

Hunger News & Hope

...a Seeds of Hope publication

Wangari Maathai: Heightening Consciousness, Liberating Minds

by Elizabeth Walker

Early in her life, her husband was awarded a divorce on the grounds that she was “too educated, too strong, too successful, too stubborn and too hard to control.” Now, at age sixty, Wangari Maathai, the first woman in eastern and central Africa to receive a doctorate degree, has various ministers referring to her as “mad woman,” a “threat to the order and security of the country,” and an “ignorant and ill-tempered, unprecedented monstrosity.”

Wangari Maathai is not

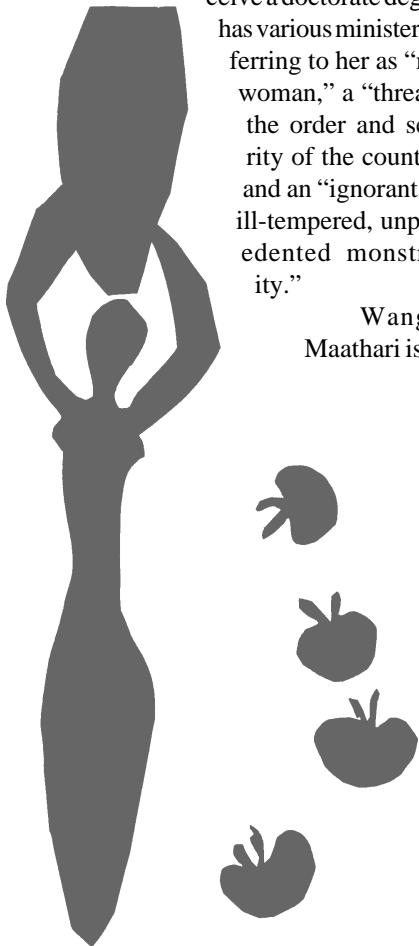
easily offended. “They think they can embarrass and silence me with threats and name-calling. But I have an elephant’s skin,” she says. “And somebody must raise the voice. I might as well have been doing nothing if I did not raise my voice.”

Through her founding and development of the Green Belt Movement (GBM) in Kenya, which organizes villagers to raise and plant trees, she has raised her rich, passionate voice on environmental conservation. In a broad effort to avert desertification and increase rural development, thousands of local natives (primarily women), employed by the GBM and funded by international institutions, have planted tens of millions of trees in Kenya.

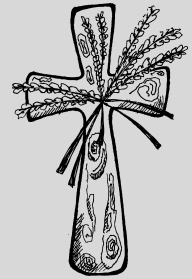
But Maathai’s successful environmental crusade in her poverty-stricken nation is as much about human rights as it is about saving the Earth. The GBM gives hope to the ordinary locals who comprise its members, those who have no power to change history and shape destiny. It also challenges those with that power, demanding that they turn lip-service and rhetoric to deliberate actions that work with—rather than for—the poor. It challenges them to do that by developing zero tolerance for corruption, working for peace and security, protecting the environment, and respecting basic human rights.

“Awareness is like a conscience,” Maathai maintains. So she continues to raise her voice, raising awareness beyond issues that impact the natural world but those that affect the total human condition.

—Elizabeth Walker, a native of Boston, Massachusetts, is a professional writing major at Baylor University and a Seeds of Hope intern. Information for this story came from www.enn.com, *The Humane Sustainable Culture Quarterly*, and the Green Belt Movement.



In this issue:



Wangari Maathai:
*Founder of the
Greenbelt Movement
in Kenya*
page 1

**We Have a Common
Future:**
*a statement from
Professor Wangari
Maathai*
page 2

**Report Calls for Aid
to Armenia**
page 3

**What to Do About
Panhandlers**
page 4

Resources
page 5

News Briefs
pages 6-7

Et Cetera
page 8

We Have a Common Future

A Statement from the EXPO 2000 Global Dialogue

by Professor Wangari Maathai

Nationals of the rich countries perceive themselves as being overburdened with taxes, which must be sent to the poor in distant foreign lands. After all, they believe, such poverty has no effect on their comfortable lifestyles! They believe that they do not experience the impact of that poverty.

Indeed, they also believe that if only the poor worked as hard as they (the rich do) and as honestly, if only their governments were not so corrupt, preying on their citizens, if only the poor were not so cowed—so unwilling to take their leaders to task, so fearful—they would also be as prosperous.

