural differences, says Marcus Grant, president of the industry-sponsored International Center for Alcohol Policies. "In Papua New Guinea, for example, tradition requires drinkers to finish a bottle once it's opened. This

DIFFERENT PATHS TO SOBRIETY

People addicted to alcohol in the developing world face an uphill battle. Medical resources, where they exist, usually are stretched thin. "And there's not great treatment for alcoholism anywhere in the world," says Dr. Robert Fisher, a consultant to the World Health Organization. "There's no magic pill or wand to wave."

For addicts able to participate in a group setting, Alcoholics Anonymous provides a free, 12-step program for recovery. AA has over 2 million members in 145 countries, and its Big Book has sold 15 million copies in 30 languages.

Some countries, like India, support nonprofit organizations that provide professional treatment. But even where such help is available, it often is ignored.

In Romania, the reluctance of addicts and their families to seek help is rooted in decades of communist oppression. "They are afraid they might be speaking to members of the secret police," says Karen Homer, formerly of World Vision Romania. "In any case, most psychiatrists here have little training in treating addiction."

Hesitation to reveal personal secrets is likewise found in many developing countries. Dr. Fisher remembers a secretary in the Pacific island group of Micronesia whose father was sexually abusing her under the influence of alcohol.

"She came to me in tears, and I didn't know what to do," he recalls. "There was an Alcoholics Anonymous group in the city, but that was mostly for expatriates. In her culture, it was taboo to share intimate secrets with a stranger."

Fisher sought help from a local doctor, who spent a day with the woman's father mending nets. The doctor told the father that, as a young man, he often lost control of himself while drinking, hurting his family in ways that were shameful.

"The doctor never directly addressed the father's behavior," Fisher adds, "but they both knew what he was talking about. The father was able to curtail his drinking and the secretary told me that her problem had been solved." —Barbara R. Thompson



YOUTH WORLDWIDE are drinking at increasingly earlier ages. Alcohol is associated with all the leading causes of death among teenagers: automobile accidents, homicides, and suicides. It is also a major factor in unplanned pregnancies and the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS. Six thousand young people die each year in the U.S. from alcohol-related causes.

means we should not be delivering alcohol there in two-liter bottles.”

Many substance abuse experts, however, accuse the alcohol industry of trying to maximize profits by “normalizing” drinking. They point to studies showing that one in ten social drinkers becomes an alcoholic, and that problem drinkers imbibe 70 percent of all alcohol consumed. The risk of addiction, such experts claim, far outweighs any medical benefits from drinking.

EXPANDING MARKETS

In part because of the growing number of social drinkers, substance abuse experts predict a continued worldwide increase in alcohol abuse. More women and young people are drinking. For physiological reasons, such as body weight, these groups stand at a higher risk of addiction than men. In Germany, for example, the number of new women addicts is growing at twice the rate for men.

Coinciding with the rise in at-risk drinkers is increasing social disruption on a global scale. Decline in traditional cultures and values puts entire countries at risk for alcohol abuse and addiction. At the same time, the alcohol industry has targeted the developing world, Eastern Europe, and the former

Soviet Union in energetic expansion efforts. The industry spends billions of dollars to sell alcohol to countries that can least afford to buy it or bear the social consequences. This pays off in millions of new drinkers every year.

BEYOND DENIAL

In the face of the enormous and complex problems of alcohol abuse, how can the church respond? The first step, experts say, is to accept the scope of the problem. “Since we see an increasing number of pastors and church leaders with a drinking problem, no one wants to talk about it,” says Hanna Bangert of World Vision Germany.

By moving beyond denial, the church can serve as a healing influence in a variety of ways. “This plague is worldwide, and countries everywhere are ready for the church to play a meaningful role,” says Dr. Anderson Spickard, co-author of *Dying for a Drink* (Word, 1985) and head of a \$50 million community-based substance abuse program developed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

“But pastors and church leaders need to do more than merely reflect the attitudes of their congregations, which may not be adequately informed about

abuse and addiction issues. They need to take the lead in understanding addiction as a disease that impacts the total person: physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.”

Spickard urges churches to collaborate with community groups to address issues of abuse and addiction. A program known as Fighting Back, for example, has enabled 14 communities in the United States, including Gallup, N.M., to develop comprehensive, community-wide strategies for prevention and treatment of substance abuse. Churches have participated in all stages of this program, including addressing factors like poverty and unemployment.

At the same time, Spickard believes that Christians have a special role in ministering spiritually to addicts and their families. “The uniqueness of the church is its ability to address the issues of shame and guilt, which are at the heart of addiction,” Spickard says. “In communicating the love and forgiveness found in Jesus Christ, churches can point the way to profound inner healing—not just for addicts, but for society as a whole.” ☉

Barbara R. Thompson is a free-lance writer living in Decatur, Ga.

LIBERIA

PHOTOS BY NATHAN JONES

After six years of brutal and bewildering civil war, Liberia is struggling to survive. The often aimless conflict between rebel groups displaced two-thirds of the West African country's 2.5 million people from their homes, killed an estimated 150,000, destroyed civic facilities, and devastated the entire national economy.

Liberia was founded in 1821 by U.S. philanthropists to resettle freed black slaves in Africa. The colony became the continent's first independent republic in 1847. A lush tropical climate, abundant mineral resources, and major foreign investment made it one of the richest nations in Africa.

