

Hunger News & Hope

...a Seeds of Hope publication

Western Sudan Heads Toward Hunger Crisis

by Stephanie Beazley



art by Kate Moore

DARFUR, Sudan—Human rights defenders of the world have been watching Sudan closely in the past couple of years, as 21 years of civil war escalated into what some have called genocide.

In May of 2004, the Sudanese government, which is Islamic, entered into a peace treaty with the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) which would allow self-rule in the Christian south for six years. In July the government signed a joint communiqué with the UN, pledging to restore peace by the end of August.

Meanwhile, the black population in the western region around Darfur continued to be terrorized by Muslim militia called Janjaweed long after August. Suspicion that the Janjaweed are backed by the government were confirmed in

August by the attack of two western villages by government helicopters.

By last December, 1.2 million people had been displaced and another 200,000 had fled to neighboring Chad.

In January 2005, the Sudanese government and rebel forces in the country reached a landmark agreement ending the 21-year civil war. However, despite UN mandates and the presence of African Union (AU) peacekeepers in the region, human rights abuses still abound—especially in the Darfur region.

Human rights violations—such as extrajudicial executions, rape and other sexual violence, torture, enforced disappearances, scorching abandoned villages, and forced displacement of civilians are widespread and continue daily.

The violations have prevented many, especially women, from venturing outside the walls of refugee camps to gather firewood or grass to sell for fear of harassment by “men on camels.”

On March 31, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution which referred the Darfur situation to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

According to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, all perpetrators of human rights atrocities in Sudan will be brought to justice. In addition, he called for the cooperation of all parties involved in order to bring peace to the region.

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Quotes, Poems & Pithy Sayings



by Jessica Garza

With the proposed cut of \$4.8 billion by the House, there is no hope for ending such insecurity in this country. At this writing, even without the cuts, people are being turned away from shelters and pantries, and many have less to eat than ever before.

2. Many of the victims of this possible action are children. The cuts threaten to take away government assistance in schools for free food programs. The majority of the children who receive this assistance are in homes that rely on the Food Stamp program, and without free food programs they will not get the nutrition they need.

This is most difficult on the children living in homes that need assistance. Before the end of the month, the food stamps have run out and their only source of nourishment comes from food programs at school. Now even that source is being threatened.

3. The Food Stamp program could see a cut from \$2.8 million to \$5.3 million if the resolution is passed.

4. Medicaid is also facing possible reductions in their budget. The program provides health care to 58 million low-income Americans, including 28 million children, 5 million elderly people, and nine million people with special needs. The proposed cut from the House would be almost \$15 billion dollars.

5. Along with this cut to Medicaid, The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) will see cuts as well. Nearly five million children who do not have health insurance and prescribe to the SCHIP will be affected.

6. The proposed budget also calls for the reduction of funds for Child Welfare Services. The foster care system, adoption assistance, and other child welfare services would have almost \$2 billion taken away. Though the Senate has not made initial moves towards this kind of cut, the House is expected to do so.

7. The people receiving assistance from the programs will still have to pay taxes for the programs that they used to have. Tax payers will still be putting out the same amount of money they always

As many people in the United States are struggling to provide for their families and stay afloat in the market place, the US Senate is moving toward legislation that will make it more difficult. In March, both the Senate and the House made decisions to cut programs that would lower the US budget deficit.

However, the programs the politicians are willing to cut will only hinder the progress of hardworking Americans to provide for their families. The estimated budget cut proposed by the House is \$30 billion to \$35 billion dollars.

The proposal includes cuts made to programs such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, Earned Income Tax Credit, the Supplemental Security Income program, foster care and adoption assistance, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TFAP) block grant, and child care.

Analysts say that the Senate is not likely to propose cuts to low-income programs other than the Food Stamp Program. They are expected instead to cut \$2.8 billion from farm and nutrition programs over a five-year period.

The struggle is not just between the House and Senate as to which resolution to adopt, but the struggle is for the American people who are at the mercy of representatives on Capitol Hill.

Lawmakers say they are making these budget cuts to help reduce the National deficit. The only problem is that, even with the supposed cuts to all of these programs, the deficit would still remain high. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reports that there would be no significant impact on the budget.

A closer look at a few of the programs that would likely take a hit shows that legislators need to think again.

1. When looking at the Social Security question, we see that millions of Americans of all ages are socially insecure. Nearly 3.5 million people are homeless every year and almost 36 million are food-insecure—that is, they can expect to miss several meals a week because they will not be able to obtain the food they need. These people are unable to provide for themselves and their families, and this problem is not going away by itself.

At this writing, even without the cuts, people are being turned away from shelters and pantries, and many have less to eat than ever before.

did. Most low-income families will not have a chance to pay for doctor bills, food, and yet they still pay taxes.

8. As for the Senate's proposal to dissolve money from the agriculture budget, analysts point out that many growers and farmers already struggle with low incomes.

There has to be some kind of proper resolution to the deficit problem, but cutting programs for low-income people, harming millions of people, will not resolve it.

The nation's leaders say they want to give Americans a better future by reduc-

ing the deficit, but they do so by taking away any hope of future for those who have the least to say about it.

