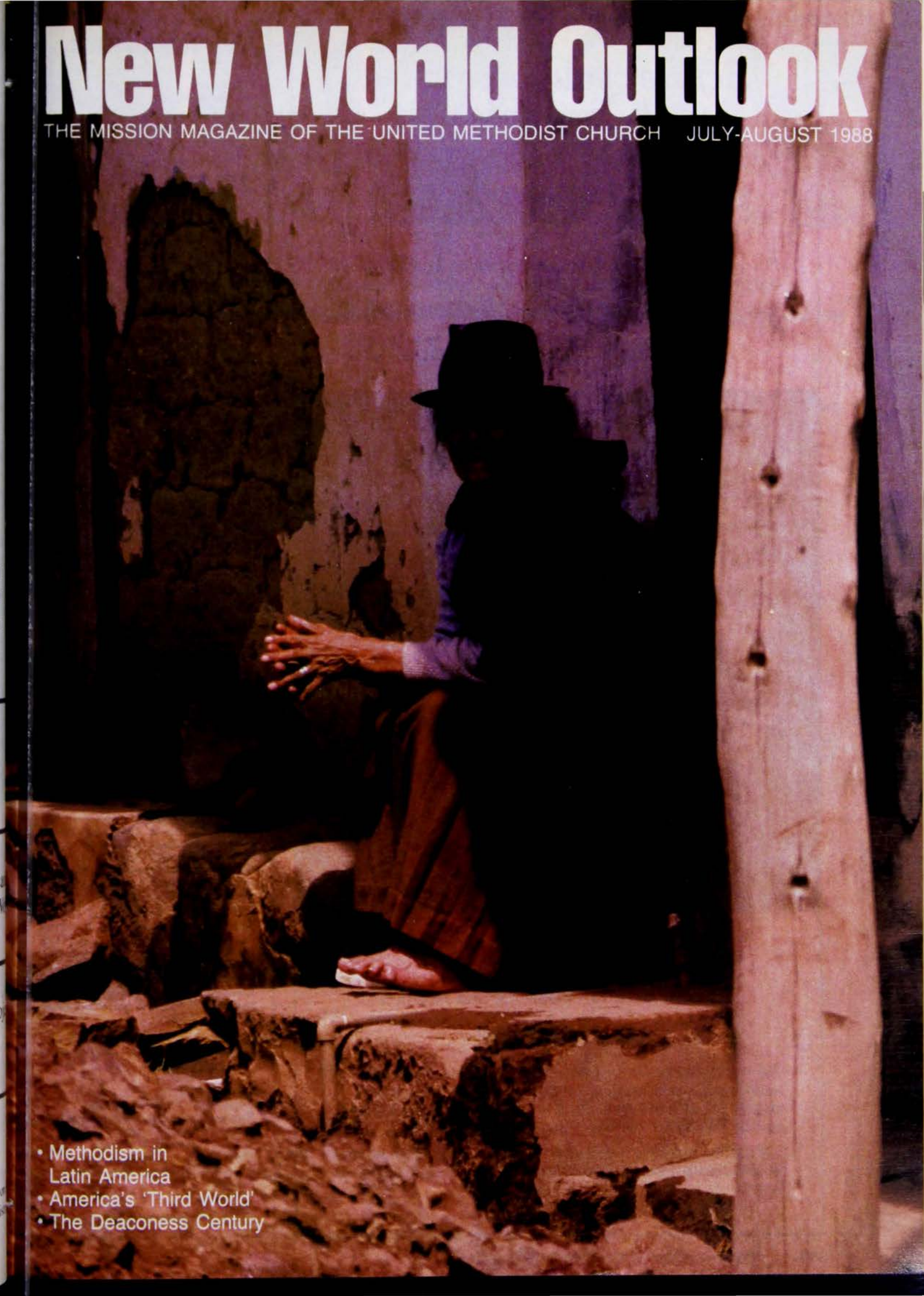
New World Outlook

THE MISSION MAGAZINE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH JULY-AUGUST 1988