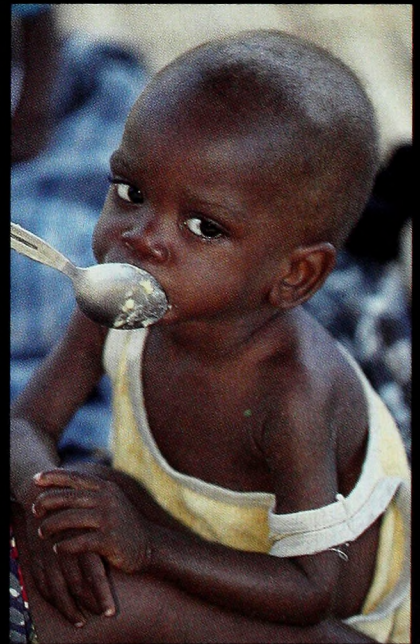
A long period of stability ended when a bloody military coup in 1980 installed an army sergeant, Samuel Doe, as president. Rebel groups overthrew him in 1989. The chaotic civil war followed. One-quarter of the 60,000 combatants were under age 15. One faction had a "small boys unit" for children under 12, who tend to be more brutal than older fighters because their conscience is not fully formed. Many of the soldiers go into battle drunk on alcohol or drugged, making them especially ruthless.

(continued on next spread)



FACES OF SURVIVAL

SHATTERED
BY WAR,
LIBERIA HAS
BECOME A
COUNTRY OF
SURVIVORS.



Left and center: With Liberia's educational system devastated, children flock to schools set up by humanitarian agencies. Right: A child who faced starvation finds food and medical care at a World Vision center.



Above: The smiles of survivors of Liberia's civil war belie perils they face in their future.



Left: Jude, 7, who watched his parents being killed, now lives in a Christian orphanage in Liberia. Nathan Jones, who took these photographs, has made adoption plans that will bring Jude and his five siblings to Washington state.



Right: A war refugee returns to her home, where World Vision aid helps her family reestablish their farm.

World Vision was one of the first humanitarian agencies to return to Liberia in the final stages of the war. Late in 1995, Dr. Titus Angi of World Vision's staff was dropped by helicopter into the ruined jungle town of Zwedru, 174 miles southeast of the capital, Monrovia. There he worked alone among starving and dying people. One soldier said of his presence: "A doctor! Very precious! Very precious!"

In April, World Vision began emergency food shipments to the capital. Last autumn, Dr. Angi and 20 Liberian staff members began emergency therapeutic feeding among 4,000 severely malnourished children in the town of Tubmanburg in western Liberia. Staff members reported children dying in their parents' arms and adults falling dead as they waited in line for food rations.

One Liberian aiding his country's survival is the Rev. T. Edward Kofi, founder of African Christian Fellowship International, which established tuition-free schools and orphanages in Monrovia for thousands of children. Kofi knows firsthand the horrors of the war. In 1990, his 13-year-old daughter was kidnapped, raped, and held for two years at a military base. In 1996, Kofi's 17-year-old son was executed by rebels as he attempted to rescue a group of blind boys.

Is he tempted to bitterness? Yes, he admits. "These soldiers are heartless." Yet, he adds, "They don't understand.

They are driven by demonic forces. So from a spiritual standpoint, it is hard to be bitter toward them. We can only pray that the Lord will miraculously open their hearts and their minds so that there can be... repentance. There is no weapon that can win this war," he adds. "Only forgiveness."

Today the people of Liberia struggle to remain human in the face of massive

inhumanity. These pictures show some of the survivors of the blighted country: 🌐

Nathan Jones, a free-lance photo-journalist from Woodland, Wash., visited Liberia twice in 1996. During one assignment, he arranged for the adoption of six orphaned children of war among his family and friends.

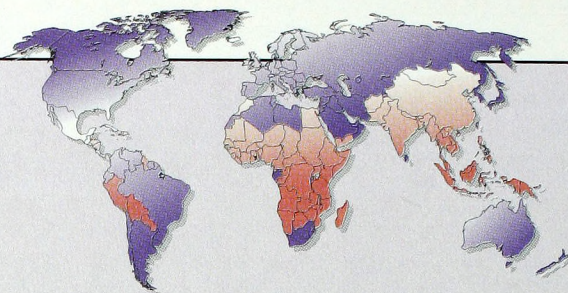


Above: A 10-year-old soldier is among 15,000 under 15 who fought in the war. Uniformed randomly in castoff army fatigues, satin dresses, even stolen choir gowns, child troopers commonly are assigned to control road checkpoints and loot buildings abandoned by fleeing citizens.



Left: A child finds care at an orphanage in Monrovia. Humanitarian agencies are planning residential facilities, education, and trauma treatment for orphans of the war.

WORLD VISION NEWS



OVERSEAS AID CUT WHILE NEED GROWS

Governments of the world's prosperous countries have cut assistance to poor countries to an average of 0.27 percent of their gross domestic product, reports the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This is the lowest proportion in 20 years.

Between 1994 and 1995, the drop amounted to 9.3 percent in real terms. More will be cut in 1997.

The United States has led the way, slicing types of aid by 22 percent to more than 30 percent, though food aid has been retained. The country now provides less overseas assistance than France, which along with Britain and Germany is cutting back too.

Meanwhile, humanitarian aid agencies are struggling to alleviate lasting disasters in collapsed states like Liberia, Rwanda, and Somalia. With these crises faded from television screens but still raging, donations for their work are proving insufficient.

"Rarely have we needed private donations as much as we do now to help the poor and the hurting," says Cary Paine, World Vision's vice president of development. "For many thousands of people, it's literally a matter of life or death."

A young girl covers her head against drizzling rain in a makeshift camp for 72,000 people displaced by civil war in the Central African country of Rwanda.

TERRI OWENS / WORLD VISION

ASIA'S MALNUTRITION HIGH, UN AGENCY REPORTS

Half the world's malnourished children are found in only three countries, reports UNICEF.