—*Jessica Garza, a recent graduate of Baylor University's professional writing program, serves on the staff of a church in Plano, Texas. Sources: Bread for the World, Food Research and Action Center, Center for Budget & Policy Priorities, Students Against Hunger.org, the Louisville Courier-Journal, and the Independent Record.*

People of Faith March on Capitol to Protest Proposed Budget

*Religious Leaders Declare
"This Budget Does Not Reflect Our Values"*
from the National Council of Churches and the Interfaith Alliance

WASHINGTON, DC—On March 15, as the US Senate began debating the 2006 fiscal year budget resolution, more than 300 people of faith participated in a rally on Capitol Hill to declare that the federal budget proposed by the Bush Administration does not reflect their values.

In the rally, sponsored by the National Council of Churches USA (NCC) and The Interfaith Alliance (TIA), religious leaders from across the country marched from the United Methodist Building on Maryland Avenue to the US Capitol to speak out against the proposed budget.

The group declared that budget favors military spending and tax breaks for the wealthy and corporations—while largely ignoring the needs of the poor, children, the elderly, families and communities.

Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar, NCC General Secretary, told the crowd, "this budget is immoral and does not reflect the values we hold as people of faith.

The proposed budget spends about half on defense and the deficit but very little on addressing the needs of the poor,

the dispossessed, children, and those who are most in need."

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, President of the Union for Reform Judaism, the largest American Jewish congregation, said, "We are here today to say that when we look at this budget, we see that American politics right now are fundamentally broken—corrupted by abuse, world indifference, and politicians who spend their days dialing for dollars."

Yoffie went on to say that the task of people of faith is to share their bread with the hungry and "to send a message to our President and to leaders of both parties that despite squalor for the poor and gated communities for the rich, the great majority of Americans have not given up on 'We, the People.'"

According to Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mohandas Gandhi and founder/president of the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, "The 2006 budget is immoral because, while it cuts programs that help the poor and the needy, it shows presents on the rich. Clearly, this budget seeks to make the rich richer while reducing the poor to panhandlers."

Believing that the US budget is a moral document, participants offered an alternative vision of the federal budget—one that would not further burden the poor.

Instead, it would provide families and communities with the tools to meet their basic needs: access to nutritious

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food, quality child care, accessible and affordable housing, comprehensive and affordable health care, high quality education at every stage of life, a fair and just tax system, job creation, and a livable income.

Rev. Dr. Welton Gaddy, president of The Interfaith Alliance, led the group in a litany that declared, "As a moral docu-

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art by Van Darden



My Weekend on the Streets

by Jonathan Hal Reynolds

I've stolen from a church before. (Yes, I know. I thought I might go to hell for what I did, but I had to do it.)

It was in April, about the time everything starts getting really green outside. I took a group of youth to a Poverty Simulation weekend, hosted by Mission Waco, where we had to give up all our belongings and become homeless for 48 hours.

The whole idea sounded like fun to me in the beginning, but little did I know that I was in for a rather miserable weekend.

First of all, it was cold—really cold. On top of that, it rained—a lot. On the first night, the designated covered area where we were assigned to sleep was flooded by 11:00 PM, so we were left standing in the cold rain the entire night, miserable and sleepless.

The next day, we roamed the streets looking for food. No, we begged for food. No one would help us. I imagined the green leaves on the trees turning into

dollar bills, so I could have a feast at Wendy's.

I finally got so hungry that I took my group over to the church where I grew up, and I stole brownies in the kitchen from some elderly ladies who were having a luncheon.

The scene felt like a movie, especially the part where the janitor chased me into the fellowship hall, and I hid quietly behind the curtains for ten minutes until he left.

The whole time I kept thinking, If I get caught stealing from the church, they'll definitely call the cops and I'll be taken downtown for sure.

Though the suspense was quite adventurous for me, I understand how such a perilous excursion could be humiliating to someone who felt forced to steal on a regular basis in order to eat.

The whole experience made me think about hungry people—homeless people—and how we get onto them all the time because they steal and beg for money and food.

I've always had a sort of hidden bitterness towards people asking me for money. I'm selfish, and I get tired of it. But now I think I understand their desperation a little bit better.

When I think about how hungry I was during the two days that I was homeless, and I think about all the people who are hungry and homeless every single moment of every single day, it's immensely overwhelming.

I feel like it wouldn't matter much if I took the time and made the effort to feed a few mouths today. I feel like there will always be starving, aching, sleepless folks all over the world, no matter how hard I try to soothe that pain.

So where do I begin? Where do we all begin? Is it with government? Is it with churches? Is it with schools? Is it with community programs? Is it with the arts?

Something Mahatma Ghandi once said that may be the truest, most powerful wisdom on our quest to heal the world: "We must be the change we wish to see in the world."

—Jonathan Reynolds, a recent graduate of Baylor University's professional writ-

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ing program, spent two semesters writing for Seeds of Hope Publishers. For more information about the urban poverty simulation program, go to www.missionwaco.org. For a more international experience, see "Living on the Other Side" on page 4.

What is Wal-Mart Really Doing to Our Communities?

by Andrew Kang Bartlett

In society, who are you? Are you a consumer, a citizen, a worker, a person of faith?

