

Hunger News & Hope

...a Seeds of Hope publication



O Yahweh, Imana of Abraham
Of Jacob, of Moses and all people
After having talked about you
Let me open my heart to you
And tell you some words
You who listens to me day and night.

...

O Jesus Christ, son of Yahweh
Son of Imana, brother of human beings
You are Imana in person
Who comes to meet me.
I need your support
I need your help
For understanding your secret;
How did you recover
From death to life?

Understand me, Jesus Christ
I know many examples of
People who go from life to death
Liberty to slavery
Joy of birth to distress and misery
But from death to life?
I only have you as the example,
You in whom I have put all my confidence.

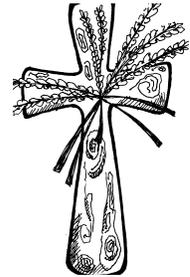
...

O Holy Spirit
You carry for us a new identity
And identity of dignity and serenity,
And identity of freedom,
Without fear
Of powers which oppress us,
Of spirits which deceive us
Of death that threatens us.

Praise be your name forever and ever
Imana
O God of life
Life for all human beings!

—The above is excerpted from a prayer by the Rev. Dr. André Karamaga, a Rwandan theologian. Reprinted from permission from Dieu au pays des milles collines. Imana is the Rwandan term for God. The art, originally an African carving of Jesus, is adapted from a photo by Lee Boltin in the St. Anthony Messenger.

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Mozambique: On the Way Up from the Bottom

by Katie Yaun

The memory of flood victims clinging to the tops of trees, a seemingly never-ending civil war, and the abounding myth that it is the “poorest country in the world” have until recently dominated the world’s stereotype of Mozambique. The country has experienced a major turnaround in the past nine years, however, starting with the 1992 end to the war between the rebel Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) led by Afonso Dhlakama and the official national government (declared independent from Portugal in 1975) led by President Joquin Chissano.

When the two leaders signed the 1992 peace agreement, the country was in ruins—including poor infrastructure, incredible debts, deplorable educational and health-care regimes, and low economic production—yet the 1994-elected Frelimo Party promised to solve the problems of the poor with “gradual and equitable distribution of the nation’s wealth.” How was this feasible with such an obvious lack of wealth? Evidently, Frelimo has initiated remarkable economic progress at the macroeconomic level.

Frelimo targeted poverty reduction, improvements in education and health, employment boosts, and inflation control as the major platforms for economic progress.

In order to realize any visible improvement in these areas, Mozambique needed at least 6 or 7 percent annual GDP growth; fortunately, the GDP growth rate peaked at 11.3 percent in 1997 and averaged nearly 10 percent in 1996-1999. A successful decrease in inflation, down from 1994’s 70-percent mark, allowed the Bank of Mozambique to stop fixing the exchange rate of the country’s currency, the *metical*, and to let it float according to supply and demand.

Since price falls concentrated in food-stuffs, this new method was good news for the poor who spend the bulk of their income upon food supplies. Overall, the largest macroeconomic gains for Mozambique have been in industry, due to the lowering of mining taxes—specifically in the mining of marble, bauxite, and graphite.

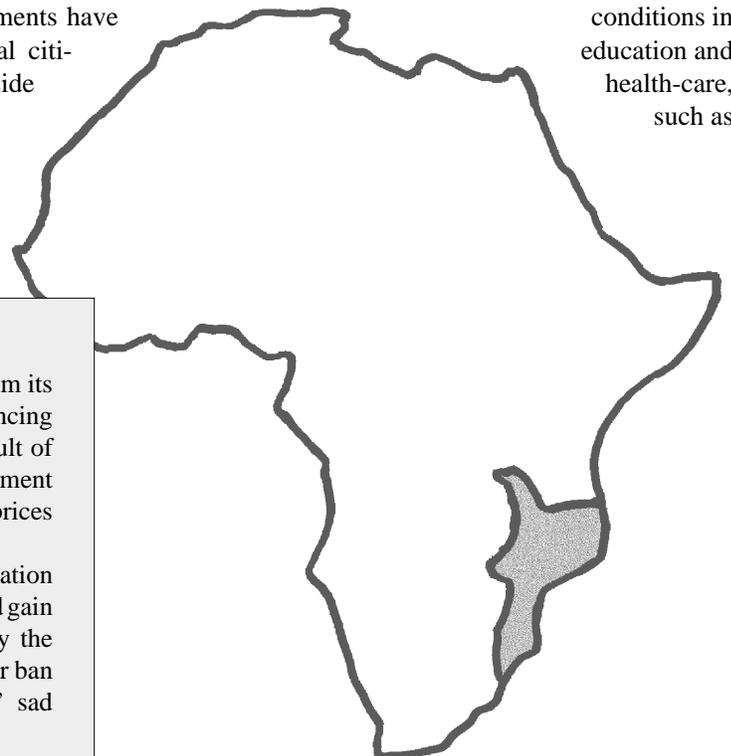
Clearly, Mozambique has experienced macroeconomic success, but what real improvements have come for individual citizens in the countryside and cities? Sixty-nine percent of Mozambicans still live below

the poverty line, especially rural dwellers who implement rudimentary farming techniques. In the towns, most of the social and economic safety nets that existed under the previous centrally-planned economy have been withdrawn. There is no longer a basic ration of subsidized food for all citizens and health services are no longer free.

The minimum wage is \$30 per month, but many companies are not even paying this minimum or are beginning the practice too late for some impoverished employees. Additionally, trade unions are complaining that the workforce is losing more than 100,000 jobs because of structural adjustment policies over the past decade.