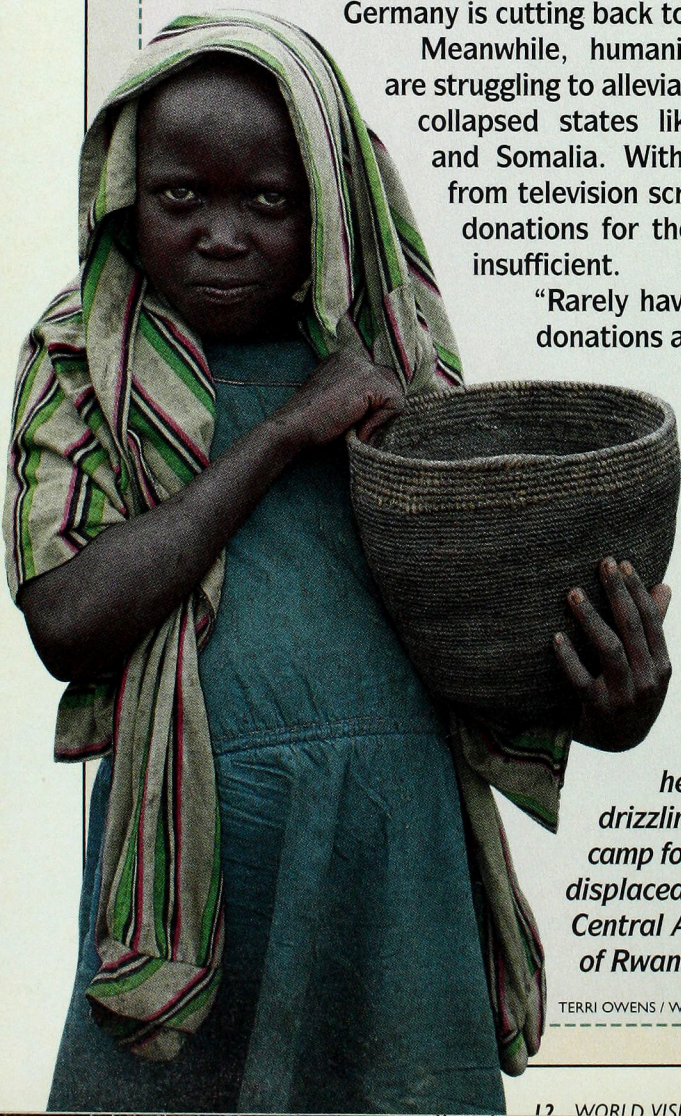
According to the agency, 67 percent of the children in Bangladesh and 55 percent in India are poorly nourished. Malnutrition also is soaring among the children of Pakistan.

Overall the child malnutrition rate in South Asia is more than 50 percent. In Africa, the malnutrition rate among the young is 30 percent.

Urban Jonsson, UNICEF's South Asia regional director, says the traditional assumption that poverty and government neglect are to blame is no longer valid. "Girls and women in South Asia seem to be generally less well cared for by their families, their partners, and their societies," he says. Consequently many Asian women are dangerously undernourished during pregnancy and deliver babies with low birth weight. The other major factor in child malnutrition is the "appalling sanitary conditions" in overcrowded South Asian slums, Jonsson adds.

World Vision India's national director, Dr. Radha Paul, says, "We have to persist with education. Where we have done this we have found that things such as infant survival rates have greatly improved."

Many government programs have proved insufficient because of the scale of the problem and difficulties reaching isolated areas, Paul believes. She says World Vision India is meeting the problem by shifting its focus from institutional child care to community development. Millions of children in villages across India already are benefiting from community projects promoting health, nutrition, immunization, and hygiene, she adds.



ORGANIZED 'FAMINES' HELP FEED HUNGRY

More than 250,000 teenagers across the United States went hungry during World Vision's 30 Hour Famine in 1996 to raise over \$4 million for work among the needy in 101 countries. The annual program included young people from 14,000 church and youth groups, community organizations, and schools.



Globally, more than 1 million participants in 21 countries joined World Vision's 1996 organized famines, simulating the chronic hunger that afflicts many millions of people who live with drought, poverty, and warfare. The events worldwide have raised as much as \$21.5 million in a single year. The length of the famines varies from eight hours for elderly Hong Kong residents to 40 hours for Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans.

The next 30 Hour Famine is scheduled for Feb. 21-22, 1997. For information, call (800) 7-FAMINE.

try of Haiti delivered 151,000 young trees to subsistence farmers in 35 communities during 1996. World Vision staff previously had trained the farmers in tree care and harvesting. All of them are residents of La Gonave island, about 30 miles northwest of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The tropical island of 83,000 people is a vestige of the pre-technology world, with no public electricity, water, or telephones. Impoverished residents over the years cut once-abundant timber to make charcoal for sale. Eventually the island was stripped of 90 percent of its trees.

The World Vision project aims to reverse the deforestation and its effects. Forest trees, including fast-growing bamboo, casuarina, and leucena, will halt loss of fertile topsoil and alleviate drought and flash flooding. Food-bearing trees, including papaya, citrus, breadfruit, coconut, and almond, will provide additional sources of food and income for islanders. The World Vision tree distribution is an annual event.

country. Experts say 100 percent of Bosnia's young people are counted as severely traumatized by enduring long-term shelling, dodging sniper fire on the way to school, and seeing parents and neighbors die. If left untended, the emotional scarring could handicap their future lives.

World Vision also is rebuilding schools and helping people launch small businesses in the crippled Balkan country.

TREES DISTRIBUTED TO HAITI FARMERS

A World Vision land protection project in the Caribbean island coun-

Tree seedlings in rich potting soil are thinned three months before planting at a World Vision tree nursery on La Gonave Island in Haiti.



BRUCE BRANDER / WORLD VISION

WV WORKERS BRAVE STRIFE IN BURUNDI

As all-out civil war threatened Burundi during many tense months of 1996, World Vision staff continued assisting people displaced by outbreaks of fighting in the Central African country.

By September, at least 150,000 people had been killed since 1993 in sporadic warfare between the majority Hutu tribe and the Tutsi minority, which controlled the country's 16,500-strong army. As many as 700,000 people in a population of 6.1 million were displaced at any one time. Governments of the world long feared a repetition of the bloodbath that washed over neighboring Rwanda during three months of 1994.