They convince themselves that poverty is very distant, it can be avoided, for example, by avoiding where the poor live or turning off the television or radio when those ugly pictures and voices are beamed into their rooms by the electronic media. They do not have to read about it in newspapers either. They can afford to ignore it. It does not concern them.

Well, such thinking is prevalent because many in the prosperous societies are

only shown the victims on TV and news media. They are given the impression the poor have only themselves and their corrupt governments to blame. After all, the rich work hard for their affluence and should continue enjoying their over-consumptive lifestyles without concern for the sustainability of such lifestyles.

It is not explained that the only reason they can lead such lifestyles is because other human beings are denied the freedom to pursue an existence with dignity, because other human beings are forced to live in poverty. It is not explained how the poor are oppressed, denied their basic rights, are discriminated against, excluded and dehumanised so that their resources can be siphoned to support consumptive lifestyles in the rich countries...

Who is rich, who is poor, who is sustaining whom? Some people would call that international trade. Others would call it exploitation.

As long as there are “us” and “them,” the human species will continue to be its worst enemy. So what will it take to change this? Well, to me, it will take a realisation

that, until all of us are truly safe on this planet, none of us is truly safe.

It is impossible to run away from poverty and its impact in our lives. This is

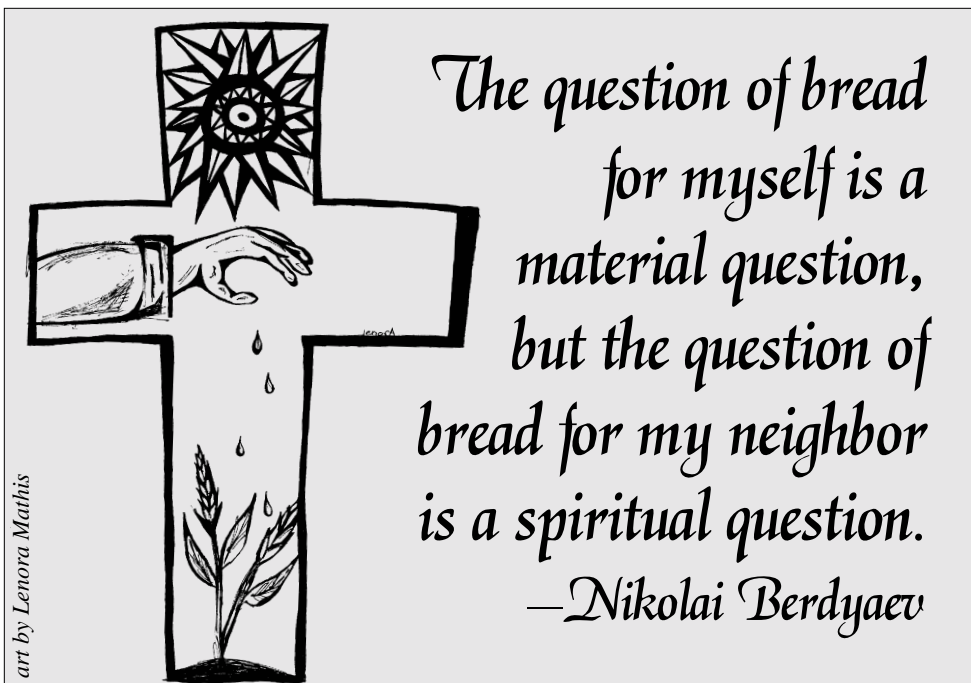
“It is impossible to run away from poverty and its impact in our lives. This is because poverty has long ugly tentacles which reach out no matter how much we hide our faces, no matter how often we look the other way.”

—Wangari Maathai

because poverty has long ugly tentacles which reach out no matter how much we hide our faces, no matter how often we look the other way. In this age of electronic media, there are no distant places. We are both interdependent and neighbours. Our future is intertwined. We have a common future; we live in a little village called Planet Earth.

—Note: At EXPO 2000, the first World’s Fair in Hannover, Germany, that featured a central conference program, experts and decision-makers from around the globe attended plenary workshop sessions. The first such dialogue, entitled “Natural Resources: The Sustainable Challenge,” was held in June 2000 and united governments, nongovernmental organizations, academic and research institutes, and industry representatives.

The groups met first to strategize successful, worldwide implementation of integrated ecosystems management and renewable energy programs, and secondly to develop new methods of accountability. For more information about this meeting, see the International Herald Tribune and the Stockholm Environmental Institute.