We in the United States have become superb consumers—yet we fall short when it comes to acting in society as citizens, workers, and persons of faith. Focused on making enough money to buy what we “need,” how can we follow the path charted by the Hebrew prophets and Jesus Christ—to let justice roll down and to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and house the homeless?

The generous among us tithe to support efforts that, for the most part, address symptoms. But who among us is willing to make changes and sacrifices in the face of our own and society’s hypocrisy? Are we willing to risk our lives, or at least some of our comforts, for a just cause?

Through our consumer lenses, Wal-Mart is the best thing since duct tape. Better! We save money on food, fuel, and furniture buying from Wal-Mart—the largest employer in the world. But the more we learn about this 3,500-store retailer, the more exorbitant the costs of those low prices appear.

The launch in January of Wal-Mart’s biggest public relations blitz ever is designed to improve their faltering reputation due to a string of embarrassments. In January, Wal-Mart settled for \$135,540 with the US Labor Department for violating child labor laws in three states. In March, Wal-Mart reached an \$11 million settlement with the federal government over the use of undocumented immigrants to clean its stores.

Most recently in April, Tom Coughlin, a Wal-Mart executive some thought would be the next CEO, was accused by Wal-Mart of abusing his expense account to the tune of \$100,000-500,000. The United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) say that Wal-Mart and Mr. Coughlin used the account to fund anti-union activities. On top of all this, Wal-Mart now faces the largest class-action suit in history, with 1.6 million women accusing the company of gender discrimination, labor law violations, shipping jobs overseas, suppressing wages, and links to a powerful Chinese businessman allegedly involved in the weapons-trading arm of the People’s Liberation Army.

But the corporate crimes we hear about are less worrisome than the ways Wal-Mart’s business model itself damages the fabric of our communities.

How are our communities paying for those deals on Tupperware, frozen pizzas and fertilizers?

Myth #1: Wal-Mart brings jobs. In fact, a new study reveals that five years after the entry of a Wal-Mart store into a county, total employment in the county remains unchanged. This means that all of the “new” jobs touted by the chain

merely displace existing jobs. Net gain, 0.

Myth #2: Wal-Mart contributes to the community through increased taxes. In some areas, more taxes may result, but not necessarily.

Myth #3: Wal-Mart gives to local charities. The Walton family, worth a combined \$95 billion, has given one percent of its wealth to charity. By comparison, *Business Week*, writing about philanthropy in America, observed that Bill and Melinda Gates made “history this year by giving their estimated \$3 billion Microsoft Corp. dividend to their foundation...To put it into perspective, that one gift is three times bigger than the amount that America’s richest family, the descendants of Wal-Mart Stores Inc. founder Sam Walton, has given during their entire lifetimes.”

Myth #4: Wal-Mart stimulates the local economy. A government funded study on poverty recently found that coun-

Below is a report from the Planning Board of New Paltz, New York. It is a forecast of fiscal impact on the city if Wal-Mart builds a Supercenter there.

Wal-Mart property tax	+ \$100,000
Cost of municipal services	- \$29,000
Cost of additional services	- \$5,000
Tax losses at three other malls	- \$29,000
50 percent property tax abatement	- \$50,000
Total town tax deficit	<\$13,000>

ties with a Wal-Mart store experienced a smaller reduction in poverty rates (see <http://cecd.aers.psu.edu>). This implies that Wal-Mart is passing on to communities without compensation—something called an *externality* in economics-speak—the cost of higher poverty.

As a retailer, Wal-Mart does not really improve on the economic base of an area. Wal-Mart does not create value, it merely sells products by others. Unlike locally-based retailers, which circulate a larger proportion of their income back

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into the local economy, Wal-Mart sends the lion's share of its profits to their Arkansas headquarters.

In exchange for bargains on lawn chairs, cream cheese, and shot guns, what does the country stand to lose?

Myth #5: Wal-Mart buys American. During their 1990s "Buy America" ad campaign, Wal-Mart was increasingly buying Chinese and pushing its supply chain overseas. Wal-Mart has unprecedented buying power as the biggest US seller of groceries, toys, guns, diamonds, apparel, sporting goods, CD/DVDs, videogames, etc.—not to mention the biggest film developer, optician, private truck-fleet operator, and real estate developer.

With \$10 billion in profits and annual sales of \$288 billion, Wal-Mart exceeds the gross domestic products of more than 160 nations. To get Wal-Mart contracts, manufacturers are compelled to hold firm on wages for their US workers and/or relocate to cheap labor countries.

Myth #6: What's good for Wal-Mart is good for the United States: State and federal governments provide a huge invisible subsidy to Wal-Mart from our tax dollars. According to a study released last year from the UC Berkeley Labor Center, employment practices at Wal-Mart cost California taxpayers about \$86 million annually in public assistance to company workers.

Because the pay at Wal-Mart is so low, employees qualified for \$32 million annually in health-related services and \$54 million per year in other assistance, such as subsidized school lunches, food stamps and subsidized housing. Studies in five other states have found similar results. In addition, estimates of the national taxpayer burden for Wal-Mart exceeds \$1.5 billion per year.