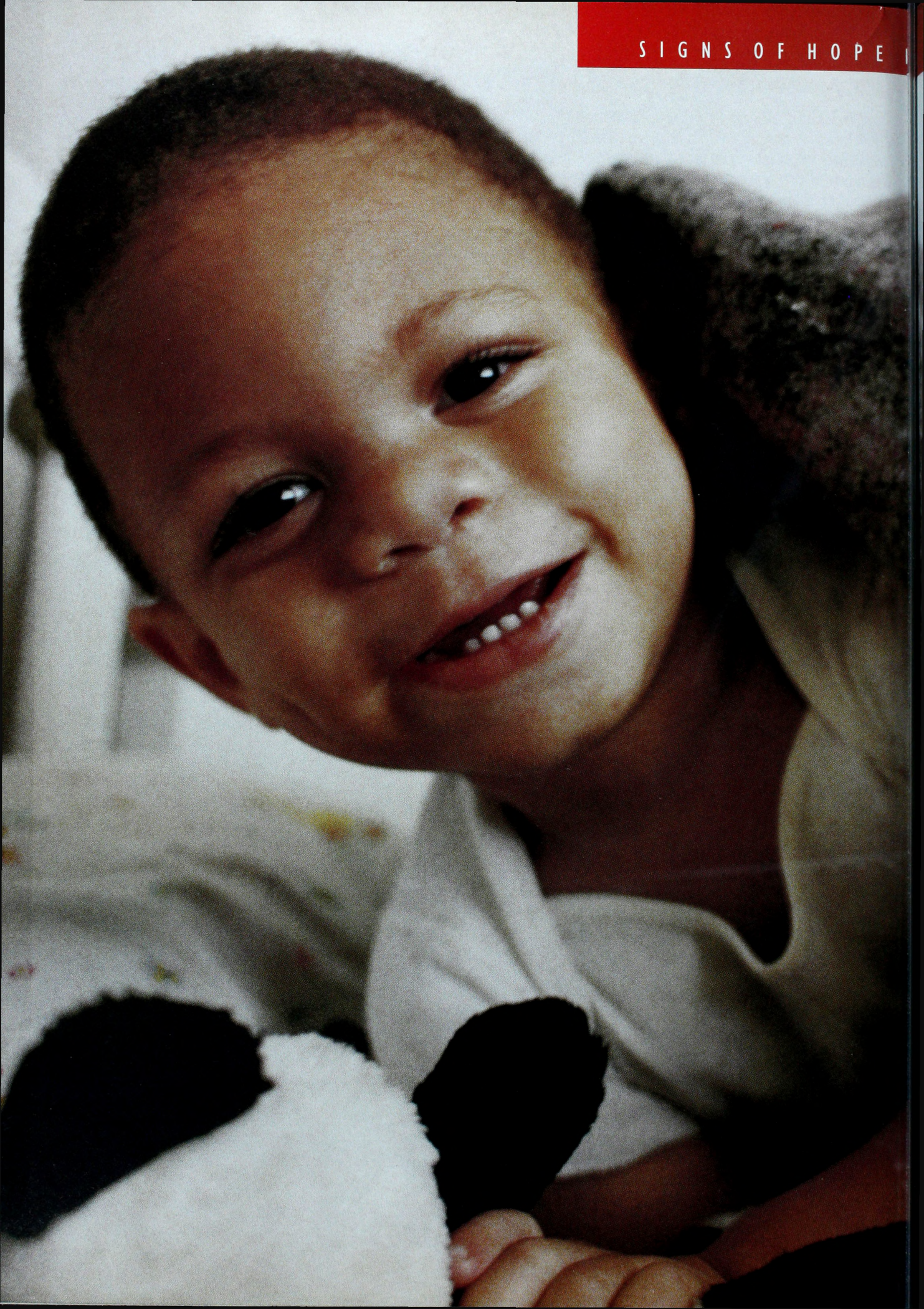
At several sites in the troubled country, World Vision distributed relief goods, provided trauma counseling, and gave medical care to displaced people and orphans of both the Tutsi and Hutu tribes. The agency also assisted refugees who fled Burundi into neighboring Tanzania.


BOSNIANS RECEIVE VARIED ASSISTANCE

World Vision distributed clothing, blankets, mattresses, stoves, and kitchen sets to Bosnian families suffering in the aftermath of four years of civil war that ended in December 1995.

Meanwhile, the agency extended psycho-social counseling for Bosnian children to four major areas of the

SIGNS OF HOPE





Travis (Kody) Armstrong, 17 months, of the south-central area of Los Angeles, beams appreciation for a wool blanket delivered to him by World Vision's Project Home Again.

Operating in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Washington state, and other parts of the United States, the project trains church volunteers to assist homeless people toward self-

sufficiency. The volunteers help families locate and furnish homes. They also help breadwinners find jobs and provide guidance in financial planning.

Since 1989, the project has resettled more than 2,500 families throughout the country. Some 75 percent of its clients attain self-sufficiency.

To help meet the basic needs of poor people in more than 100 countries, World Vision distributes more than \$100 million in goods annually from businesses, government agencies, and individual contributors. Kody's blanket was one of 65,500 that the U.S. Department of Defense donated under a 1987 homeless assistance act. The blankets were transported in 25 trucks to World Vision distribution centers around the United States. 🌐

World Vision Photo by Randy Miller

SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR
HELPING OTHERS
IN THE NAME
OF CHRIST