Report Calls for Emergency Aid to Armenia

YEREVAN, ARMENIA—After suffering through one of the hottest and driest summers in decades, Armenia is in the midst of a bleak winter. Food production in that country is projected to plummet because of the summer drought, which also affected many other countries throughout

some areas the current prices of these fruits are so low that farmers are not even picking them.

In addition, livestock producers will face tremendous hardships because the drought has caused a sharp decline in the availability of animal feed. The shortage is expected to lead to widespread undernutrition in livestock, and there are fears of high numbers in livestock mortality.

The report notes that the sale and slaughtering of livestock has already increased, depressing prices and reducing incomes for producers. Agriculture employs 42 percent of the Armenian

population and contributes about one-third to the GDP. Arable land is limited; many farmers cultivate on steep slopes that are now highly eroded. As it is, living conditions are already precarious. Now access to food, particularly for rural farmers, has become exceedingly difficult. Much of their produce has been lost to drought, and they have little to sell or barter.

To boost farm production and prevent more food shortages next year, the report recommends giving emergency support to the agricultural sector for winter wheat seeds for planting, adequate amounts of animal feed, and major upgrading of the country's crumbling irrigation system.

—from the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization

Those most vulnerable to food shortages are the nearly 300,000 subsistence farmers in the mountainous rain-fed areas of northern Armenia. The report called for "a timely and targeted intervention" to prevent widespread starvation and misery.

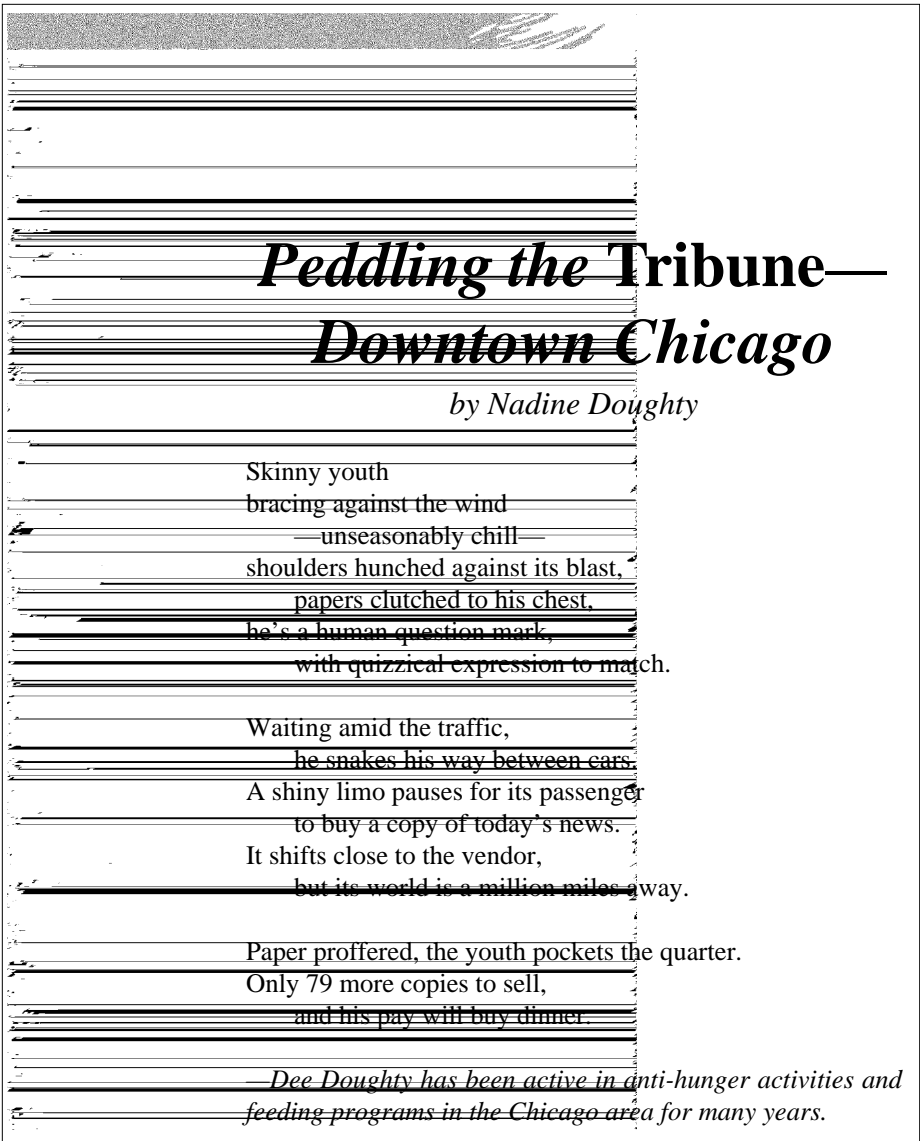
the Caucasus, Central and South Asia and the Middle East.