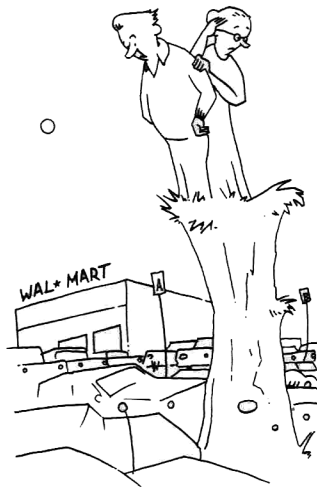
Myth #7: Wal-Mart pays decent wages. The average Wal-Mart employee earns about \$8.23, which is below a living wage in almost all parts of the country.

Full-time Wal-Mart employees must wait six months, and part-timers must wait two years before having an option to participate in a health care package, whose deductible at \$1,000 is more of a catastrophic medical insurance.

Reminiscent of the "company store," Wal-Mart has resurrected a corporate model in which its employees are compensated so poorly, they have no choice but to shop at Wal-Mart.

What can we do?

While acknowledging that to make ends meet, many people need the lowest price they can get on every purchase, we must be willing to hold corporations accountable to values we hold dear. Achiev-



ing corporate responsibility sounds daunting, but as with the journey of a thousand miles, it starts with one step, and there are many ways to begin.

One place to begin is to talk with those around you—in your congregations, schools, neighborhood, and with government and company leaders—about what you expect from Wal-Mart or any company that joins your community. Discuss ethics and faith obligations. Determine common ground standards for community benefits.

The Queens, Bakersfield, and Inglewood, California, are the most recent communities that have done just that. Last year, the Rev. Dr. Harold E.

Kidd of First Presbyterian Church of Inglewood—and a broad alliance of clergy, elected officials, community-based organizations, business owners, workers and residents—were successful in keeping Wal-Mart out. In April 2005, they sent a letter to Lee Scott, CEO of Wal-Mart [The letter and a partial list of endorsements can be found at www.alternet.org/story/21677], which summarizes their reasons and illustrates the stance that communities can take.

Other ideas:

1. Stand in faithful solidarity. Think through what loving our neighbors really entails. On our tiny, globalized planet, how do we show compassion and love to our neighbors working in sweatshops in China or in big box stores down the road?

2. Examine your life filtered through the lens of your faith. Should we buy less stuff and with the money saved buy from independent stores and local farmers who contribute more to the local economy?

3. Explore the possibilities of reforming corporate personhood rights, corporate chartering laws in your state, as well as working to reform campaign financing.

4. Borrow *The Corporation* and other films on globalization from the Presbyterian Hunger Program (php@pcusa.org) and come up with ways to curb abusive corporate behavior and build life-affirming alternative models.

For more ideas on how to deal with Wal-Mart as consumers, retailers, suppliers, citizens and planning boards, read chapter seven of Bill Quinn's *How Wal-Mart is Destroying America (and the World)*. Available, not at Wal-Marts, but at an independent book store near you (if you still have one).

—Andrew Kang Bartlett is the Associate for National Hunger Concerns for the Presbyterian Hunger Program, PC(USA) in Louisville, Kentucky. The Presbyterian Hunger Program is one of the sponsors of *Hunger News & Hope*.

Is Wal-Mart Cleaning Up Their Act?

by Jacquie Scott

Don't we all just love those little smiley faces that greet us when we walk in to Wal-Mart? I do. And I think every other college student and individual concerned with saving money would. The yellow smiley faces at Wal-Mart promise us all great savings, they remind us of the time we found that great deal on those really cute sneakers or the time we found those desperately needed socks priced two for one.

I know all about the great savings at Wal-Mart—I save so much money there that you could replace my smiling face with the one at the store entrance and probably still not notice the difference.

Most recently though, Wal-Mart's name isn't being coupled with the sound of change clinking in consumers' pockets as they rack up generous savings. Instead words like "sex discrimination" and "unfair labor practices" are being stamped on the Wal-Mart label as the nation's leading retailer faces the largest civil rights class-action suit in United States history.

In June of 2004, US District Court Judge Martin Jenkins allowed six current and former Wal-Mart employees from California to represent all female employees who have worked at the company since December 26, 1998. This will include over 1.5 million women.

According to *Women's Enews*, the plaintiffs in *Dukes v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.* have charged Wal-Mart with "discrimination in promotions, pay, training and hiring." (To date women fill only one third of Wal-Mart's managerial positions even though they make up over 70 per-

cent of the company's employees.) Earlier in 2003, during pretrial testimony, when questioned about Wal-Mart's unfair hiring practices, executive vice president of Wal-Mart's "people division" Coleman Peterson noted in several memos that the company was lagging behind in the number of women in management.

He even offered remedies for this problem, including hiring a point-person to ensure more women managers were hired. Peterson later "admitted," though, that his memos were mendacious in character.

There other practices that women say make it hard for them to ascend the corporate ladder as employees of Wal-Mart. These include the erratic posting of job openings, meetings which are held at strip clubs and the restaurant chain Hooters, which Peterson called "du jour," and Wal-Mart's practice of relocating newly employed managers.