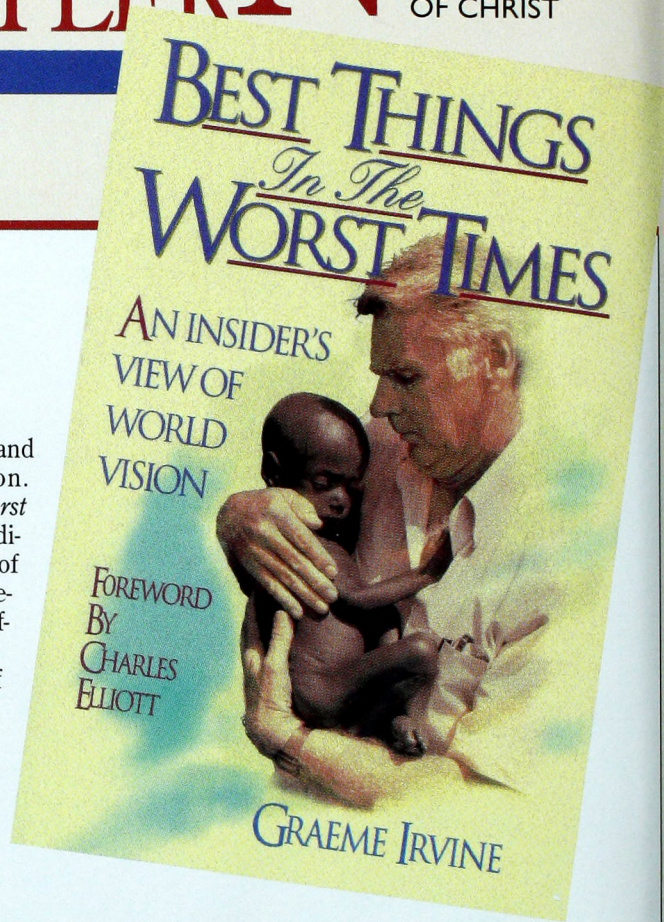
BEST THINGS IN THE WORST OF TIMES

You can't celebrate life in one part of the world, while ignoring suffering in another. We are one human family, sharing a common humanity," states Graeme Irvine, retired president of World Vision International, in his new book *Best Things in the Worst Times*.

The book, based on Irvine's 28 years of service with the Christian humanitarian agency, explains World Vision's mission and how his life

has been inspired and shaped by its vision. *Best Things in the Worst Times* presents a credible and clear picture of how World Vision alleviates poverty and suffering worldwide.

To obtain a copy of Irvine's book, contact Book Partners, Inc. at (503) 682-9821.

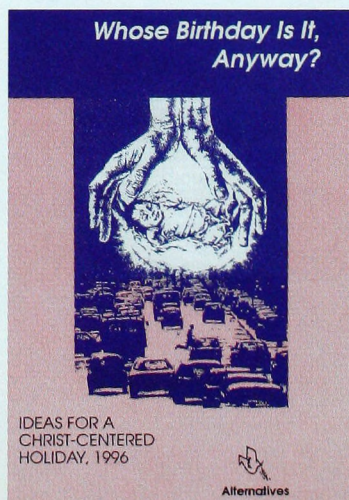


CHRISTMAS ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives for Simple Living challenges people to handle their money wisely so that they can give to the poor. This non-profit organization offers a wide range of resources to help people simplify life, spend less, and give more to needy people at Christmas and throughout the year.

While Christmas tends to be a time of stressful activities—scurrying, shopping, and worrying—author Tom Sine suggests alternative themes—waiting, preparing, anticipating, walking, receiving, living, and sharing—in the 1996 edition of *Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway?* The booklet also offers Advent Scripture readings, ways to celebrate activities, such as trimming the tree, and suggestions for remembering those in need.

For more information on Alternatives or its resources, contact Gerald Iversen at (800) 821-6153.



NEW FOCUS

New Focus, a nationwide Christian nonprofit organization, helps people get off welfare. Formed in 1994 through World Vision's domestic ministry, the group trains churches to help current or former welfare recipients toward independence.

Church families learn to show effective compassion to the whole person by considering physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

Resources include *Heart House*, a self-evaluation guide that explains the gospel, and a Bible study geared to low-income households.

For more information on New Focus, or on how to help a welfare recipient through your church, call (616) 895-5356.

omplied and written by Stephanie Stevenson

URBANA '96

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship will celebrate five decades of challenging students to become involved in missions during the 18th annual Student Mission Convention at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The convention, Dec. 27-31, is primarily for high school seniors, college students, and graduates.

More than 270 mission organizations, seminaries, and graduate schools will be represented. World Vision's 30 Hour Famine program will benefit from a lunch-hour fast and prayer meeting for attendees. Lunch savings will be donated to several organizations.

More than 17,000 students, young professionals, and church workers are expected to attend.

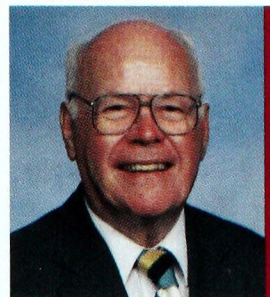
For more information, you may contact the Urbana '96 web site at <http://www.gospelcom.net/iv/> or call (608) 274-7995.

“We are all God's children so it is important to share His gifts. Do not worry about why problems exist in the world—just respond to people's needs.”

—Mother Teresa

THE POWER OF ONE

Profile #2



“Our World Vision Gift Annuity allows us to make a commitment to lifting the hopes and lives of others while guaranteeing us a secure income for the rest of our lives.”

William Whann
Lehigh, Florida

Growing up in an orphanage, William Whann recognized early the power of giving and the difference it can make to those in need. He plans to give most of his estate to help people learn to help themselves.

“My World Vision Gift Annuity provides tax benefits and a lifelong income while allowing me to support others in their struggle to become self-reliant, World Vision is in my estate plan for one reason: I see the impact their projects are having in improving the quality of life for mankind.

There is great value in this investment in the world's children, including the example we can set for our own family.”



1-800-426-5753

*“Freely you have received,
freely give.”*

Matt. 10:9

The Power of One...

A series of donor profiles of those who know their gifts have the power to touch a life, that in turn can transform a family and even an entire community.

For more information on how you can help alleviate hunger, poverty and ignorance through a Gift Annuity to World Vision, please complete and mail to: World Vision, P.O. Box 70084, Tacoma, WA 98481

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Telephone () _____

Business Telephone () _____

WORLD VISION SOUTH AFRICA



WORLD VISION'S DIRECTOR FOR SOUTH AFRICA, SHELDON RANKIN, SPOKE WITH WRITER ANN HUDOCK ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S TRANSFORMATION AND WORLD VISION'S WORK THERE.

In April 1994, Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first-ever black president. Though South Africans and the world see great hope for the country's future, it is clear that reversing apartheid's legacy of inequality and poverty will take a long time.