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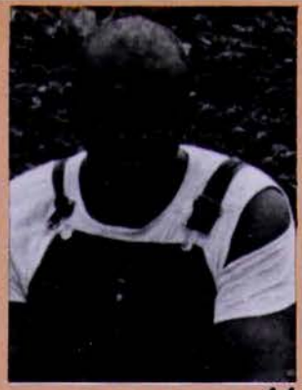
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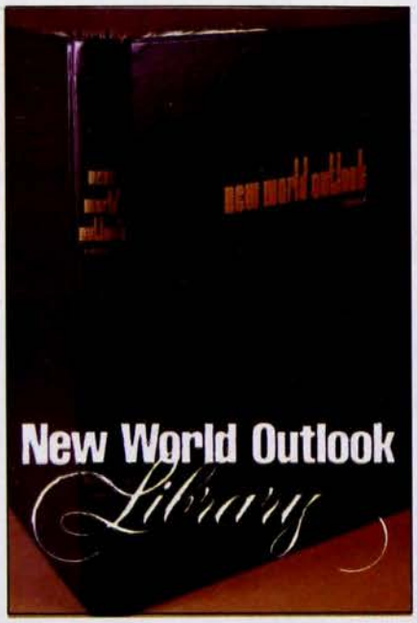

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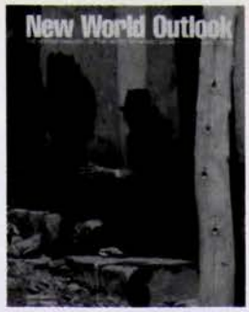


TO OUR READERS

For the first 100 years of Methodism in Latin America, our southern neighbors remained linked to the "mother church" in the United States. But beginning with the independence declared by Mexican and Brazilian Methodists in the 1930s, our Methodist colleagues throughout Latin America have been on a long and sometimes turbulent path of self-determination.

Our July-August cover story profiles some of the challenges facing these dynamic colleague Methodist churches, which met last February in Quito, Ecuador under the aegis of CIEMAL, the Council of Latin American Evangelical Methodist Churches. Leaders from more than 14 countries spent seven days wrestling with how Christians from the Wesleyan tradition could act to support life within a region plagued by poverty and oppression.

The indigenous women of Latin America, like the one on our July-August cover from Ecuador, are among the most vulnerable persons on the continent. The photograph was taken by Paul Jeffrey, a United Methodist missionary who provided exclusive coverage of the Quito meeting for *NEW WORLD OUTLOOK*.

Yet the CIEMAL delegates found much to cheer about, writes Mr. Jeffrey, a General Board of Global Ministries missionary posted to Nicaragua. He reports that the church has become a source of hope, faith and determination for many Latin Americans.

Also in this issue, we report on the centenary celebration of the United Methodist deaconess movement. Brenda Webber, a frequent contributor to *NEW WORLD OUTLOOK*, writes that the deaconess movement is still alive and well today, in spite of some shaky moments during the past 100 years. The women who answered the call to become deaconesses around the world all share an important trait: a dedication to serve their church and God.

Freelance writers Thomas and Marlene Marsh provide an update on the alarming incidence of neglect and abuse of older persons in U.S. society. This is a much bigger problem than most people realize, they write. But the churches are well situated to be aware of abuse of the elderly, and to respond to and prevent its incidence in the future.

Our July-August issue continues *NWO*'s June coverage of poverty in America with a special report on "America's Third World," a glimpse of two of the nation's 25 poorest counties. *NEW WORLD OUTLOOK* sent writers to Arkansas and South Dakota for a closer look at some searing poverty right in our own backyard.

The editors would like to share with you news of annual awards given to *NWO* by Associated Church Press. Our October 1987 issue, which focused entirely on the mission study theme of the Soviet Union, won an "award of merit" for in-depth coverage of a current issue. NWO also received honorable mentions for general excellence for a denominational magazine, editorial commentary, and photography.

THE EDITORS

Mission Memo

News and Analysis of Developments in Christian Mission

July-August 1988

MIDDLE EAST. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzahk Shamir has been asked by officials of the World Methodist Council to meet with them to discuss the Middle East situtation. A recent letter from the bishops to Mr. Shamir suggests a mid-October meeting "in order to learn more directly the causes of the upheaval" in Israel and "to share . . . concerns." The letter to Mr. Shamir followed a meeting of the Council in London during observance of the 250th anniversary of Aldersgate. The bishops ask that Methodists around the world push their governments to support convening an international conference around U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 which condemns the taking of territory by war and calls for all nations to respect the political integrity of other nations. "Such a conference should include on its agenda the need to recognize Jerusalem as an independent and international city where the religious and civil rights of Jews, Muslims and Christians are respected," Council officials stated.