Sources say Wal-Mart's founder, Sam Walton, knew that this type of practice made women's advancement into management difficult.

More pretrial testimony from Wal-Mart executives revealed the extent of Wal-Mart's discrimination against women. Store managers frequently tell female Wal-Mart employees that their "non-breadwinner" status justifies the fact that they receive lower wages than male coworkers who are doing the same jobs they are.

This wage disparity issue runs from the bottom ranks to the upper echelons of Wal-Mart corporate culture. The National

Organization of Women (NOW) reported: "the average male senior vice-president earns \$419,435 per year, while women earn \$279,772 in the same position."

In February of this year, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) sued Wal-Mart under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act for permitting a female associate to be sexually harassed. And this wouldn't be the first time the EEOC has filed a lawsuit against Wal-Mart.

Since 1994 the EEOC has brought more than 17 lawsuits against the retail giant for infractions against the American Disability Act alone. Consider the following. In 2001, Jesse Bernard, who uses a wheelchair, applied to a Wal-Mart in Clinton, Missouri and was told that "people like him" were not wanted as greeters. He sued Wal-Mart with the EEOC.

I can't walk out of Wal-Mart smiling at my amazing savings when I now know so much of what's going on inside Wal-Mart, but I will not boycott Wal-Mart.

Seven weeks prior to Jesse Barnard's case, the commission sued Wal-Mart for not accommodating a disabled employee in Peoria, Arizona. A week before this case, a judge in Phoenix order Wal-Mart to pay \$750,200 in fines for "failing to comply with a consent decree."

More recently, in 2004, according to NOW, an Oregon Wal-Mart official locked employees in the store without pay until their duties were finished for the day. Store managers have been known to delete bars of worked hours from employees' time cards if payroll costs exceed a certain amount.

If the 1.5 million women involved in *Dukes v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.* are suc-

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cessful, damages and fines could run over 1 billion dollars for Wal-Mart.

The campaign for awareness on Wal-Mart's hiring practices has been led by NOW, who, in 2002, handed Wal-Mart its "Merchant of Shame" award, as well as by church-led organizations such as the Chicago-based Justice Ministries at Trinity United Church of Christ and several other African-American congregations.

The federal government's Labor Department and the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have also both been staunch in their efforts to curtail labor abuses by Wal-Mart and, to some extent, have been successful.

The New York Times reports that this past February, Wal-Mart agreed to pay \$135,540 to settle charges that it allowed minors to use cardboard cutters and work during school hours, both infractions against child labor laws, in Connecticut, Arkansas, and New Hampshire.

Of course, Wal-Mart is doing what it can to un-smudge the public's perception of the company. In June of 2004 the company announced its New Diversity Initiative, which Lee Scott, President and

CEO, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., says provides two major incentives to encourage stores not to engage in unfair hiring and labor practices.

The first: top executive's bonuses will be cut if Wal-Mart doesn't promote women or minorities to management positions proportional to the total amount of those who have applied to these positions; second, stores will begin using computer systems to ensure managers and hourly workers receive proper pay and are allowed breaks.

In March of 2005, Scott and Wal-Mart awarded \$1.5 million to the United Negro College Fund, which provides numerous scholarships for young people. The company also has a "Teacher of the Year" award.

In addition to this, Wal-Mart recently began a pilot project that will reduce waste and help charity organizations at the same time. In June of 2004, Wal-Mart began a partnership with Caritas of Waco (Texas) to provide what they are calling "gifts-in-kind" to local charities.

Waco's Caritas is a nonprofit agency that includes an emergency assistance program, and what America's Second Harvest, the national food bank organization, calls a "super pantry."

Every day Wal-Mart delivers several 18-wheeler loads to the Caritas warehouse, full of paper and household goods that would not sell, but which vendors do not want returned.

These goods are quickly distributed to more than eighty social service agencies who distribute them to people in need. They are also picked up by Second Harvest food banks all over Texas, as well as one located in Mexico. The food banks then distribute them to even more agen-

cies. These goods are returned items that Wal-Mart suppliers and vendors ask to be given away.

These are all good works, but then there's the smiley face—the smiley face which represents the launch of Wal-Mart's advertisement campaign to gain public support in the face of so much public scrutiny.

I can't walk out of Wal-Mart smiling at my amazing savings when I now know so much of what's going on inside Wal-Mart, but I will not boycott Wal-Mart. I am thinking about the other person on the other end of the line; the worker who lives in China and whose only opportunity to work is with Wal-Mart.

If they don't work for Wal-Mart, would they have any income at all? I also consider the single mother with four children who needs Wal-Mart's low prices because she cannot afford to shop elsewhere.

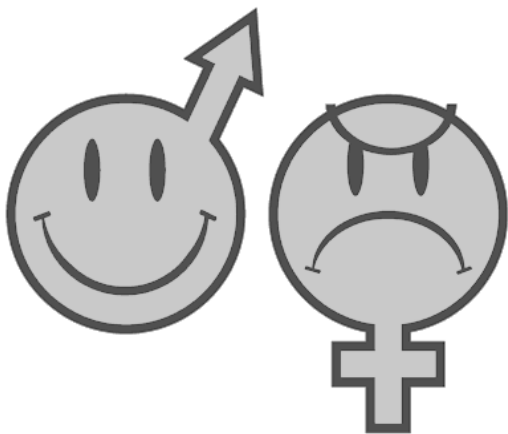
I will, however, write to my state senators and ask them to speak up in Congress about Wal-Mart practices here and abroad. I will also write to Wal-Mart executives, urging them to continue improving their personnel policies and purchasing practices.