Today, more than 70 percent of all South Africans live in poverty. Of these 31 million poor people, 95 percent are black. The majority of the poor live in rural areas.

Twelve million households in South Africa do not have access to safe drinking water. Violent crime threatens internal stability and jeopardizes the country's valuable tourist industry. Students protest inadequate educational facilities, often vandalizing or even destroying schools in the process.

How is South Africa facing its many challenges?

Q HOW HAS SOUTH AFRICA CHANGED SINCE MANDELA'S ELECTION?

A There definitely was a sense of euphoria during pre- and post-election times. There was also a fear of right-wing violence and the possibility of anarchy. All that has changed dramatically, given the strength of liberation for all, both black and white.

Apartheid had so skillfully and successfully set a barrier between people that, although we're brothers in the same land, we really didn't participate

SOUTH

Y ANN C. HUDOCK

**BUILDING
A NEW
NATION**

AFRICA

in one another's world. The miracle of the election was that it drove home for the first time that we were one. There was a sense of acceptance. The former negative talk has really been quashed.

Nelson Mandela probably has been the single greatest advocate for reconciliation. He has settled white people's fears, has lowered barriers, and has in fact promoted the really important thing, which is not just sharing the notion of being one nation but integrating our space.

A poignant example of this was a young black girl I saw walking down the street wearing a school uniform that a year ago had been worn exclusively by white children. It really brought home to me that changes were happening in a very powerful way.

A clear indication of the new order is the extent to which people have embraced Mandela as their president. There is a sense of relief that there wasn't the collapse or anarchy that people feared.

The new South African flag also has become a symbol that everyone loves. At rugby matches you are more likely to see the new flag than the white Afrikaner flag, though rugby matches once were the domain of Afrikaners. Now Afrikaners are as comfortable as anyone with this symbol of the new South Africa.

South Africa is very much a new land and there are still tremendous challenges to be met. People hope the government will deliver a new society. That is very much the challenge in this country. Changes might not happen as fast as people would like, but a clear sense of hope is there.

THE ELECTIONS PROMISED PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE BLACK POOR. WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, AND WHAT IS YET TO BE REALIZED?

Our expectations were very high, and probably there's a sense of disappointment. Many black people expected a job, a house, and education instantly. There is a sense of disillusionment now that this hasn't happened. At the same time, with the honeymoon period over, people are taking the initiative and positive changes are happening.

The chief vehicle by which change and transformation were to occur, the Reconstruction and Development Program, unfortunately is not assuming the prominence it once had. That is the sobering reality of the limits of what this economic system is capable of producing. You can't undo 350 years of injustice overnight.

Most people recognize that education is the primary vehicle for redistributing wealth, and integration is happening there. Black parents are busing their children to white schools. That is a very significant indicator of change.

Housing is the second area where there have been changes. These too probably are not as great as expected, but a subsidy scheme helps make home ownership a possibility for the black population.

An area where we have seen significant improvement is in the promotion of black entrepreneurship. There is an expansion of black business, with a focus on microenterprises in order to broaden the country's economic base.

SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW FLAG reflects the national motto, "Unity is Strength," in diverse lines converging into a single direction. Its six colors recall other flags in the country's nearly 350-year history.



SOUTH AFRICA'S TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

BY ANN C. HUDOCK

The new South African government's Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to

investigate human rights abuses committed during the era of apartheid—or official separation of the country's races—that extended from 1948 to 1991. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who in 1984 won the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the struggle against apartheid, heads the commission.

On his appointment to the position in November 1995, Tutu said: "I hope that the work of the commission, by opening wounds to cleanse them, will thereby stop them from festering. We cannot be facile and say bygones will be bygones, because they will not be bygones and will return to haunt us. True reconciliation is never cheap, for it is based on forgiveness, which is costly. Forgiveness in turn depends on repentance, which has to be based on an acknowledgement of what was wrong, and therefore on disclosure of the truth."

TRAVELLING COURT

Since its first hearing in April 1996, the commission has operated like a travelling court, moving around the country listening to victims' stories. There is no shortage of these. During the 1980s alone, between 55,000 and 75,000 people were detained without trial in South Africa, and a large number of them were

abused, tortured, or killed.

Most of the harrowing tales presented to the commission come from ordinary people who summon the courage to speak of the past in order to get on with the future. Women tell of police raids, armored cars, and husbands disappearing in the night. Some people were forced to watch while spouses and children were tortured or killed. Women were brutally raped in front of their husbands. Most witnesses find the exercise in truth searing.

GRANTS AMNESTY

While the commission does not hold prosecution powers, it can grant amnesty to people who testify to crimes they committed for political and non-personal reasons. The commission will spend two years reviewing atrocities committed from 1960 until December 1993, when a multiracial transitional committee was formalized in advance of the April 1994 elections.

Many people do not ask for reparation. One woman asked for a tombstone for her dead husband. Most want only answers about what happened to their loved ones, and explanations as to why some were taken from them. Other people just want to tell their stories. At one point in a Truth Commission hearing in the coastal city of East London, accounts of atrocities became too stark even for Tutu, who laid his head on a table and wept uncontrollably.

There also are changes in employment practices—and without state intervention. We are seeing black men promoted, and also black women, in the public and private domain. These changes are occurring voluntarily.

HAVE SOUTH AFRICA'S BROADER POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL CHANGES AFFECTED THE LIFE OF THE AVERAGE BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN?

Absolutely, although that is not to say our problems have come anywhere near to being solved. As I said, enthusiasm and expectations for economic changes were greater than anything that could be realized quickly.

The challenge that faces us is to create a just society and an economic base where everyone who works hard has a chance to prosper. Government and international aid is not enough to accomplish this. The South African public must willingly give some of its own resources. World Vision can support and lead that process.

We have beneficiaries who don't want charity. They want to give something back to the program that has helped them. That shows a readiness to change and grow. It speaks of a transformation that all South Africa needs to undergo. World Vision is well placed to facilitate and lead such a challenge.