A consultation of the Middle East Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches Commission on International Affairs in Cyprus has also asked that churches press for a United Nations conference on resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
Mary Sue Robinson, an executive secretary of the World Division, General Board of Global Ministries, reports that Christians in the Middle East are looking to Christians in the U.S. for support. The Middle East churches perceive that other Christians show less concern for Middle East Christians and Muslims than they do for the state of Israel. "The very clear message . . . was that Middle East churches feel abandonded by the rest of the churches in the world," Ms. Robinson explained. She recently returned to the United States after a monthlong tour to Cyprus, Israel, Egypt and Algeria. Ms. Robinson is pushing for more financial support for United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) projects in the region and advocacy for peace and justice in the Middle East, as well as for the Christians there.

PHILIPPINE ATTACKS. Dr. Nemesio Prudente, president of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, is recovering from injuries he received when his car was hit by a grenade. Three of his bodyguards were killed. The June 30 ambush was the second attempt on Dr. Prudente's life in less than a year. His wife, Ruth, is on the staff of the General Board of Global Ministries' Women's Division.
The Washington, D. C., based Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines is calling for concerned individuals to write the Philippine president, national secretary of defense, and U. S. Congressmen to demand that perpetrators of this attack against Dr. Prudente be

brought to justice.
Dr. Prudent, in the past, has provided refuge for persons fleeing right-wing death squads in the Philippine province of Leyte. Amnesty International says Dr. Prudente's efforts are believed to be the reason for the latest attack. It came less than a week after Alfonso Surigao, a reknowed human rights lawyer and a member of the executive committee of the United Church of Christ of the Philippines, was shot to death, June 24.

BISHOPS CALL FOR LIFTING EMBARGO. Seventeen United Methodist bishops have urged the U.S. government to lift an embargo against delivery of medicine, food, clothing and vehicles to Christian communities and the Red Cross in Nicaragua by the "Veterans Peace Convoy." The signed statement from the bishops was drafted in the U.M. Board of Church and Society. The 36-vehicle convoy was halted by U.S. Customs and Treasury agents at Laredo, Texas. An undetermined number of lay persons and at least two United Methodist pastors were participating in the convoy. The 1988 General Conference has also asked that the May 1984 embargo be lifted.

SOUTHERN AFRICA ISSUES. United Methodist Bishops from Kansas and West Virginia are amongst the long list of religious leaders and high-ranking political persons demanding that the United States enact tough economic sanctions against South Africa. The bishops have joined in support of the move for Congress to enact the Dellums/Kennedy/Cranston bill that would impose comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

In Mozambique the United Methodist Church is holding its own and continuing to grow, despite threats and attacks by rebels says Norma Kehrberg, associate general secretary of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). The church in Mozambique has over 50,000 members and is still growing. The Chamanculu United Methodist Church will open soon in Maputo. The church mission station at Cambine has been attacked twice by guerrilla fighters. The latest was May 17. Church property was vandalized and destroyed. Items of value were taken by the "armed bandits."

NETWORK NEWS. Vision Interfaith Satellite Network (VISN), the new interfaith cable network, now has the potential to reach 13.3 million households. VISN has made an agreement with Satellite Services Inc. that expands the network's potential viewing audience in the United States by several million TV watchers. Satellite Services is a multisystem operator, representing 7.6 million households.

VISN is looking for a new operations chief. The network's chief executive officer, David Ochoa, has resigned. Mr. Ochoa, who was also general manager, stepped down following a request from members of the network's board of trustees that they have more "hands on" control of the daily activities, according to Nelson Price, secretary-treasurer of the network. He said the board wanted a regular reporting procedure. But Mr. Ochoa thought that would prove inhibiting, Mr. Price surmised.

COURTSUIT DISMISSED. A federal district judge has dismissed a civil lawsuit filed by the Christic Institute. The lawsuit charges that a secret network of ex-CIA and military officers arranged the bombing of a 1984 press conference in Nicaragua. The judge ruled that there was not enough evidence to prove the conspiracy charge. The Institute, an interfaith law firm that deals with public-policy matters, receives financial support from a number of church groups, including The United Methodist Church.

PRESBYTERIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has reached agreement on a major statement on "Christian responsibility in a nuclear age."