A joint FAO/WFP mission during the fall of 2000 found that Armenia overall food supply situation for 2001 looks grim. Those most vulnerable to food shortages are the nearly 300,000 subsistence farmers in the mountainous rain-fed areas of northern Armenia. The mission's report called for "a timely and targeted intervention" to prevent widespread starvation and misery.

During this year's crucial harvesting months, rainfall was as much as 70 percent below normal in Armenia's most important agricultural areas. The country's staple crop of potatoes is expected to down 40 percent from last year. Combined wheat and barley production for 2001 is forecast at 27 percent less than the previous year.

The FAO/WFP reported that Armenia would need 502,000 tonnes of imported wheat and barley by the end of spring of 2001. Commercial imports are expected to account for 358,000 tonnes, and 70,000 tonnes of food aid has been pledged. This leaves an uncovered cereal deficit of 75,000 tonnes. The report states that a shortfall of this magnitude, if not addressed by the international community, could severely affect vulnerable groups.

Fruit cultivation, because it relies on irrigation, was largely spared from this year's drought and production rose by nearly 50 percent. However, many small-scale fruit growers cannot sell their surplus produce because of poor state roads, the high costs of transport, and the general lack of an effective marketing infrastructure. Seasonal surpluses of perishable produce, such as apples, apricots and peaches, mean low prices for local fruit growers. The mission learned through individual farmers and village officials that in



**Peddling the Tribune—
Downtown Chicago**
by Nadine Doughty

Skinny youth
bracing against the wind
—unseasonably chill—
shoulders hunched against its blast,
papers clutched to his chest,
he's a human question mark,
with quizzical expression to match.

Waiting amid the traffic,
he snakes his way between cars.
A shiny limo pauses for its passenger
to buy a copy of today's news.
It shifts close to the vendor,
but its world is a million miles away.

Paper proffered, the youth pockets the quarter.
Only 79 more copies to sell,
and his pay will buy dinner.

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

What to do about Panhandlers:



How to Respond with Integrity and Compassion

by Katie Cook

All across the country one runs into people—usually homeless people—standing at highway intersections holding signs that say “Will work for Food” or some such message—or standing on busy streets, asking for money.

Many of us believe, after looking at the twenty-fifth chapter of the gospel of Matthew, that something should be done to help such people. But we don’t know what, exactly, that we should do. Is there a “right” thing to do? If so, what is it, and is the “right” thing always the same?

I know—from years of experience in emergency assistance to the poor—that sometimes those people are in earnest, and sometimes they are not. In one town, I know many of the street people by name. I know that fourteen or so of them are running a well-organized and successful scam; they sometimes bring in sixty dollars or more in one day, and they spend it on alcohol and other substances.

But I also know several street people—in that same town—who honestly want to work and earn their meals. I have worked directly with them to help them find day labor or odd jobs. In that town, I know who is “legit” and who is not.

But what if you don’t know them? And what about the ones you know are “conning” you, but you also know they’re hungry?

Do you go ahead and help them, with the conviction that deciding whether someone is “worthy” or not is a pietistic, self-serving attitude? The agency where I worked embraced a policy that said, “We should never turn away someone if there is ANY chance they really need assistance. If we are to err, we will do it on the side of being too generous.”

That is a good policy—and, I think, a moral and biblical one. But what about substance abuse? If I give money to an alcoholic or crack addict, don’t I become an enabler of that chemical dependency? In that case, it would seem that I shouldn’t give someone money unless I am well-enough acquainted with that person to know for sure that there is no substance abuse.

But how can you tell the difference, when you don’t have time to work several years in a feeding program and get to know the local poverty population personally? Is there something else you can give? Something you can do that you know won’t be destructive?

Several years ago, when the Seeds of Hope staff were in New York City, we talked with friends about this question. One of them, Mark, had an agreement with the owners of a local coffee shop in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where he lived. His practice was to instruct street people to go to this coffee shop for a meal and tell them Mark sent them.