WHAT ROLE HAVE NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS GENERALLY—AND WORLD VISION SPECIFICALLY—PLAYED IN SHAPING THE COUNTRY?

Previously, NGOs offered the only sector where the black voice could be heard, other than in outright protest. NGOs promoted a culture of democracy and a vision of an alternative society.

World Vision contributed to this by providing a safety net assisting 32,000 children at any one time. We worked towards the development of local communities, which involved building schools and water programs. World Vision has a 29-year history in South Africa working among the poorest of the poor.

In recent years, we have changed our focus to emphasize building relationships among South Africans. We are using our child sponsorship program to facilitate this. It is truly remarkable the number of local South African sponsors that are really getting to know their sponsored children. In the past this wasn't possible. Our newsletters also have educated the South African public about opportunities to build relationships. This has transformed many people's thinking and brought about reconciliation.

CRITICS OF PRESIDENT MANDELA HAVE CHARGED THAT, TO FURTHER CENTRALIZED POWER AND CONTROL, HE HAS LIMITED THE RESOURCES OF NGOS, THE VERY ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUSTAINED POLITICAL RESISTANCE OVER THE YEARS. IS IT TRUE THAT NGOS ARE STARVING FOR LACK OF SUPPORT?

I certainly understand this analysis but I disagree with it. It is important to understand the life cycle and evolution of the NGO sector in South

WORLD VISION SOUTH AFRICA



Africa. Under former international sanctions against the country, NGOs were the only legitimate means by which most overseas money for development aid could be channeled. This created a hothouse for growth in the NGO sector.

This was money that the South African government otherwise would have received through bilateral aid. So the first thing our new government did was to channel these funds away from the NGO sector directly to the government.

World Vision has responded by increasing our local fund raising capacity and, in fact, our budget has increased. Meanwhile, World Vision's relationship with the government is very positive. We have developed programs and taken them to the government where they were endorsed at the highest level.

WHAT HAS BEEN WORLD VISION'S MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, AND ITS GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Our challenge is to transform our program to make it immediately relevant to all South Africans. We are recruiting more black child-sponsors. They previously did not support the program because it was not directly about political transformation. Now that this objective has been achieved, people want to focus on other concerns.

Our greatest achievement has been in local fund raising for development and self-help. We have 6,000 South African sponsors now, and most sponsor more than one child.

I'm quite proud of what we've done already, but our hope over the next two years is that our programs will be expanded. However, these efforts are limited since World Vision's program needs are greater than the amount of money we are able to raise.

WHAT IS WORLD VISION'S HOPE FOR THE FUTURE?

World Vision's expectation is for children to have a full life—not just black children but white chil-

WORLD VISION VOCATIONAL TRAINING in weaving, sewing, and knitting enables this woman to create sleeping mats from shopping bags. Other students sew school uniforms, factory overalls, and T-shirts, while one copies dresses from fashion magazines.

dren too. Children here have suffered abuse, violent crime, political assassination. They need and deserve better lives.

We also want to see the development of full human beings. We want to encourage people to value all life, especially where that value didn't exist before.

In a finite world, how do you create more? You do that by giving away, by active service and Christ-centered love. We want to encourage society to do that so that we can create a better life for all people.

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT AND RECONCILIATION IF PRESIDENT MANDELA CEASES TO LEAD IT?

The ANC [African National Congress] has considered this, and a successor [Thabo Mbeki] has been chosen. As a country, we understand that we have Nelson Mandela only for a short time. The consensus is that he probably will work until 1999. Then, when we see the next set of elections, he will run and win but retire. Then his successor will take over.

We have avoided the personality cult that sometimes forms around popular leaders. This speaks of a fairly mature democracy, where we understand our strengths and weaknesses. It displays a vibrant democracy, and the presence of healthy debate.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU SAID THAT ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA MEAN THAT "CHURCHES CAN GET BACK TO BEING CHURCHES." WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT AND RECONCILIATION?

The church's role is to preach the gospel. I believe the gospel is about the total transformation of human beings. You must address the whole human condition. This means that people in South Africa need to regain a sense of dignity, pride, wholeness, and the security of a personal relationship with God. The development of the community depends on the transformation of every single individual.

Right now, the church needs to direct people to God. I think that's what Tutu meant. He pointed out that the church's role before was narrower, since it emphasized the need for political transformation. Now the churches must go back to addressing the whole picture. The church must advocate reconciliation and healing.

Ann C. Hudock is a writer on international development. She lives in Brighton, England.



JOIN ME... In Helping The Forgotten Children

"Every child should be touched, loved... and should wake up each morning with the hope that his or her dreams can come true. That's why I love World Vision! Sponsorship gives people like you and me the chance to give dignity—and a future—to needy children."

—Larnelle Harris

Five-time Grammy award winner Larnelle Harris knows about the needs of suffering children—and how compassionate people are helping to save them from lives of hunger, poverty and despair. He also knows that through World Vision Child Sponsorship, he can help change our hurting world—one child at a time.

You, too, can have a special relationship with a needy child. A monthly gift of \$20 can provide things like food, clothing, medical care, education and the chance to know God's love.

To tell a child he's not forgotten, please clip and mail the coupon today.



YES, I WANT TO HELP!

- ☐ Enclosed is my first \$20 payment. Please send me a photo and story of a
 - ☐ boy ☐ girl from
 - ☐ Africa ☐ Asia ☐ Latin America
 - ☐ where the need is greatest
- ☐ I can't sponsor a child right now, but here's a gift of \$ _____ to help needy children.

1700

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

AB6WSW

Please make your check payable to World Vision.

Mail to:

WORLD VISION

Child Sponsorship

P.O. Box 70050 Tacoma, WA 98481-0050



NEXT TO THE LAST WORD

There is a life-affirming story behind the photo feature by Nathan Jones that appears on pages 8 to 11.