To break away from poverty in the countryside and cities, Frelimo has targeted increases in social spending and foreign investment, with the objective of building up human capital.

The government chose these targets to alleviate current conditions in education and health-care, such as



The Cashew Industry’s Saga of Liberalization

By the end of the war in 1992, Mozambique had shifted from its 1975 status as the world’s leading cashew producer to experiencing state company breakups sanctioned by the government as a result of diseased crops. The country conceded to the World Bank’s argument that liberalization of the raw cashew trade would improve the prices paid to farmers for their products.

Yet a recent Deloitte study found that the benefits of liberalization had gone to traders and not to farmers, and that Mozambique would gain an extra \$150 per ton by exporting processed nuts. Backed by the processing industry, the ruling Frelimo party has placed a 10-year ban on the export of raw nuts to rectify the overlooked farmers’ sad situation.

A Beneficiary of Major Debt Relief

The World Bank and IMF declared in April of 1998 that Mozambique is eligible for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. By June of 1999 they had waived \$1.7 billion of Mozambique's \$5.5 billion total debt, stemming from wars, droughts, and floods since the mid-1980s. Full relief will not come until Mozambique satisfies certain conditions such as implementation of social development measures and achieving "satisfactory performance" under IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility.

Floods Take a Serious Economic Toll

Flooding in south and central Mozambique in February 1999 literally washed away the government's plans for a sustained 10 percent economic growth rate. Deaths, demolished farm land, destroyed homes, drowned cattle, and damaged irrigation infrastructure left the economy severely shaken.

The UN-backed government received only \$250 million for post-flood reconstruction, forcing it to drop the economic growth target for 2000 from 10 to four percent in light of this more pressing need.

overcrowded schools at all levels, high dropout and failure rates among older students, low teacher salary, a shortage of clean drinking water, poor sanitation, recent cholera breakouts that killed 2,000 people between 1997-1999, and the uprising of a malaria epidemic from the stagnant pools of leftover flood water. Mozambique will implement a two-tier system of social spending: private institutions are encouraged to build schools and clinics for those who can afford to pay fees, while the public sector and government will provide for those who cannot afford the fees.

As far as foreign investment is concerned, the administration initiated several industrial projects in order to generate thousands of jobs, with the hope that increased employment will alleviate social problems in education and health care. The largest of these projects is MOZAL, a \$1.3 billion

aluminum smelter on the outskirts of Maputo drawing shareholders from London, Mitsubishi (Japan) and South Africa.

Additional industrial projects in the works include production of steel slabs with South African iron ore and Mozambican natural gas, a new power station based from two dams in Cahora Bassa and M'panda-Ncuca, and the rehabilitation of transport infrastructure.

Despite its macroeconomic success and its plans to alleviate poverty among the private sector, Mozambique remains dependent on huge annual injections of foreign grants and soft loans. The government collects enough domestic revenue to cover its running costs, but the capital budget is almost entirely funded by foreign aid.

The most recent meeting of the World Bank's Consultative Group for Mozambique brought donor pledges of

\$570 million for 2001. In response to the notion that the Mozambican government is taking orders from foreigners, Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi acknowledged: "we are a country that begs, and beggars have their sovereignty curtailed."

Yet the commendable fact remains that a supposedly dependent country of "beggars" has pulled itself from the devastation of war to a degree, at least, of economic prosperity—and appears to be taking whatever steps are necessary to accomplish this feat. The next challenge facing Mozambique is how to ensure that the benefits brought by growth and stability can raise the living standards of the vast majority.

—Katie Yaun, a native of Jackson, Florida, is an English major at Baylor University and a *Seeds of Hope* intern. Source: Africa Discovery, United Nations



Ensuring Small Farmers' Access to Land

Companies and individuals in Mozambique wishing to acquire land for commercial purposes must first hold consultations with the local community and then obtain a written opinion from the district administrator.

This mechanism was recently implemented for two reasons: First, land tenure does not take the form of ownership but of use rights, a right free of charge to small farmers. Second, it is feared that if a market in the land was more accessible (i.e. if the mechanism was not in place), social polarization to the countryside would increase, with the end result that rich estate owners would override the poor farmers who have occupied the land for years.

An Examination of the Food Security Crisis and its Implications in Africa

by Elizabeth Walker

Televized images of starving children once again flood commercial breaks. Three years of drought have forced millions of Africans to the brink of death. But those watching these images over their TV dinners have seen all this before. So why should they have to help Africa once again?

Three consecutive years of poor rainfall have led to a drought crisis, placing some 13.4 million people in seven countries of East and South Africa at extreme risk of food insecurity and famine. While global climate changes may be affecting

the frequency of rainfall, other internal factors are contributing to the intensity of the drought.

High population growth rates, inefficient farming techniques, and deforestation each are contributing to this chronic drought disaster. Regardless of cause, however, as more than two billion tons of fertile topsoil blows away, a population dependent on agriculture is now starving.

Ninety-percent of water pans are dry. To access water in Ethiopia, men travel an average distance of 25 kilometers and women dig more than six meters into dry riverbeds. Whole communities have become nomadic, desperately searching safe drinking water from distant sources. Because of the widespread displacement, 24,000 students—who had nutritional and disease surveillance at their schools—have been displaced. Nearly half the schools subsequently have closed.

Obviously, without water, Africans are also without food. Acute malnutrition across the total population has quadrupled. In Kenya, for example, malnutrition among children under five has increased from 0.25 percent to 13.15 percent in the last few months; in Somalia, the malnutrition rate among children under five is now at 24 percent and rising.