Another of the friends, Doug, suggested that we give our “doggie bag” to one of the beggars in the Village. (We did, and he was profuse in his thanks: “Oh, wow! Chinese food! And it’s still warm. This is wonderful!”)

I mentioned that I usually suggested to people in Central Texas that, if they really want to help, they can go around to a fast food place and get a hamburger or go home and make a sandwich—and then bring it back to the person.

I told them about a woman I know in Fort Worth who prepares several reclosable bags filled with soap, toothpaste, and other toiletries—and keeps them in her car to give to homeless people asking for money. Her feeling is that, if the person is an addict, the toiletries won’t do any harm. “And, after all,” she says, “I’m not out very much.”

My friends and I discussed all these things as we walked around the city, literally stepping around people sleeping in the subways and huddled on street corners. We had begun to feel powerless; there was no way to respond to all the people we saw. We finally, however, came up with what I think is a good idea. Here it is:

How about giving gift certificates to a coffee shop or fast food restaurant? Many of those establishments regularly produce booklets of certificates. They would be easy to obtain, and you could carry them in a pocket.

If you really want to help the hungry without being exploited, and without becoming a chemical codependent, try this idea. If the person refuses it and only wants money, that gives you a pretty good idea as to his or her motives. If he or she is really hungry, the certificates will be welcome. If he or she asks for money instead, simply say you have no money (which for me is usually the bald truth), just the certificates.

Since we ran a story with this idea in *Seeds Magazine* in 1992, I have heard from a number of people who have tried some variation of these ideas. One seminary student never left her apartment without taking a piece of fruit to give to the first street person she saw.

Another student keeps a supply of granola bars in her car. One man goes by a hamburger place before he gets to the intersection where the panhandlers stand.

Another woman socks away all the bread that comes to her table in restaurants, and then goes off to find someone to give it to. A church group on mission in Chicago drove around with “to-go” boxes of food, looking for people who looked hungry. A pastor in Waco, Texas stops and volunteers to drive the person to the emergency assistance agency.

There’s the idea. It’s worth a try. Maybe these people are “on the make,” and maybe they’re not. But they’re hungry. And these ideas are better than taking another street (yes, I admit; I’ve done it) in order to avoid the eyes of a hungry person.

—Katie Cook is the editor for *Seeds of Hope Publishers*.

More With Less Cookbook Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The More With Less Cookbook was first published in 1979 by Doris Janzen Longacre when she returned to the United States from a Mennonite mission trip to Vietnam and Indonesia. Making the transition back into an American lifestyle, she was shocked at the number of overweight Americans and their habit of “being taken in” by the advertising, alluring packaging, convenience and variety of marketed foods rather than their nutritional value. To solve this problem, Longacre developed dozens of recipes inspired by cultures throughout the world, which she designed to teach her readers how to build a simpler diet while still receiving all the nutrition a person needs.

Last September Herald Press released a 25th anniversary edition of the cookbook, which is loved as much for its philosophical offerings as for the recipes.

In a recent interview in *The Mennonite*, Longacre’s two daughters revealed that after all these years they still make “a lot of the same recipes that Mom made,” like gado-gado, an Indonesian vegetable dish and pflinzen, thin Russian pancakes.

The 25th anniversary edition contains Longacre’s original text—including suggestions on how to eat and live responsibly in light of world food needs—but also adds current comments by cooks, readers, and hunger organizations who have all reaped the benefits of her inspiring book. *The book is \$20.99 in the U.S. from Herald Press, 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottsdale, PA 15683. In Canada the price is \$31.29 from 490 Dutton Drive, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7.*

Resources for Kids

The fight against hunger and homelessness needs all the support our world can muster, and children are no exception! Four current resources, now available, are all designed specifically for children who want to make a difference in the world.