The Woodland, Wash. photo-journalist visited Liberia twice during 1996. He fell in love with six orphans from the same family—four boys and two girls ranging in age from 6 to 10. The children had been taken for safety to a missionary compound where he was lodging.

Nathan discovered that the youngsters had fled for their lives after the brutal murder of their parents. During their ordeal, one of the boys, Galima, 7, was held to the ground with a machine gun to his head. The children went without food for 10 days, and generally had little to eat.

Nathan, his three sisters, and a close friend, with their spouses, have banded together to adopt all the children. These caring couples live within minutes of each other in the Washington state countryside.

Nathan does more than take pictures; he moves mountains.

—Terry Madison

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HOMECOMING PREPARATIONS

The question softly and timidly asked from the back of the room made the required seven-week church membership course worthwhile.

"Do you mean He's coming back?" Bewildering and exciting at the same time, the question came from a brand new Christian. Our membership colleague was an Iranian woman, a recent émigré from that country and a recent convert to Jesus. The spiritual void that she had once felt, a need tied to her humanity more than her national origin, was in the process of being filled.

Her life had taken on new meaning. There was a freshness about her. The smile was easy, constant, infectious. Something new had begun within her. She would never be the same again. Her enthusiasm was irrepressible.

But she was indeed brand new to the faith. As the pastor covered the historic verities of the faith, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus—and his promised return—her eyes grew wider and wider.

"He's coming back! I didn't know that."

Would that each of us could live in such a way that our spiritual eyes, and the accompanying excitement, would grow bigger and bigger day by day. Unfortunately, far too many of us have our spiritual identity anchored in the event of evangelism rather than in the process of discipleship, that growing, nurturing, deepening experience with "the author and finisher of our faith." For some of us, the testimony ends with conversion, and it seems that God has not done a single new thing within us for a long, long time.

Others have sought to invest their spiritual energies in fine-tuning doctrinal differences. A legitimate exercise in the process of spiritual maturation, but sadly, many are sidetracked by the doctrinal battles. Theological purity becomes more important than Christian unity. We'd rather fall on our doctrinal swords than bear witness to the incomprehensible love of a savior who promises to return. This movement to a modern-day Pharisaism can inoculate many against a gospel that is always bigger than our individual understandings.

Our Iranian friend was highlighting a potential problem with our faith. Each of us has been drawn to Jesus by a need that encouraged a commitment. Perhaps our need for a friend in time of trouble, for a reconciler in relationships, for One who would shoulder our burden of sin, for a father figure, for an exclusive king with an inclusive kingdom, for the promise of heaven and the expectation of life eternal—it's all there, and more!

But our original conversion quite possibly was not dependent on the whole of the gospel. The Good News, as we understood it then, was good enough. Gratefully, the Good News, in all of its sacred wholeness and holiness, is more than we will ever be able to comprehend fully, this side of glory.

From this enormous position of strength, we continue to work out our faith. Our faith deepens. Our relationships take on new meaning. The community of faith becomes more important to us, and the application of our faith, given the increasing complexity of our world, becomes more challenging and more necessary.

Our world certainly challenges us, but I continue to believe that this difficult decade of the 90s harbors some of the greatest opportunities for the church. The world is hurting. Genocide, ethnic cleansing, the widespread cheapening of human life have created a sense of intractability regarding humanity's problems. The loss of an ethical focus to our collective actions, the erosion of common values, the abandonment of moral courage have left the world in a bewildering mess. Governments have failed, ideologies have shattered, leaders have come up short. The felt need for a transcendent solution is huge.

We live in a world that desperately wants a path toward faith, to believe in something higher and stronger than itself, something better on which to anchor the present and reduce the future's uncertainty. Very simply, the world wants something that works.

A faith whose basic premise is a permanently restored relationship with a sovereign God is something that works. It is indeed a position of strength.

Our faith, holistically presented, contains a cross and an empty tomb. Calvary makes our faith credible. The remission of sin is accomplished through the sacrificial shedding of blood. The resurrection makes our faith relevant. Death is no longer victorious. Calvary speaks to an identification with a suffering humanity. The resurrection points to the ultimate end of that suffering. Calvary legitimizes the presentation of faith to a world in need. Innocence, willingly sacrificed for needs others can't overcome, will always have an audience. The resurrection makes all of our hopes for the world eternally tangible.

Whether at the grave site of a loved one or witnessing the genocidal hatred of a world in its death throes, nothing short of divine intervention will do. Nothing else makes sense. Nothing else works.

But a sovereign God did intervene. He "so loved the world that he gave." He gave all. He gave enough. Someday we will understand the totality of that gift. For now, it is enough to know that the "windows of heaven have been opened and a blessing poured out such that we cannot contain it."

If we can't contain it, why not give it away? If the News is so good, why not share it? We are stewards of the event that took place in our individual lives: our conversion to the God of history and the Christ of Calvary. We are humbled by the magnificence of this gift freely bestowed. We are challenged by our inability to comprehend it fully.

But we also should be motivated to share what we know—God's inseparable love affair with this world. Two thousand years ago, he felt compelled to intervene with his son. He continues to intervene through those of us who have chosen to follow his footsteps, until he does return. ☉

If the News is so good, why not share it?



Staff members of a World Vision health project in Cambodia are baptized by local pastors.

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THE POWER OF ONE

Profile #3



*"I see my World Vision
Gift Annuity as a rewarding
investment in helping humanity
while also providing me with
the financial security I need."*

Gwen Bradley

For over forty years Gwen Bradley has supported the mission of World Vision through world-wide child sponsorships. And, she has seen first hand the remarkable achievement of their programs.

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help in the outreach to children.
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provides a welcome supplement
to my social security and retire-
ment income. And the annuity
operates very efficiently.*

*Most important to me is
that my lifetime earnings can
be used to nourish others in
both body and soul. I can't
imagine a more rewarding
investment!"*


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*"Let us not love in word, neither
in tongue; but in
deed and truth."*

I John 3:18

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*A series of donor profiles of those who know their gifts have the power to touch a life,
that in turn can transform a family and even an entire community.*

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