To compound prevailing hunger, most of the affected countries are in the throes of political, economic, and social insecurity. Affairs of state only intensify the tragedy of starvation.

Until the two sides signed a comprehensive

peace agreement in December 2000, the Ethiopian government spent more than one million dollars daily on the border conflict with Eritrea, which won its independence from Ethiopia eight years ago. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi announced, “In Ethiopia, we do not wait to have a full tummy to protect our sovereignty.”

While his people are plagued with hunger, he commissioned four new Su-25 attack jets, each costing twenty million dollars. Even as the military now withdraws, he ignores all indications of the drought, refusing to accept any food aid shipped through the Eritrean port of Assab, which prior to the conflict received 75 percent of relief assistance destined for landlocked Ethiopia.

As the Ethiopian government confronts its enemy Eritrea, South Africa is confronting the legacy of apartheid. Seven years since the end of the segregationist apartheid regime and the installation of the first democratically elected government, South Africa remains an inequitable society. Poor health, low education, and structural unemployment remain as vestiges to the apartheid era. Additionally, current economic factors further explain the persistence of poverty and unemployment, the agents of chronic hunger that exacerbate the drought.

Soon after the formal end to the apartheid regime, the government of South Africa adopted a new macroeconomic policy framework, called Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR). Striving to develop a competitive, fast-growing economy, the GEAR strategy includes tightening fiscal discipline, increasing foreign and domestic



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investment, accepting privatization, and opening the economy to international competition.

Unfortunately, these market liberalization policies, designed to catapult the South African economy, have proven disappointing. Unprepared for global competition, the South African job sector fell stagnant: the government judges that an average of 50 percent of the potential labor force is unable to secure employment.

Consequently, the South African gross domestic product has grown merely 2.1 percent annually, well short of the 3.8 percent average that GEAR deemed essential.

Therefore, social and economic stratification persists. The impoverished remain where they were as whites continue to earn up to 15 times more. The hungry, feeling unable to affect their circumstances against inherent racial oppression, unemployment, and drought, are increasingly willing to resort to armed revolt. Combined with easy availability of black-market firearms, South Africa, as Minister for Social Development Zola Skweyiya acknowledged last September, "is sitting on a social time bomb."

Yet the expectation of further violence and destruction is not limited to the nation of South Africa. Throughout Africa, resource scarcity and conflict appear inextricably linked. A research program undertaken by the World Hunger Program at Brown University examines the genocide in Rwanda as a case study. The introduction to its report states, "A complete analysis of the causes of Rwanda's genocide lies in a combination of extreme pauperization and reduction of life chances for a majority of the poor." Inside of three months, that system of genocide systematically slaughtered one million Tutsi, scapegoats of hungry bellies.

Current economic strife and agricultural failure foreshadow similar violence. With no jobs and no fertile land,

terror looms—unless the hungry can find food.

Unfortunately, one of the key charitable advances in Africa has failed to make a difference this year. In 1992,

So why should television viewers have to help Africa once again? Because this is not just another drought.

African governments and foreign donors set up the Food Security Reserve (FSR) to stockpile mass amounts of food to be dispatched in times of shortage. Last year, however, the system broke down when promised food loans did not arrive. Therefore, rather than being able to confront the current food crisis with the 370,000 metric tons of grain the FSR usually holds, African governments have only 50,000 metric tons on hand.

So why should television viewers have to help Africa once again? Because this is not just another drought. This is a natural disaster that threatens to send Africans back to the beginning. They suffered lifetimes under elitist governmental regimes and they are struggling this lifetime against the lethal legacy of long-gone, satiated leaders.

The hungry in Africa again need television viewers worldwide because now is when they need food most. Their governments ignore them; established charities have failed them; and now nature seems to betray them. And they cannot continue to assert themselves when they are starving.

—Elizabeth Walker, a native of Boston, is a senior professional writing student at Baylor University. Sources: Panafrikan News Agency, Church World Service, UNICEF, Brown University World Hunger Program, Africa Recovery, United Nations Development Programme.



Bread for the World's 2001 Offering of Letters, Africa: Hunger to Harvest, is urging the U.S. Congress to commit to cut hunger in half in sub-Saharan Africa by seeking at least an additional \$1 billion in poverty-focused assistance, including debt relief.

With this additional aid, African countries could better carry out development programs that give communities the capacity to improve education, health, agriculture and economic opportunity. The cost to the U.S. government would amount to one penny a day per citizen. By making this commitment to Africa, the U.S. could leverage as much as another \$4 billion in development aid from other countries.

In *Africa: Hunger to Harvest*, we will make the case that African nations need additional U.S. aid to develop their human and natural resources—and thereby strengthen their capacity to deal with hunger, poverty and related problems. Development strategies would vary throughout the region, depending on the needs and priorities of each country and community.

Among other things, sub-Saharan Africa needs resources to improve farming and support farmer-owned businesses; prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases; enroll more children in school (especially girls, who are often kept out); and create microenterprises and business opportunities.

—For more information, contact BFW at 50 F Street NW, Suite 500; Washington, DC 20001; Phone: 800/82-BREAD; Fax: 202/639-9401; Web: www.bread.org.

The Bush Plan for ‘Charitable Choice’ —a Few Concerns

by Christopher Bryan

U.S. President George W. Bush’s highly publicized proposal for the federal government to help subsidize religious organizations that sponsor social welfare programs has garnered much attention, both favorable and otherwise. Ironically, the Bush administration’s preferable mode of policymaking—applying a rigorous cost-benefit analysis to determine the course of action—renders the governmental funding of faith-based organizations, as presently conceived, more costly than beneficial.