Personally, I would even be willing to pay more for a cute pair of sneakers if it meant that people would be paid fairly. This just sounds fair to me.

—*Jacquie Scott, a native of Yokosuka, Japan, is a sophomore professional writing major at Baylor University. Sources: New York Times, The National NOW Times, Women's Enews, US Labor Department, US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Caritas Newsletter, interview with Rev. Jason Faminoff, Director of the Caritas Gifts-in-Kind program.*

The art on pages 5-9 is from Bill Quinn's book, How Wal-Mart is Destroying America (and the World), from Ten Speed Press.

Two Faces of Wal-Mart



Worship Guide on Trade and Globalization

The Presbyterian Church USA produced a worship guide for the Global Week of Action on Trade, which was observed in April. This guide can be used at any time to raise critical issues and encourage Christian discipleship in a globalized world.

The colorful 16-page Worship Guide includes a complete order of service, Bible readings, theological reflection, sermon ideas, children's activities, prayers and songs, and stories of people affected by economic globalization.

To order the guide for \$2, contact the Presbyterian Distribution Service at 800/524-2612 or online at www.pcusa.org/marketplace, PDS #74365-05-360. You can also download PDFs of the guide at www.pcusa.org/trade/worship.htm.

Books to Watch for:

In the Spirit of the More-with-Less Cookbook

In 1976 Herald Press released the *More-with-Less Cookbook* by Doris Janzen Longacre. Since that time the publisher has sold more than 850,000 copies—making it the best-selling book ever. On July 1, the company will release a new cookbook with recipes that “celebrate the rhythm of the land in the spirit of More-with-Less,” called *Simply in Season*.

Through stories and simple “whole foods” recipes, Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert explore how the food we put on our tables impacts our local and global neighbors. They show the importance of eating local, seasonal food—and fairly traded food—and invite readers to make choices that offer security and health for our communities, for the land, for body and spirit.

Paper, 336 pages, 0-8361-9296-6: \$13.99; in Canada \$17.49

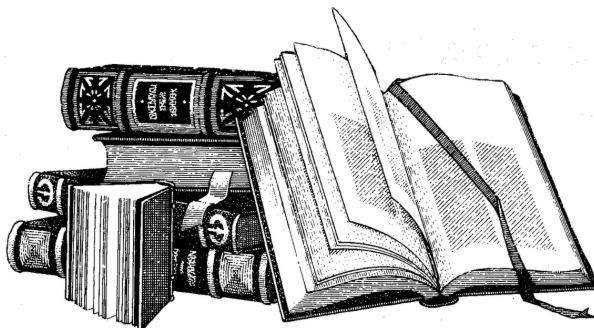
Spiral, 336 pages, 0-8361-9297-4: \$19.99; in Canada \$24.99

For more information, contact Patty Weaver at Herald Press, 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottsdale, PA 15683-1999; Phone: 724/887-8500 x 225; Fax: 724/887-3111; Email: patricia@mph.org. To order, call 800/245-7894.

McGovern/Dole Book on Hunger Due Out in October

Next October, Fortress Press will release a new book entitled *Ending Hunger Now: A Challenge to Persons of Faith*, by Senator George McGovern, Senator Bob Dole, and Donald Messer. This book brings together three powerful voices behind a shared conviction: that helping the millions who lack basic provision of food has become a religious imperative and human priority. Writing for congregations and individuals of faith, these bipartisan leaders appeal to the biblical, theological, and ethical foundations of action against hunger.

For more information, contact Bob Todd at Augsburg Fortress, 100 South 5th Street, Suite 700; Minneapolis, MN 55402; Phone: 612/330-3234; Fax: 612/330-3215; Email: toddb@augsburghfortress.org; Web: fortresspress.com.



Coming in Late Summer:



art by Sharon Rollins

*I Have
Heard the
Cry of the
Door*

*the Seeds Hunger Emphasis
worship packet for 2005*

Sacred Seasons is a quarterly series of creative worship tools to help raise awareness of hunger and justice issues. A year's subscription includes Advent, Lent, Ordinary Time, and a fall hunger emphasis resource. To order, call 254/755-7745; fax 254/753-1909; write to Seeds

Publishers at 602 James, Waco, TX 76706; or email seedshope@aol.com. US subscriptions are \$120. Single packets are US\$50. (Non-US subscriptions are \$135; individual packets are \$60.) For more information, see www.seedspublishers.org.

Sacred



Seasons

Violent Crimes Against Homeless People on the Rise in the US



art by Robert Darden

WASHINGTON, DC—In an attempt to promote education about the homeless in the United States, the National Coalition for the Homeless began to compile special reports for their organization in the early 1990s to monitor violence and hate crimes committed against the homeless.