The statement details how congregations can handle the matter of tax resisters who oppose government nuclear arms policies. It establishes a voluntary Fund for Obedience to Higher Authority to assist individuals who suffer financial hardships as a result of their "acts of conscience."
The Assembly passed a resolution asking the Presbyterian church to spend 15 million dollares in the next five years on evangelism and new-church development. The push grew out of concern over declining membership.

UNIVERSITY SENATE TAKES ACTION. "Insufficient information and inconclusive data" is the response from the University Senate of The United Methodist Church to a Boston University fact-finding report on the church-school conflict. The senate has set aside the investigative report on administrataive policies and procedures at Boston U., a Methodist-related university, and is narrowing its focus to the university's School of Theology, which it will visit this fall. The university and theology school have been the focus of criticism from several factions within the church.

One university has been restored and another dropped form the approved list of Methodist-related schools. The University Senate restored Southern Methodist University, Dallas, "without qualification," giving the school back its status as fully approved. It had been approved "with warning" following a four-year scandle involving the athletic department. Westminster College of Salt Lake City, Utah, was dropped from the list. The senate, which is responsible for reviewing, approving and listing church-related educational institutions, including seminaries, declined comment on reasons for Westminster being dropped; instead, Roy B. Shilling Jr, senate president, cited the senate's evaluation criteria, which includes financial health, administrative effectiveness, program quality and church-relatedness. He said Westminister's problems were in its church-relatedness. Charles H. Dick, Westminister president, said the college has had to become more "ecumenical" in recruitment and fundraising but it will request "associate" status under new church guidelines.

ABORTION ISSUE. The U.S. Supreme Court left intact a federal sex education law that provides grants to religious groups and others who provide teen-agers with premarital sex counseling. The case originated in the Virginia federal courts where three United Methodist pastors challenged the constitutionality of the law, arguing that it discriminates against supporters of "the legal option of abortion." Family planning services and abortion counseling centers are ineligible for the grants. Justice Sandra Day O'Conner supported the majority opinion but noted, however, instances of "improper administration" in application of the law. The Supreme Court sent the case back to Virginia federal district court to determine whether the law has been properly applied there.

The American Baptist Churches General Board, the churches' policy-making body, has adopted a new resolution on abortion that takes account of the diversity of opinions within the church over the issue of abortion. The new policy statement emphasizes life as the "sacred and gracious gift of God" and the need to avoid abortion wherever possible. This is a change from previous policy wording that stressed respect for "the integrity of each person's conscience."

BOARD-EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT. A newly formed employee's association has signed a three-year agreement with the General Board of Global Ministries that covers pay increases, grievance and arbitration procedures, vacation, seniority,

discipline and discharge and affirmative action. The association came into being after Board employees voted to decertify their union, a bargaining unit of the United Auto Workers, AFL-CIO. Sonia Zlotnick, the employee who petition for the decertification, is now president of the new association.

PERSONALIA. Ann N. Beardslee has been appointed interim general secretary for Church World Service, the relief agency of the National Council of Churches. She will hold the position through September 21-22 when the Chuch World Service Unit Committee meets, said the Rev. Arie R. Brouwer, NCC general secretary. Beardslee replaces J. Richard Butler who resigned the post May 19 following a rift with Brouwer. Ms. Beardslee served directly under Mr. Butler as associate executive director. She retains that title until a new general secretary is named.

The Rev. James E. Andrews is retaining his position as stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) He won re-election over Harriet Nelson, a lay leader who was recommended by a General Assembly committee. Mr. Andrews is now in his second four-year term. The position is the highest salaried administrative post in the denomination.

Claire Randall, a former general secretary of the National Council of Churches, is the new head of Church Women United, an organization representing a half-million women of the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. Dr. Randall is the only woman to fill the top staff position at the NCC. She is also the only woman or American to have received the medal of the Order of St. Valdimir by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow.

Daniel E. Weiss, director of the American Baptist Board of Educational Ministries since 1983, is the newly elected general secretary of the American Baptist Churches. Dr. Weiss moves into the position on Sept. 1. He was chosen by the churches' General Board. For eight years he served as president of Eastern College and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, both church-related institutions. While he was at the schools, enrollment and financial donations increased, and the academic progarms expanded. As head of the board of educational ministries, Dr. Weiss pushed for the the training of qualified professional church leaders.