Although there is little doubt that further opening up federal coffers to religiously oriented programs would benefit the recipients of the direct services offered, the larger questions that should focus our inquiry and scrutiny are “at what cost and to whom?”

Violation of Constitutional Principles.

The First Amendment’s Establishment Clause protects against an excessive entanglement of church and state. On this point, the most obvious concern is the obvious and practical question of how the newly created White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives will determine eligibility: will constitutionally impermissible viewpoint discrimination occur at some point in the decision-making process? Can a Satanist cult running a homeless shelter qualify? Will white supremacist organizations under the banner of Christian Identity be allowed to receive federal funds to maintain a soup kitchen?

The problem that inevitably arises is this: given that there is a finite amount of money to disburse, and there are countless groups applying for such funds, deciding who gets how much falls to the discretion of bureaucrats whose choices might reflect biases against certain groups or sects. Given Americans’ penchant for litigation, perhaps the most costly facet of the Bush plan would be the interminable legal wrangling

stemming from this thicket of constitutional problems. In the final analysis, this only serves to distract attention—and divert valuable resources away—from the central issue of providing services, alleviating hardship, and preventing at-risk conditions that make people prone to societal ills in the first place.

Infringement on Religious Organizations’ Integrity and Independence.

Faith-based groups receiving federal funds should be subject to the regulations and policies attached to nonreligious organizations. (Otherwise, religious groups get the funding both ways: being eligible for federal money without having to abide by

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legal requirements, which would create a peculiar form of preferential treatment for faith-based organizations.) But as many religious organizations are realizing, the costs of compliance often outweighs the benefit conferred.

Most truly local and grassroots charity groups lack the administrative infrastructure, support staff, and resources to navigate the frustrating red tape and paperwork drudgery that compliance requires. In the words of Reverend Jim Donald of St.

Columba’s Episcopal Church, “Once you get into working with the government you get into a kind of bureaucratic hell.” Federal guidelines about how the money will be spent require acute attention not only to accounting but also to myriad regulations in such far-flung realms of occupational safety, Title VII antidiscrimination law, and tax rules, among others.

Receiving federal money also means recipient charities have to write monthly reports, be open to site visits and the inspection of files. For some religious leaders and program managers, the fact that such strings are attached to receiving federal money defeats the purpose of desiring governmental assistance, which can easily rise to the level of intrusion on how an organization operates internally.

Evangelical groups have echoed these worries. The Southern Baptist Convention’s North American Mission Board has warned its ministries that there can be a tendency over time for the government to attempt to control that which it subsidizes.

Some groups have already disavowed federal funding for this very reason—the specter of excessive entanglement between church and state scares partisans on both sides of the divide. In a recent survey of over 1,200 religious congregations, only 28 percent of politically conservative congregations were willing to apply for government financing for charity work, compared with 51 percent of politically moderate or liberal congregations.

A Step Backward: The End of Basic Government-run Public Services?

Yet another reason that citizens, regardless of their relative position on the political ideological spectrum, should be wary of the Bush plan is that it could devolve into a gradual shrinking of public sector services offered by the government. It would be alluring for fiscal conservatives

to make the rather disingenuous argument that since faith-based organizations are equipped to tackle the nation's social ills, the government can scale back its direct services and programs.

The result would be a ramshackle system of public service providers in complete disarray—a stunning reversal of the promising trend now beginning to occur in which different service providers are more centralized and increasingly working in tandem with each other in helping the disadvantaged. The purpose of a neutral, non-sectarian government is precisely to address national problems in a systematized and efficient way.

By trying to delegate this responsibility to religious charities, the Bush administration may be laying the groundwork to cut key programs with proven effectiveness in order to help bankroll the generous tax cuts and increased defense spending that lies at the heart of the conservative political agenda.

Moreover, placing too much faith in religious organizations to solve deep-seated social problems removes the impetus on lawmakers to fashion needed programs and meaningful reforms in an already ailing social service system.

Holding the Needful Hostage to Proselytization.

The possibility of pressure exerted on the downtrodden to conform to the ideology (before receiving a helping hand) is part of the reason many citizens are skeptical of Bush's proposal. Many groups perform charitable functions because they see it as a fundamental part of their religious convictions. And almost all of them have a vested interest in converting people to what they perceive to be a preferable way of life.

But would a Jewish man be welcome at a government-funded Nation of Islam program? The long bloody history of religious wars should remind us that religious belief cuts deep into the consciousness of individuals, sometimes at odds with other basic characteristics. Thus, many taxpayers are understandably and justifiably uncomfortable with the public financing of insidious forms of coercion directed at people who are down and out.

Sculpting a Tenable Solution.

A compelling alternative to a system riddled with the constitutional vexations and ethical quandaries illustrated above would be to restrict public financing to religiously affiliated groups that agree not to discriminate in employment practices and to abide by federal regulations, thus enabling them to provide useful and socially beneficial social services without violating basic principles of fairness and equality.

Also, religious organizations should take the high road in their efforts at evangelism by not making services contingent on memorizing Scripture or converting to a creed. Also, beneficiaries should be made aware about the religious nature of a program and notified of secular alternatives.

Of course, the status quo already provides that federal subsidies may be used to pay for, say, the soup but not the Bible. And

it has been a long-standing practice that organizations that are affiliated with a house of worship but are separate institutions performing only secular functions should be able to enjoy eligibility for tax dollars. Furthermore, there are non-financial ways government can support religious groups, such as inviting faith community representatives to join community task forces.