From 1993 to 2003, the number of violent crimes against the homeless soared to almost 300.

Unfortunately, along with the number of violent acts, the number of deaths rose to 131 people. The victims range in age from 4 months to 74 years old. Reportedly, 229 men and 34 women have experienced violent crimes.

The perpetrators range in age from 11 years to 65 years old. The threat of violence is a rapidly growing problem for the homeless.

Many cities have developed support centers in their area to aid in homeless crimes. Major cities across the US are hardest hit by this kind of violence. Places like Dallas, Chicago, Portland, and Cleveland have had homeless people in their areas experience hate crimes as well as murder.

These violent acts include persons having their belongings stolen or destroyed. Men and women alike have been physically attacked with bricks and baseball bats. One woman was badly burned at a campfire site.

A number of homeless people over the age of 50 have experienced some type of violent crime. This group is not able to protect themselves from attack due to their age and physical condition. Also, homeless people with mental and physical disabilities are more vulnerable to attacks since they are unable to defend themselves.

In the early 1990s, many organizations came to the aid of the homeless in an attempt to protect from further hate crimes. The National Coalition for the Homeless, National Center for Hate Crime Prevention, and the National League of Cities has made it their goal to serve the homeless community with support against thoughtless crime.

Several law initiatives have been created for the prevention of violent acts against the homeless. In 2003, San Francisco proposed a resolution to support the protection of the homeless as suggested by the National Coalition for the Homeless. The resolution requires an investigation into the hate crimes by the Department of Justice and the US General Accounting Office.

The National Homeless Coalition has more details about starting petitions for violent crime resolutions to send to city councils, county, commission, and state legislatures in your area. It is important to promote awareness in cities with a high homeless population. These types of crimes against the homeless can be prevented.

—compiled by Jessica Garza. Source: *The National Homelessness Coalition*

People of Faith, *continued from page 3*

ment, the federal budget should not, and cannot, be built on the backs of the poor, the elderly, and future generations.”

Three Members of Congress—Congresswomen Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), Lois Capps (D-CA) and Donna M. Christensen (D-US Virgin Islands)—also spoke.

Rep. Woolsey, who conducted a workshop on SMART Security (Sensible, Multilateral American Response to Terrorism) at the Advocacy Days conference, spoke of a time in her life when—although she was educated and in good health—she was on welfare.

She thanked the crowd for speaking out and urged them to continue to advocate for a budget that helped those living in poverty.

Rep. Christensen encouraged participants to say no to the tax cuts for the wealthy that have been proposed by the Bush Administration. “Giving the richest people in the country more money takes away from educating our children. It robs our people, our families and communities of the opportunity to compete on a fair playing field. It takes safe, strong roofs from over our heads, and leaves us at salaries below a living wage or without any job at all,” she said.

Quoting President Bush’s 2005 State of the Union address in which he said that society is measured by how it treats the weak and vulnerable, the Rev. Brenda Girton-Mitchell, NCC Associate General Secretary for Justice and Advocacy, asked, “The President said he wants to pass along freedom,” but how can we experience freedom when the basic values of our society are mocked by a budget that makes so many morally indefensible choices?”

—For more information, contact Leslie Tune of National Council of Churches USA at 202/544-2350 x11, or Don Parker of The Interfaith Alliance, at 202/639-6370, x111.

Living on the Other Side: Global Hunger Simulation Focuses on Rural Poverty

by Kelley R. Bruce

“Out of the 6.39 billion people in the world, 852 million men, women, and children are hungry or malnourished. There is enough food available in the world right now to feed everyone. So why are people hungry?”

ELM MOTT, TEXAS—This is one example of the types of probing questions asked as a part of the “Living On the Other Side” (LOTOS) experience at the World Hunger Relief Training Farm in Elm Mott, Texas.

LOTOS, formerly called “A Day On the Other Side,” has been redesigned as an intense global hunger simulation.

The weekend experience is designed for youth and adults (age 12 years and up) to educate participants and inspire active responses to eliminate world hunger.

Participants are invited to learn about the causes and issues related to global hunger. Other topics addressed as a part of the simulation include poverty, debt relief, HIV/AIDS, access to clean water, rural living, child labor, and issues affecting women. A tour of the 42-acre working farm is also provided and participants complete an afternoon service project.

More than just sitting and learning, participants role-play common daily decisions faced by struggling families. Through the use of games, videos, skits, Bible studies, and engaging educational activities, youth and adults gain an understanding of what life is like for hundreds of millions of hungry people around the world.

World Hunger Relief, Inc. (WHRI) is a Christian organization that concentrates on alleviating hunger around the world through technical assistance in sustainable agriculture techniques. Staff and interns on the 42-acre training farm in Elm Mott manage a grade-A goat dairy, an organic pecan orchard, and an organic garden.

The farm produces eggs, goat milk, organic produce, and pecans, which are sold to the local community. WHRI also offers educational tours of the farm and local education through a variety of volunteer opportunities for school, church, and community groups. The farm also houses a Fair Trade shop for visitors.

For more information about this weekend experience, go to www.worldhungerrelief.org.

—Kelley Bruce recently completed an internship at World Hunger Relief, Inc. as part of her work toward a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from the Baylor University School of Social Work.