RETIREMENT. Francis Smith, whose journalism career expands 40 years, has retired as director of the United Methodist News Service's New York office. Ms. Smith started out as a reporting with a former St. Louis daily and moved on to cover some of the major religious meetings and events around the globe. She has been editor of the Presbyterian Survey and United Church Herald, an associate editor of Christianity and Crisis, editor of Ecumenical Press Service, World Council of Churches, Geneva.

DEATHS. Retired United Methodist Bishop Ralph Ward, episcopal leader of the New York area from 1972-80, died June 28 at his home in Convent Station, N. J., at the age of 79. In 1983 Bishop Ward served as acting general secretary of the World Division. Before that he had filled the same post for the National Division. He was also president of the National Division from 1964-68. Since retirement, Bishop Ward has worked to raise funds for the Commission on Archieves and History building at the Drew University.

Robert F. Storey died in Cincinnati on June 24. Mr. Storey, 56, director of communications for the West Ohio Conference, had also served as director of communicatons for the Birmingham Area and as a pastor in Alabama. Memorial contributions may be made to the United Methodist Scholarshio Fund, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 1001 9th Avenue, S., Nashville, TN. 37203.

Editorials

THE MORASS IN PANAMA: NO EASY WAY OUT

"You shall reap what you sow" aptly captures the U.S. dilemma regarding Panama. For decades the United States has propped up Panama's military government while it trafficked in drugs and arms, and abused and exploited its own people. Recently, after Gen. Antonio Manuel Noriega, commander of the Panamanian Defense Forces, was indicted on drug–trafficking charges by two federal grand juries in February, the Reagan Administration offered to drop charges if General Noriega would resign and leave Panama.

But the Panamanian strongman rejected the deal, saying he had no plans to quit Panama, and reportedly no further negotiations are contemplated from the Reagan Administration. It is against this impasse that rumors of military intervention are being circulated among senior officials at the State Department.

Given the history of U.S. military involvement in Caribbean and Latin American countries, the possibility of intervention against General Noriega cannot be ruled out absolutely. But such an intervention would be illegal, immoral and downright stupid. If we can be so induced to violate another nation's territorial integrity, why not move against some of the world's *real* dictatorships in Paraguay, Chile or South Africa?

To overthrow Noriega is not the answer, and the attempt to lure him from office by dropping the indictment is hypocritical at best. You don't make deals with known drug–traffickers abroad when you are waging an all–out war on drugs at home with a pledge to prosecute all traffickers.

There is no easy way out of the morass in Panama that the United States has, in part, helped to create. The situtation is a conundrum that began taking shape during Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency, and was solidified during Jimmy Carter's tenure when Washington sought to minimize allegations against Panama in order to win ratification of the Panama Canal treaties.

There has been plenty of time to head off this dilemma but one administration after the other has found it expedient politically to turn a blind eye to Panama's excesses. Unfortunately, the new president, Bush or Dukakis, will inherit a messy situation.

SILBER LINING FOR A CLOUDED WITNESS

Close on the heels of the conclusion of the 1988 General Conference, Boston University President John Silber served public notice that The United Methodist Church is becoming "an institution in which theology is distorted and degraded by the trends of politics and intellectual fashion." The setting for his observations was the Oklahoma Annual Conference where Dr. Silber had been invited as guest preacher.

As head of one of the nation's largest United Methodist–related universities, Dr. Silber's views deserve serious attention. For if his assessment is accurate, many of the 1988 General Conference actions and the statements of the Council of Bishops and other agencies of the church are politically tainted, intellectually shallow and naive, and scripturally in error.

While insisting that "theology draws on God's revelation and tradition," Dr. Silber rejected the method of "those who bolster a political agenda by an *ex post facto* nod to theology and revelation." He sees an all–too–frequent tendency among church leaders toward adopting stances informed more by ideology than theology and employing a method which requires "that we overrule reason, ignore rational methods, discount the experience of others, falsify facts, twist Scripture and in consequence constrain the freedom of others in the pursuit of pre–established objectives."

Such is the "clouded" witness of United Methodism today, as Dr. Silber sees it, a witness more attuned to popular political fad and ideological fashion than the United Methodist heritage of tradition, reason, experience and Scripture. According to Dr. Silber, United Methodist leadership capitulates before such popular agendas "because they fear being called intolerant or unmodern."

In reference to the Council of Bishops' pastoral letter *In Defense Of Creation* and a recent statement opposing aid to the Contras in Nicaragua, Dr. Silber insisted that "the bishops have not demonstrated either the historical and contemporary knowledge of the diplomatic and military experience necessary to speak with authority on the Nicaraguan question or the intricate question of disarmament."