If President Bush wants to make public funds available for faith-based organizations there should be some rules of engagement. Otherwise, there is a danger of religion becoming a mere shill for bigotry instead of a life-affirming solution to real problems, a haunting prospect that would dispirit the essence of the undertaking and disrupt the balance of church and state.

—Christopher Bryan, a native of Shreveport, Louisiana and a former Seeds intern, is a student at the University of Chicago Law School.

Insulation
by Nadine N. Doughty

to insulate: "To place in a detached situation; to separate by a non-conductor from other bodies"

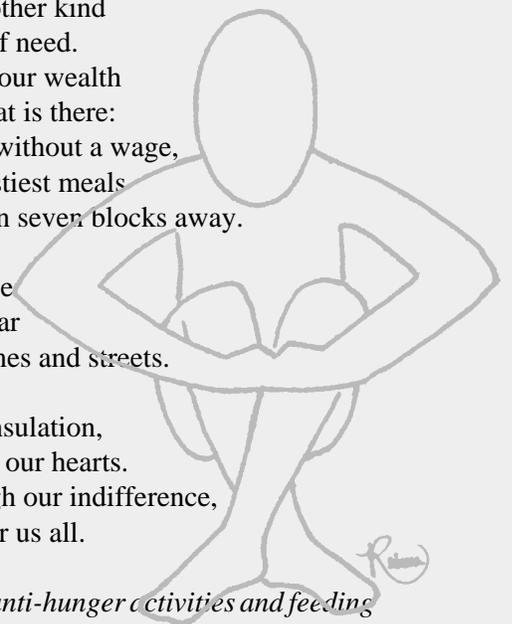
Insulation—
How fine it is for keeping dwellings warm!
How useful, too, for muffling unwanted sounds.

The security of our lives gives another kind
of insulation—from the face of need.
Our busy schedules, comfort, and our wealth
all cushion us from seeing what is there:
the ones without a home, without a wage,
the ones who find their tastiest meals
in the soup kitchen seven blocks away.

How easy to drive by and never see
the insecurity, the want and fear
persisting in those shabby homes and streets.

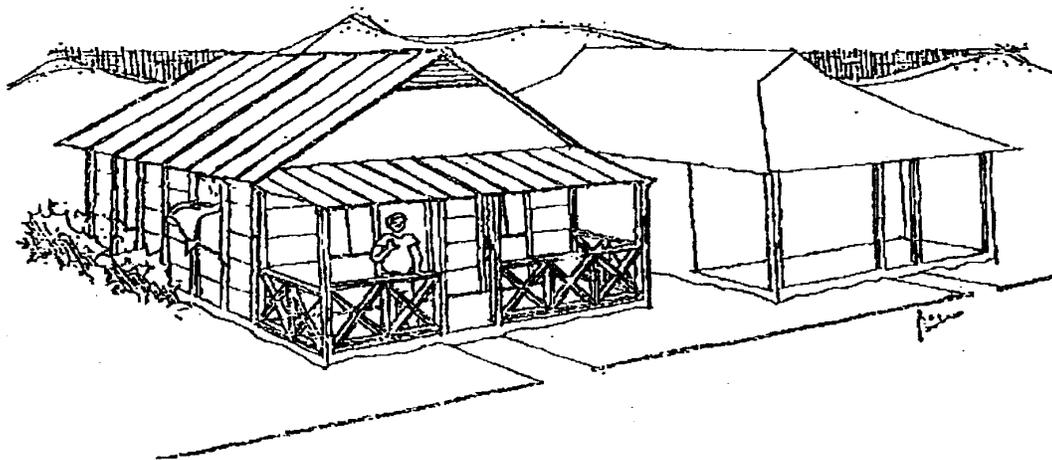
Let's strip our minds of harmful insulation,
and clearly see the needy with our hearts.
It's then that we will pierce through our indifference,
to seek and find true justice for us all.

—Dee Doughty has been active in anti-hunger activities and feeding programs in the Chicago area for many years.



Habitat for Humanity Affiliate Teams Up with Hunger Farm to Build Simulation Site

by Katie Cook



The plan (left) for the retreat house came from a Habitat for Humanity project in Nicaragua.

Several years ago two Central Texas leaders in the anti-hunger movement were at the World Hunger Relief training farm in the mountains of Haiti, discussing the vast challenge of raising awareness of food security and poverty issues among U.S. folks. Jimmy Dorrell, founder and director of Mission Waco (an agency that serves homeless and low-income people in Waco, Texas) had created a poverty simulation program that was attended and emulated by people from all over the country.

Dorrell and Lee Piché, director of World Hunger Relief, Inc. (based in Elm Mott, Texas) began to dream together. Someone, they agreed, needed to create a place in Central Texas where young people could go to study—and to actually experience—the poverty of developing countries.

Operating out of that inspiration, WHRI headquarters staff and volunteers subsequently developed a retreat, designed as a hunger awareness experience for youth. Calling it “A Day on the Other Side,” retreat leaders began hosting church groups on the Elm Mott training farm about a year ago.

The retreats, which normally begin on Friday evening and continue through Saturday afternoon, combine hands-on education and Bible study with movies and resource-distribution games that help young people discover truths about poverty. The curriculum is designed for up to 30 people. Each young person raises \$50 from sponsors in order to participate.

John Alexander, director of Waco’s Habitat for Humanity affiliate and former Mennonite Central Committee volunteer in

Nicaragua, came up with the idea of connecting the efforts with the Habitat practice of “tithing.”

Every Habitat affiliate, worldwide, gives ten percent of all unrestricted income to fund a project somewhere outside that country. The Waco affiliate has traditionally designated their tithe to Central America. In this way, the tithe from every Habitat house built in Waco can also fund at least one house in El Salvador or Nicaragua.