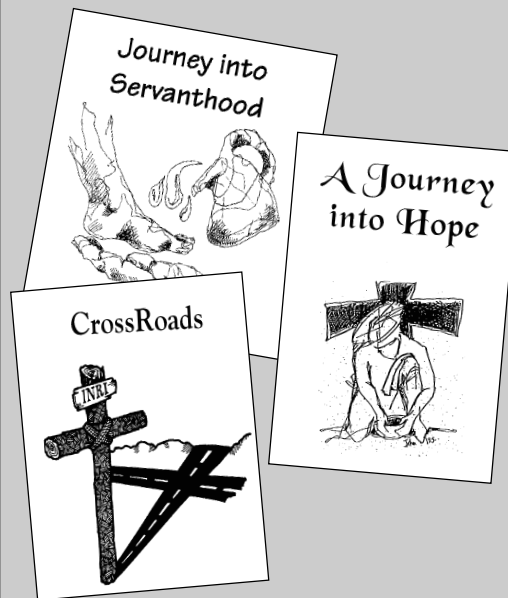
First, *The Giving Market* offers children a hands-on opportunity to learn about hunger and respond to local and global needs; to have fun with songs, recipes and activities found in the “Global Deli” country packets while learning about a specific country’s hunger problem; and to set the stage for their very own deli and market with a Step-by-Step Resource Guide and Accessory Packet with banners, deli hat, sticker sheets, and more. *To order call Augsburg Fortress at 1-800-328-4648 or fax 1-612-330-3455 and ask for Resource Guide code #67-3613 ISBN: 6-0001-0917-2 or Accessory Packet code #67-3611 ISBN: 6-0001-0913-X.*

Second, *Under Construction: A Habitat for Humanity Vacation Bible School* is a resource that uses a construction metaphor to help children learn about community. To teach children the value of service, *Under Construction* also introduces them to Habitat for Humanity International. By combining solid biblical teaching with practical Christian service, the children and the adults who are leading them engage in a Christian learning experience like no other.



art courtesy of
Ministry of Money

Lenten Resources from Seeds of Hope



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 seedshope@aol.com; web: www.seedspublishers.com

Contact Smyth & Helwys Publishers at 1400 Coleman Ave, Macon GA 31207; 800/747-3016; Fax 912/752-2264

Third, *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference* is an innovative teacher guide developed by World Hunger Year board member and teacher Stephanie Kempf. The guide contains 25 lessons that provide valuable background and creative suggestions to help students answer the difficult questions surrounding hunger and poverty. The book also shows students how to transform negative feelings about world hunger into positive actions in their community, country, and world with fund-raising ideas, organizations to contact, and a listing of available videos and books for use with lessons. *To order, mail or fax a purchase order (along with a check made out to WHY/KIDS to KIDS), PO Box 54, Kittery Point, ME 03905. Credit card orders can be placed by phoning 207/439-9588.*

Fourth, *The Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger* project is a worldwide educational initiative about hunger issues for school-children of all ages, and provides classroom materials for teachers to introduce the topics of world hunger, food security, and nutrition. The project’s aim, a collaborative effort of ten major anti-hunger organizations, is to facilitate student discussions and understanding of hunger in the world, as well as to stimulate their participation in activities to create a world free from hunger. Three lessons have been tailored to each of three school levels, all of which cover the following questions: “What is hunger and malnutrition and who are the hungry?” “Why are people hungry and malnourished?” and “What can we do to help end hunger?” *For more information, visit www.fao.org/fmh or contact the US National Committee for World Food Day at 202/653-2402/ www.worldfooddayusa.org.*

art courtesy of Church World Service



A Sigh of Relief:

U.S. Congress Passes Jubilee 2000's Debt Relief Bill

WASHINGTON, DC—The victory in the U.S. Congress on October 25 surprised even the supporters of debt relief. Not only did Congress pass a foreign-operations spending bill that relieves the world's poorest nations from pressing debt, but they also passed the bill in full.

Both houses of Congress agreed with overwhelming bipartisan support to write off loans to 30 of the world's poorest countries, fulfilling a pledge by the United States to help alleviate the crippling effects of debt on economic development.

The foreign aid package consists of two parts. The first part includes \$435 million in appropriations to be funneled through the World Bank to regional African and Latin American banks.

The second part of the policy includes legislative language authorizing the International Monetary Fund to use the full proceeds from the sale of \$8 million in its gold reserve to finance a new debt relief trust fund.

Because Congress approved the entire \$435 million, the U.S. is spared the embarrassment of being the only major industrial nation unwilling to pay toward the \$90 billion international debt relief initiative. The global movement began in Europe several years ago, with several countries making funds available to forgive debts.

The debt relief bill cleared the House on a 307-101 vote. The Senate followed with a 65-27 vote. Former U.S. President Bill Clinton pledged immediately to sign it. "It's not often we have a chance to do something that economists tell us is a financial imperative and religious leaders say is a moral imperative," Clinton stated.

Legislators were prompted in part by reports of children in poor countries dying because their governments were spending more in interest payments than on health and education. President Clinton had spearheaded an international effort to bail out debt-laden countries, but was unable at first to persuade Congress to agree.