With regard to the rights and role of women and homosexuals, Dr. Silber declared, "If there is reason to believe that motherhood is essential to the survival of the human race, there is reason to question feminist rights organizations that attempt to define womanhood completely without reference to motherhood, and homosexual rights organizations that attempt to put their deviant–behavior lifestyle on the same normative level as heterosexuality."

It is a curious theological, rational and intellectual critique which insists that gender identification and sexual identity must be based on motherhood and procreative responsibility in the interest of human survival while dismissing as unenlightened and naive a call for nuclear disarmament which bears witness to the same survival concern. Human survival is less threatened by choice and difference with regard to propagation than by human capacities for total annihilation. Hence the bishops addressed their pastoral letter to the defense of creation rather than procreation. And in so doing, the bishops spoke with the theological authority of faith in the revelation of God in Christ, attested to in Scripture and embodied in tradition. They refused to be

restricted or silenced by presumed deficiencies in "historical and contemporary knowledge of diplomatic and military experience" to bear applied witness to the revealed truth of the Creator God who so loved the world as to self–empty Jesus the Son and Savior into it.

One suspects that the alleged contemporary distortion of Scripture, reason, experience and tradition which Dr. Silber finds so troubling are actually applications of a faith witness which offends his own "pre–established objectives."

Quite obviously Scripture can be selectively twisted and used as proof–texts to support a plethora of preordained conclusions in violation and disregard of the full Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Silber sees a now–abandoned "tradition of intellectually informed theological inquiry" as having been alive and well in both the distant and recent past—in the social witness of John Wesley and United Methodist heritage as well as the theological interpretations and applications of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King Jr. Ironically, the examples chosen from among the great cloud of witnesses who surrounded us would seem to refute rather than reinforce Dr. Silber's criticisms of current United Methodist witness.

The social and geopolitical applications of Dr. King's theological inquiry are suggested by the title of a sermon he never lived to preach. Earlier in the day of his assassination, Dr. King phoned Atlanta from Memphis to let the Ebenezer Baptist Church office know his Sunday sermon Title: "Why America May Go to Hell." We will never know the exact catalogue of good or bad intentions which pave the road to the conclusion, but we do know some of the thoughts to which Dr. King gave verbal expression only days before.

To one audience Dr. King had expressed the bitter assessment that "there aren't enough white persons in our country who are willing to cherish democratic principles over privilege." And to a gathering of Southern Christian Leadership Conference staffers engaged in heated debate over the precise demands which should be the focus of the proposed Poor People's Campaign in Washington D.C., Dr. King commented, "I don't know what Jesus had as his demands other than 'Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.' My demand in Washington is 'Repent, America.'" Such was Dr. King's theological assessment and Scriptural witness, unencumbered by historical or contemporary knowledge limitations or diplomatic and military expertise.

John Wesley did get to preach a last sermon of sorts in 1744 at St. Mary's before Oxford University. His sermon topic was "Scriptural Christianity," and his preaching pondered the realized vision of "a Christian world." Said Wesley:

"Suppose now the fullness of time to be come, and the prophecies to be accomplished . . . Here is no din of arms, no 'confused noise,' no 'garments rolled in blood.' . . . wars are ceased from the earth . . . no brother rising up against brother; no country or city divided against itself, and tearing out its own bowels. Civil discord is at an end for evermore, and none is left either to destroy or hurt his neighbor. Here is no oppression to make 'even the wise man mad,' no extortion to 'grind the face of the poor'; no robbery or wrong; no rapine or injustice; for all are content with such things as they possess.' . . . And with righteousness or justice, mercy is also found. The earth is no longer full of cruel habitations."

Then Wesley returned from vision to reality, looking the "venerable" professors of Oxford University square in the eye, asking, "Where does this Christianity now exist? Is this city a Christian city? Is Christianity, scriptural Christianity found here? . . . Has all you teach an actual tendency to the love of God, and of all mankind for His sake?"

It was the last sermon John Wesley was allowed to preach before Oxford University. He was "excommunicated" from that pulpit, as Dr. Silber fears may happen again to those who oppose contemporary United Methodist witness. Then and now the application of scriptural Christianity punctures pride, deflates privilege, and arouses resentment when the results of theological inquiry cut to the core of cherished preconceptions.