So, Alexander said, what if the Waco affiliate’s tithe were to build a Central-American type house on the WHRI training farm property, and the house were to be used for hunger awareness retreats?

So construction materials were donated by the Waco Habitat affiliate, volunteers at the farm provided the labor, and the building became a reality.

The building is patterned after a typical Habitat dwelling in Nicaragua—a 20x20 one-room, cement-block frame on a concrete slab.

Some of the learning opportunities for retreat participants will be hands-on experience with appropriate technology. For instance, there will be no running water at first. The youth will have to carry what water they need for the 24-hour retreat. Piché says there are plans to attach a solar-powered shower at some point in the future.

The house will also have limited electrical lighting, a composting toilet, and a covered porch—which will serve as a cooking area. The youth will cook on a fuel-efficient wood-burning *lorena* stove.

—For more information about the “Day on the Other Side” retreat, contact Dale Barron or Lee Piché at World Hunger Relief, Inc., PO Box 639, Elm Mott, TX 76640; Phone: 254/799-5611; E-mail: WHRI@hot.rr.com; Web: worldhungerrelief.org.

‘National Community Needs Database’ Seeking Local Information from Interfaith Community

The Focus On American National Community Needs Database is being developed to provide a one-stop resource for the communication of unmet needs of front-line service programs in every United States county. The objective of the initiative is to provide the general public, local churches, interfaith organizations, youth leadership programs, volunteer programs, and corporate networks easy access to unmet needs of front-line service programs in their communities. Organizers are looking for local community assessments from across the country. If you have information or want to know more about the database, visit: Focus On American National Community Needs Database at www.humanitarian.net/usdatabase.



New Church World Service Kit Offers Rainbow of Resources

Church World Service has created a colorful, attractive new intergenerational “Rainbow of Hope” kit containing ten excellent resources that inform people of the popular “Tools of Hope and Blanket Program.” The program was designed, partially, in response to the fact that 22.4 million refugees worldwide are in need of blankets, tents, and emergency supplies.) The ten new resources include:

- ‘Tools of Hope’ gift catalog featuring stories and highlighting outreach opportunities for individuals and whole congregations*
- An 8 1/2 minute video and study guide highlighting the Tools of Hope program, and how congregations can become a part of “A Rainbow of Caring” to impact people worldwide.
- A colorful “Rainbow of Caring” poster with photos of people who have been helped.
- Five individual guides filled with skits, Worship, Minute for Mission, Children’s Activities, and Alternative Giving—to help promote the Tools of Hope & Blanket Offering.
- *Build a Better Tomorrow* children’s curriculum, including four sessions of Bible study, stories, activity sheets and poster, ways for children to be involved in mission and outreach.
- Tools of Hope poster with four photo panels, featuring stories of the projects depicted.
- Cards to acknowledge gifts, envelopes to send group offerings to Church World Service, and samples of the offering envelope/leaflets.

To order, contact Church World Service, PO Box 968, Elkhart, Indiana 46515; Phone 800/297-2767; Web: www.churchworldservice.org.

*Gifts to meet critical needs of people in various areas of the world are listed with prices that reflect average costs to provide items to families and communities in need. “From fish fingerlings to farm tools, blankets to breadmaking cooperatives, water pumps to rabbit hutches, the key is that they’re the right tool when it meets a need identified by the communities themselves,” the catalog reads.

Hunger and the Free Market: Literature from Food First

Food First provides two forms of literature for anyone—members or nonmembers—interested in learning about and fighting against world hunger. The first is the quarterly Backgrounder, which highlights current events affecting hunger issues. A recent Backgrounder critiqued the Seattle WTO protests, taking a ruthless look at the nature and workings of the WTO and suggesting alternatives for fair global trade practices.

Food First books also examine issues surrounding free trade and the global economy. *Dark Victory: The United States and*

Global Poverty, edited by Walden Bello, with Shea Cunningham and Bill Rau, postulates reasons why poverty has deepened in so many countries, and analyzes the decline of living standards in both the U.S. and developing countries as a result of a free market economy.

For more information about Food First resources, call 510-654-4400, fax 510-654-4551, or visit www.foodfirst.org on the web.

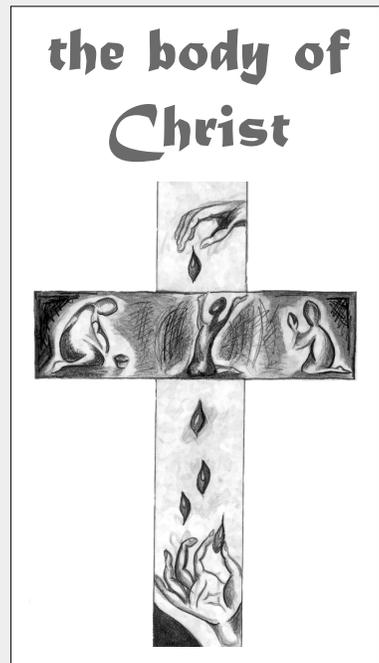
Urban Lessons for Today’s Mission

From real stories of people who experience urban poverty spring hope and inspiration for today’s church. *Stories from Below the Poverty Line* provides fresh, compelling lessons for Christians preparing for mission in a new century.

Chronicled within the book are accounts of tragedy and triumph in the inner city that bring new meaning to age-old Christian themes. We learn about community from homeless people; from public housing residents, about servanthood; from a gang leader, about grace; and from a Guatemalan mother poised to commit family suicide, about hope.