Hunger in Western Sudan,

continued from page 1

However, increased political division within the rebel forces threatens to further hamper the possibility of a swift end to the conflict.

While the Janjaweed militias continue to attack civilians, the rebels harass relief workers and refuse to cooperate with the AU peacekeepers, further contributing to what UN officials refer to as one of the “worst humanitarian crises in the world today.”

In addition to continued violence and unrest, citizens of the Darfur region face a worsening hunger crisis. According to Laura Melo, public information officer with the UN World Food Programme (WFP), “with the continued displacement and prevailing economic hardship, more and more people are likely to find themselves with nothing to feed their children.”

Officials fear that the number of people in need of food will be considerably higher than the original peak estimate of 2.8 million during the approaching rainy season from July to September.

Though the WFP distributes 30,000 to 40,000 metric tons of food each month to the region, thousands remain unreachable due to insecurity, bad roads, lack of funds, and lack of capacity to transport the food. It can take as long as four months for food contributions from other countries to reach Port Sudan, and then another two months to reach Darfur.

With the approach of the rainy season, attention is turned to the large areas of Darfur that will most likely be cut off during these seasons. To make up for this, an additional 23,000 tons of food must be transported and ready for distribution when the rains begin.

Despite recent efforts to raise funds, the WFP has only raised \$281 million of the \$467 million needed to adequately provide for the people in the region.

However, due to the emergency actions of the United States, the WFP will not be forced to reduce rations for at least two million people during such a critical period.

Though emergency actions by the US have helped, the WFP’s operation in Darfur remains severely underfunded. According to Ramiro Lopes de Silva, the WFP Sudan country director, recent estimates of people in need of food have been increased to 3.5 million in need during July and August, but the WFP will only be able to target 3.25 million of these people. Thus, if the numbers continue to rise, “Sudan will face a new catastrophe, unless more [aid] gets here fast.”

—Stephanie Beazley is a recent graduate of Baylor University’s professional writing program and a former Seeds of Hope intern. She now resides in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Source: World Food Programme of the United Nations (www.UN.org/news).

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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

Seeds of Hope Publishers is housed by the community of faith at Seventh and James Baptist Church. The mailing address is 602 James, Waco, Texas 76706; Phone: 254/755-7745; Fax:

quotes, poems, & pithy sayings

Compassion is not religious business; it is not luxury; it is essential for our own peace and mental stability; it is essential for human survival.

—*His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

With all of the dimensions of fear and war that are happening in the world...we need a dimension of unity and harmony.... The message of [the Santana musical album] *Shaman* is for us to embrace our divinity. Everyone has divine [qualities]—everyone has goodness inside: beauty, elegance, excellence, grace, dignity. So, behave like that.

—*Carlos Santana*

The church has failed to follow her appointed pathway of separation, holiness, heavenliness and testimony to an absent but coming Christ; she has turned aside from that purpose to the work of civilizing the world, building magnificent temples, and acquiring earthly power and wealth, and, in this way, has ceased to follow in the footsteps of Him who had not where to lay His head.

—*C. I. Scofield*

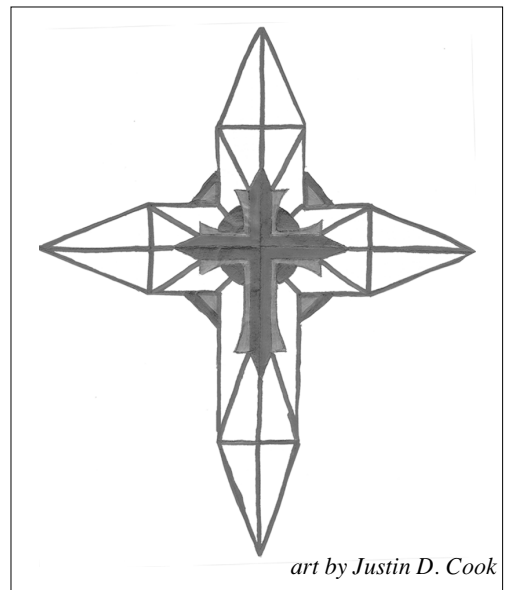
From Screwtape to Wormwood:

One of our [hell's] great allies at present is the Church itself. Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean the Church as we see her spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity, terrible as an army with banners. That, I confess, is a spectacle which makes our boldest tempters uneasy. But fortunately it is quite invisible to these humans.

—*C. S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters*

Forget about the red states and the blue states. Here's how the country is really divided. We've got one country where the rich and famous are given *carte blanche* and don't even pay to have their own wrinkles filled in, and the other country where the rest of us pay our taxes, get parking tickets, and hope for a sale. There were around 125 Oscar goodie bags [given to Academy Awards participants]. Last year's estimated value? \$110,000 apiece. Do the math. That's more than 13 million dollars...that could really help people, organizations, and communities who actually need it.

—*Commentator Nancy Giles, CBS News Sunday Morning*



art by Justin D. Cook

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Seeds of Hope Publishers also produce quarterly packets of worship materials for the liturgical year—with an economic justice attitude.

These include litanies, sermons, children's and youth activities, bulletin art, and drama.

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