John Wesley's sermon and Dr. King's words have more in common with the bishops' pastoral letter and other recent United Methodist peace and justice statements than with Dr. Silbert's critique.

MOSCOW SUMMIT: A HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENT

Assessing the recently concluded Moscow summit, it is pointless to argue whether the improvements in U.S.–Soviet relations are more the result of changes in our government's thinking or the new openness initiated by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. It is equally pointless to argue that President Reagan's emphasis on human rights was of lesser importance than discussion of disarmament. All these concerns are inextricably linked and mutually significant.

It certainly suggests a thaw in the cold war when a U.S. President accepts an invitation to sign an intermediate–range nuclear missile treaty in a country he has referred to as the "evil empire." And, to be sure, without General Secretary Gorbachev's policies of "glasnost" (openness) and "perestroika" (reconstruction) and his interest in halting the arms race, such a summit would have never occurred.

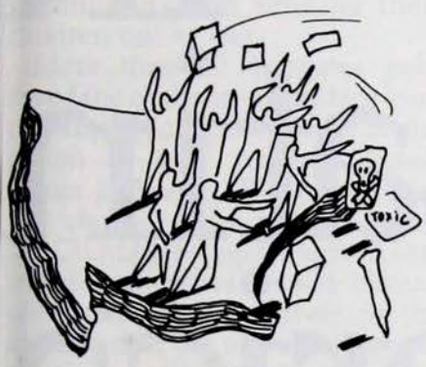
The issue of human rights is important, of course, and it belongs on the summit agenda along with arms negotiations. But we must avoid confusing our priorities, for the majority must survive first if we are to address the liberties of our minorities.

There is no way to predict the long–range impact of the INF accord, but its signing is a hopeful portent for future cooperation between the two mightly armed superpowers. At the next summit, there is no reason not to insist again on human rights, but it might be far more important to focus on limiting conventional forces and nuclear weapons in Europe.

In My Opinion

Dumping On Our Neighbors

By Ralph Bugg



Graduation day was approaching and the medical school faculty pondered what to do about Joe and his failing grades. They liked Joe but feared he might discredit the school and the profession. They voted to deny him a degree.

Joe's classmates petitioned the school to allow Joe to graduate on condition that he would never practice in the U.S. The deal was made and the poorly qualified young physician went to Europe.

This incident seems too outrageous to be true, but it happened. We—as communities and nation—are given to dumping shady persons and shoddy goods on others.

When a court employs banishment, an undesirable is foisted on another populace. In a notorious episode, Florida and California officials shuttle sex offenders back and forth. First, Florida expelled a prostitute to California. A police chief there returned her and, to boot, another sex offender—a diagnosed schizophrenic. "We owed one to Florida," he said, in what is reminiscent more of sports than of justice.

Supporters argue that banishment curbs wrongdoing, relieves jails, and affords the offender a fresh start. That kind of thinking extended to the individual level could mean that if I capture a burglar in my house, I could release him for his promise to move his operations to my neighbor's premises.

In the workaday world, wrongdoers are quietly dismissed (sometimes with letters of recommendation) to find new victims. A college suspected a bursar of faking vouchers and let him go. Later, another employer charged the fellow with embezzlement.

Often hospitals, medical societies, and the armed forces allow doctors with poor reputations to move away rather than discipline them. One case involved an Air Force heart surgeon with an alarming mortality rate. His superior assigned him to a civilian medical training center without so much as mentioning his record. When a patient there won a $2 million judgment against the doctor, the Surgeon General of the Air Force explained, "I received no query, so I didn't volunteer any information."

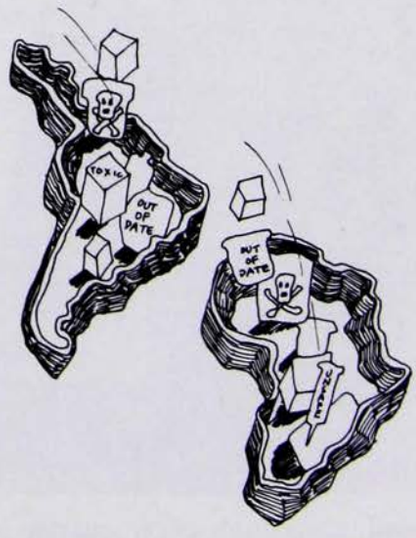
America has drawn scorn, especially from developing nations, for exporting shoddy and hazardous materials. Examples: Millions of children's pajamas treated with a carcinogenic fire retardant were banned here but were sold overseas. Dalkon Shield contraceptives were removed from sale here, but a U.S. agency continued to distribute them abroad.