Equally compelling are bridge-building links between urban and non-urban settings. Paper, 112 pages, \$9.99 (Canada \$14.79), from Herald Press. Contact: 800/759-4447; www.mph.org.

Introducing the
2001 Ordinary Time
Worship Packet



from Seeds of Hope Publishers

Seeds Worship Resources: Four 20-page packets each year filled with prayers, litanies, sermons, activities, art, and more. \$50 per packet or \$120 for all four. To order, call 254/755-7745; fax 254/753-1909; write 602 James, Waco, TX 76706; e-mail seedshop@aol.com; web: www.seedspublishers.com



Opportunities from Harvest of Hope

BIG ISLAND, VA—The Society of St. Andrew now offers week-long and weekend mission trips for youth and adults designed to teach participants about hunger, its causes, and its effects. Activities include work in local fields donated by growers, food-deliveries to local hunger-relief agencies, study, and worship.

Summer Harvest of Hope events consist of week-long retreats designed for senior high youth and their adult sponsors. Senior High Weeks are available in:

- Chestertown, MD
- Wilmington, NC
- Eastern Shore, VA
- Poynor, TX

For this program, teams of 5 youth (who have completed their freshman year of high school) and 1 adult (21 years or older) are accepted, with tuition at \$165 per person. Weekend retreats are also planned for intergenerational groups, which are available in:

- John's Island, SC
- Fincastle, VA
- Fairfield, PA
- Dahlonega, GA

Youth participants in this program should be at least 10 years of age. Teams of six with at least one adult are accepted with tuition at \$65 per person.

Finally, a trip is available to college-age and young adults, in Keezletown, VA, with tuition at \$50 per person.

To find out more about this ministry, including dates of operation for each camp location, contact: Harvest of Hope; 800/

33304597; sosahoh@endhunger.org; 3383 Sweet Hollow Rd., Big Island, VA 24526; www.endhunger.org.Microcredit Summit

Campaigns Targeted for the World's Poorest Families

DATELINE—Both the Asia Pacific Region Microcredit Summit Meeting of Councils (APRMS) held in early February, and the Africa meeting held last October have made a profound difference to the Microcredit Summit Campaign and to the families it seeks to reach. Participants in Microcredit Summits discuss four core themes: 1) reaching the poorest 2) reaching and empowering women 3) building financially self-sufficient institutions and 4) ensuring a positive measurable impact on the lives of clients and their families.

These themes are actualized through discussions of papers commissioned for the meeting, day-long courses, and training sessions for leaders. At the Asia-Pacific Summit Meeting, a new training video on the CASHPOR House Index was premiered. Delegates left with copies of this program, as well as the previously produced video on Participatory Wealth Ranking, two poverty-measurement tools blazing new territory in the field.

Because more than three quarters of the 13.8 million poorest families of 1999 were living in Asia and the Pacific, the successful Asia summit discussions, courses, and training will facilitate Microcredit Summit Campaign's main goal of impacting the lives of these families. Further plans are underway for a Latin America/Caribbean meeting to be held in Mexico later this year.

—from Faith Works, the newsletter of the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice. For more information, contact Katie Shaughnessy at (612)379-7374, or Ron Kreitmeier at (651) 291-4479, both of the Twin Cities Labor Religion Coalition.

Immigrant Working Conditions Improve in the Twin Cities

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL—In the Year 2000, Twin Cities hotel and restaurant employees organized various community events, unions, and strikes in order to improve the employment situation of immigrant workers

in this field. The success of these events was largely due to religious groups who saw the immigrant's plight as an opportunity to put their faith into action.

At the beginning of the year, workers at the Holiday Inn Express formed a union, but the management's INS call halted the campaign. What could have been a sad story for eight of the workers being deported by the INS turned into a success when the Hispanic Social Justice Committee at Holy Rosary Catholic Church sprang into action.

Clergy, congregation members, unions and community residents participated in rallies, press conferences, and prayer services—actions which led to a nationally recognized ruling by the INS. The ruling gave seven of the eight workers two years to remain and work in the country while they hope for a national amnesty bill to pass.

In another instance of religious-group impact, in the summer of 2000 the Twin Cities Labor Religion Network organized people of faith to join the picket lines each day of a 13-day rolling strike held by hotel workers at seven hotels in Minneapolis and Bloomington. The workers and their community allies won a master union contract covering 1,450 workers at nine hotels which included free health insurance for workers and increased wages from 21 to 30 percent over five years, among other concessions.

Reflecting upon the year's activities, Rev. Nancy Anderson, pastor of Minnehaha United Church of Christ and a leader in the Twin Cities Labor Religions Network, said, "Supporting the hotel workers this year helped me, members of my congregations, and the members of the Labor Religion Network put our faith into action. Faith cannot only be a private matter. It must direct our public witness.

Myths About the Living Wage Debunked

BOSTON—Published by Responsible Wealth, the new report "Choosing the High Road: Businesses that Pay a Living Wage and Prosper" debunks myths about higher minimum wages. Inspired by the report, more than 40 cities—including Boston, Baltimore, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Antonio—

have adopted living wage ordinances, which mandate an increase over federal minimum wage according to local living expenses. In addition, 120 living wage campaigns are underway, already having recruited 50 business owners to pledge a voluntary pay raise for employees to over eight dollars an hour.

Over one quarter of American jobs pay less than a national living wage of eight

dollars an hour. Below that wage, a 40-hour workweek leaves a family of four under the poverty line, meaning an inability to sustain subsistence.

Despite the economy's record-breaking nine-year expansion and skyrocketing CEO pay, the typical modern worker earns less, adjusted to inflation, than in 1973.