Last year, however, the Jubilee 2000 movement—an eclectic coalition that spans the spectrum from Pope John Paul II to Christian Coalition leader Pat Robertson to the rock singer Bono of the group U2—put pressure on those legislators who were reluctant.

Grassroots lobbyists from Jubilee 2000 and groups like Bread for the World convinced Congressional conservatives that debt relief is not just compassionate; it is fiscally intelligent.

The United States' dedication to this operation will be tested again this year. At the G-8 Summit, another few hundred million dollars will be expected from the U.S. But the worst is over—this year's \$435 million contribution is the largest installment in a three-year package.

Newly inaugurated U.S. President Bush has expressed at least a mild endorsement of the concept of debt relief. Hopefully, impoverished nations can anticipate a continued dialogue in 2001 for debt cancellation. —from the Washington Post, The New York Times, *Jubilee 2000 USA*, *Bread for the World*

Georgian Drought Results in Grain Crisis

T^BILISI, GEORGIA—The failure of spring rains has caused a sharp decline in agricultural production, instigating a severe food crisis. In addition to vegetables, specifically potatoes, a staple crop, the drought has dramatically reduced the production of cereals.

According to the World Food Programme, projections for the total, national cereal requirement is 1.6 million tons. Currently, with only 326,000 tons, the harvest is down 60 percent.

The decline in food production is reflected in higher market prices. Tomato and onion prices increased 100 percent; the price of cheese increased nearly 55 percent compared to the same time last year.

Moreover, because in Georgia farmers cultivate very small parcels of land, they have little capital and little access to credit in order to meet the drastic inflation. Without ownership of seeds, equipment, fertilizers, or pesticides, individuals lack the collateral to feed their families.

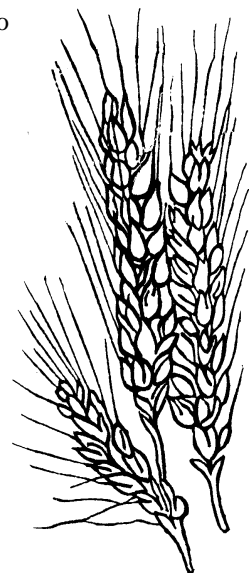
Simultaneously, the nation's irrigation and drainage systems have fallen into disrepair. Compounded by civil war, which has left 260,000 people internally displaced, the country lacks the manual resources to make reparations. Coping with water shortages has only exacerbated the situation.

Currently, the nation has only 4,000 tons of wheat seed. Farmers will require 30,000 tons for the next growing season. The World Food Programme recently issued a statement saying that commercial imports and food aid pledges are imperative to avert a famine.

—from the World Food Programme

New Potato Blight Evokes Memories of Irish Famine

TOLUCA, MEXICO—Potatoes in Mexico and around the globe are shriveling up as if they had been burned, according to a report from the World Food Programme. A more resistant form of potato late blight, the fungus which caused the Irish famine, killing one million people and forcing a mass migration



into the United States during the mid-1800s, is rampant, surviving even in warehouses.

Believed to have reemerged in Toluca, Mexico, the fungus destroys whole crops within days of exposure. Facilitated by trade with far-flung markets, the fungus appeared in the United States in 1992 and is currently devastating fields in Mexico, Europe, Russia, Asia, and Africa.

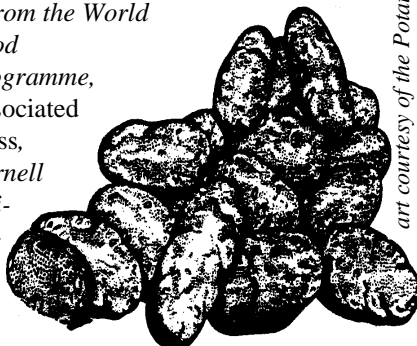
One or two applications of the fungicide metalaxyl each growing season once protected potato crops. However, even up to twelve treatments during a season seemingly cannot halt this newer, more resistant strand. Farmers now are desperately spraying more and more fungicide to curb the problem, consequently making potato farming less profitable and more detrimental to the environment.

Two programs—one in Mexico, the other at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York—are working to develop resistant potatoes. Under the partnership, scientists from Russia, Poland, and the United States breed new potato varieties and send them to Mexico to be tested. A still more resistant variety may be up to ten years away.

In the meantime, “a severe late blight problem could harm millions of people and possibly destabilize [a] region,” states W. Ronnie Coffman, chairman of the Cornell University-based program. One of the world’s most basic food staples, sometimes called “the second bread,” is being systematically eliminated, and stomachs worldwide are feeling the repercussions.

—from the *World Food*

Programme,
Associated
Press,
Cornell
University



art courtesy of the Potato Project

U.S. Surveys Discover Some Good News, Some Bad

‘National Survey of America’s Families’ Finds Hopeful Trends

Washington, DC—Compared to statistics from 1997, more single parents in the U.S. are employed, more families can afford food, more adults receive health insurance coverage from their employers, and more children are living both with two parents and above the poverty line. These findings—from the recently-released 1999 National Survey of America’s Families (NASF), sponsored by the Urban Institute’s Assessing the New Federalism project and by Child Trends—examine trends in family well-being since the 1996 enactment of the nation’s far-reaching experiment in welfare reform.

The most significant national improvements in child well-being occurred among low-income 12-to-17-year-olds. More are “highly engaged” in school (30 percent in 1997 to 34 percent in 1999) while less exhibited high levels of emotional and behavioral problems (15 percent in 1997 and 10 percent in 1999).

Unfortunately, during the same time, the well-being of higher-income families declined in several respects. Fewer high-income parents read or tell stories to their children while more report frequently feeling frustrated and stressed by the experience of caring for their child, especially in two-parent households. And their children are showing the consequences: those between ages 6 and 17 are now less likely to be highly engaged in school.

To gather this information, Westat, Inc., a survey research firm, conducted 42,000 interviews between February and October 1999. Families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty line (or \$26,240 for a family of two adults and one child) in thirteen states provided statistic samples: Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin.

—from *The Urban Institute*

Mayors’ Survey Shows Emergency Programs Ill-Equipped to Handle Needs of the Poor

WASHINGTON, DC—According to a survey presented at the year-end meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, entitled “A Status Report on Hunger & Homelessness in American Cities,” emergency food assistance and shelter facilities are ill-equipped to respond to present demand.

The survey showed that an average of 13 percent of the demand for emergency food assistance in sample cities goes unfulfilled. Perhaps more tragically, 46 percent of cities report that emergency food assistance facilities may have to turn away those in need because of lack of resources.

An average of 23 percent of shelter requests by homeless individuals and 27 percent of shelter requests by homeless families are estimated as unaccommodated. In 68 percent of cities, emergency shelters may have to turn away the homeless due to an inadequate number of facilities.

The mayors also learned of an initiative being developed by the Focus On America National Community Needs Database, which provides a one-stop resource for the communication of needs in service programs throughout the U.S. For easy, on-line access to information which will facilitate community service, look up the following web site: www.humanitarian.net/usdatabase.

—from the *Humanitarian Resource Institute*

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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-

A good person knows the rights of the poor, but wicked people can not understand such things.

—Proverbs 29:7

In the vacant places
 We will build with new bricks
 There are hands and machines
 And clay for new brick
 And lime for new mortar
 Where the bricks are fallen
 We will build with new stone
 Where the beams are rotten
 We will build with new timbers
 Where the word is unspoken
 We will build with new speech
 There is work together
 A church for all . . .

—T. S. Eliot

When our communities of faith don't have places where we can question each other about how much stuff we have and where we place our allegiance, they just support the status quo.

—John Pitney, Walk Lightly on the Earth

Unused fields could yield plenty of food for the poor, but unjust men keep them from being farmed.

—Proverbs 11:1

If you head into unfamiliar woods, you had better find companions first; if you want to buck traffic, organize a convoy. To nonconform freely, we must strengthen each other.

—Doris Janzen Longacre, Living More With Less

In hell the people have chopsticks but they are three feet long so they cannot reach their mouths. In Heaven the chopsticks are the same length, but in heaven the people feed one another.

—Vietnamese Story



art by Peter Yuichi Clark

Don't take advantage of the poor just because you can; don't take advantage of those who stand helpless in court. The Lord will argue their case for them and threaten the life of anyone who threatens theirs.

—Proverbs 22:22-23

The republic is a dream. Nothing happens unless first a dream.

—Carl Sandburg

The Lord says, "I hate your religious festivals; I cannot stand them! When you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; I will not accept the animals you have fattened to bring me as offerings. Stop your noisy songs; I do not want to listen to your harp. Instead, let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry.

—Amos 5:21-24

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

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