—from *Responsible Wealth*, a network of

over 450 businesses and individuals in the top five percent of income who are concerned about economic disparity. To promote shared prosperity, the organization presents research on the business benefits of higher wages: lower worker turnover and absenteeism, meaning a reduced training costs, higher morale and higher productivity, and a stronger consumer market.

Global Campaign for Debt Cancellation Continues

New Name, New Campaigns for Jubilee 2000/USA

A coalition of faith-based and activist organizations launched the Jubilee/USA Network at a three-day meeting in Denver, Colorado February 16-18, 2001. More than 80 nationwide organizations convened in Denver to celebrate the progress achieved by Jubilee 2000/USA and to continue seeking ways to end debt domination. Along with its new name, Jubilee/USA Network, will come a new governance structure with several new initiatives for economic and social justice including:

- a "drop the debt" campaign at the G8 Summit in Genoa (July 2001) which aims to get full cancellation of debts owed to the IMF and the World Bank by at least the most heavily indebted countries;
- a campaign to link debt and the effort to combat AIDS, including a demand for acquisition of AIDS medicines at best world prices;
- efforts to link debt and trade, particularly with the approaching Summit of the Americas in Quebec; support to educational efforts exposing problems of the export-led growth model;
- a campaign to eliminate user fees for essential services, especially requirements for

forced privatization of water supplies and other aspects of structural adjustment agreements;

- efforts to complete legislative action needed this year to get full Congressional appropriations for existing debt relief.

The Network Council was the mastermind behind these changes, one of the restructured governance bodies within the Jubilee USA Network. This group, now the primary decision-making body of the Jubilee USA Network, welcomes input and participation from members of local and regional debt groups, as well as from national organizations and denominations. Groups that are interested in belonging to the Council are encouraged to review the criteria for membership and submit an application.

—from *Jubilee USA Network*

Canadian Steps Toward Debt Relief

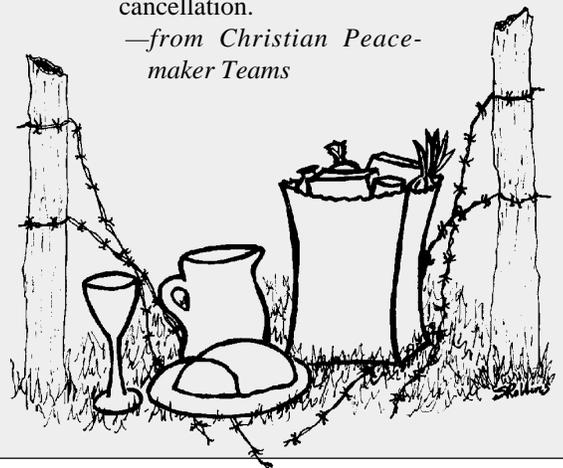
The global campaign for debt cancellation is still in full swing. The Jubilee Initiative reiterates its call for the complete and unconditional cancellation of bilateral and multilateral debts of the world's poorest countries; ending the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs); and the assessment and cancellation of the illegitimate debts of developing countries.

One small step toward meeting these three goals recently occurred in Canada in December,

when Finance Minister Paul Martin extended a debt payment moratorium on bilateral debt owed to Canada by Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). The Jubilee Initiative commends Martin's moratorium on collecting payments rather than holding payments in a trust fund (according to Britain's policy). The Initiative also applauds how the moratorium will free up foreign exchange for spending on social and economic development in impoverished countries.

However, since HIPC's owe Canada less than one half of one percent of impoverished country debt, the overall effect on global debt relief will be minimal. The Jubilee Initiative is therefore urging Martin to work for an extension of his action by multilateral creditor institutions, and is calling on all creditors to rectify the imposition of onerous SAPs. With Canada's debt relief example there is hope that creditors and other countries will soon follow suit in both bilateral debt and SAP cancellation.

—from *Christian Peacemaker Teams*



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Statement of Purpose

Seeds of Hope is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be optional. The group intends to seek out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable, and empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

Editorial Address

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Seeds of Hope Publishers also produce quarterly packets of worship materials for the liturgi-

et cetera

Don Quixote appears to be insane, but somewhere deep inside we know he had at least part of it right—like finding splendor in the tawdry, like treating the lowliest prostitute like a princess... It seems to me the godliest kind of chivalry.

—Katie Cook

Francis [of Assisi] looked at Holy Devotion not as a kind of piety, but in the medieval meaning of the term: a quickness to do the will of God once you know it.

—Murray Bodo, *OFM*

And what ought to be my place (the place of the privileged) in a world filled with the oppressed? This, I suppose, is the perennial question, the question, perhaps, which forms the very heart of the Sermon on the Mount. One can hardly escape the feeling that this is the central question of our century also. It is, above all, a question that I have preferred to ask in the abstract surrounded by family and friends. But for me now, the question has been raised by the bodies and souls of those who suffer. (Has the answer been posed by those who serve?)

—Marc Ellis, *A Year at the Catholic Worker*

The hero is one who kindles a great light in the world, who sets up blazing torches in the dark streets of life for men to see by. The saint is the man who walks through the dark paths of the world, himself a light.

—Felix Adler

Today is your day and mine, the only day we have, the day in which we play our part. What our part may signify in the great whole we may not understand; but we are here to play it, and now is our time. This we know: it is a part of action, not of whining. It is to express love in terms of human helpfulness.

—David Starr Jordan

After breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Master, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

—John 21:15, *The Message*

cal year—with an economic justice attitude. These include litanies, sermons, children's and youth activities, bulletin art, and drama.

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