American resistance to the opening of toxic waste sites has spurred U.S. companies to dump their refuse overseas. Pesticides banned in the U.S. are sold abroad (possibly boomeranging when we import contaminated foodstuffs). Outlawed antibiotic drugs are exported. Medical field tests ruled out here are run overseas.

However, what one person calls "dumping," another considers a trade of mutual benefit. Exporters of pesticides may argue that it is the purchaser's responsibility to set standards and to educate people in safe practices. A pharmaceutical manufacturer who may have tested a drug on animals, but who has not received permission to make similar tests on humans in the U.S. may, "to benefit mankind," test abroad. Companies responding to foreign disasters sometimes send substandard merchandise and take tax write–offs.

Dumping is symptomatic of a malignant myopia in which we see unfamiliar people as faceless, valueless and without feeling. We can thus avoid responsibility for them.

All of us can help to improve our moral climate, promote legislation, report substandard services, and boycott offending manufacturers. If, instead, we continue to permit dumping, we dehumanize ourselves and cut ourselves off from the world family—with tragic consequences. □



Ralph Bugg is a free lance writer living in Atlanta, where he was night city editor of the Constitution. □

Methodism in Latin America

Worship and Bible study were integral to the CIEMAL conference in Quito, Ecuador.

Text and photos by Paul Jeffrey

Methodists from every quarter of Latin America gathered in Quito, Ecuador, during February to discuss conversion. Yet they weren't discussing how to convert non–believers. Instead, after 15 decades of ministry in Latin America, they explored how the Methodist Church can be converted anew to the cause of the poor and marginalized throughout the Americas.

The delegates to the fifth quadrennial assembly of the Council of Latin American Evangelical Methodist Churches (CIEMAL) didn't have to venture far through the streets of Ecuador's capital city to witness signs of the political, economic, and spiritual crises calling them to conversion.

Half a city block to the west from the church center where the Methodists gathered, the Church of the Word, a California–based sect, whose followers include former Guatemalan dictator Efrain Rios Montt, recently set up shop in the basement of an office building. They attract middle–class adherents with its preaching of prosperity and anti–communism.

Two blocks away, a first–floor apartment was bombed late at night two days before the assembly began. The heavily damaged building was under military guard during CIEMAL's gathering. Neighbors surmised that the bombing resulted from conflicts between two drug–peddling gangs.

A few blocks further to the south, the acrid odor of tear gas

hung in the air for hours after police repressed demonstrators who daily took to the streets to protest the high cost of living.

In all directions, in the darkened doorways of office buildings closed for the night, indigenous families huddled together for warmth against the cold of the 9,000–foot elevation. Having migrated to the city in search of work, their dream had devolved into a dehumanizing routine of selling chewing gum or watchbands and sending their children out to beg.

More than 80 delegates pondered the challenges they face from the ideological penetration of the region by new religious movements and sects. But rather than just viewing these sects as rivals, the CIEMAL delegates agreed that member churches should instead offer creative alternatives to the ideologies of the new movements, which use Christianity for their own aggressive, nationalistic ends.

The implications of the region's enormous foreign debt for the churches' ministry were also examined. Member churches shared some of their programs that assist victims of the international economic crisis. But delegates also called the region's "eternal debt" a theological problem, part of a structural system of oppression which needs to be challenged and dismantled.

Women "bear the heaviest burden" of the economic crisis, according to Ercilia de Palomino, a Chilean lay woman who heads the Confederacy of Latin American Methodist Women, a CIEMAL–related group. "We see our husbands out of work, the children malnourished, the daughters turning to prostitution," she said. Given this situation, "the woman has to take responsibility," she concluded.

De Palomino, one of more than a dozen women delegates in the assembly, reported that women are slowly taking a more active role in CIEMAL. More than 35,000 Latin American Methodist women are active in local Methodist women's groups, and are carrying out creative and crucial ministries to abandoned children and abused women. In May of 1987, the presidents of Latin American Methodist women's national federations gathered in Lima, Peru, to reflect on their particular role within society and the church and to strategize about new involvements. Integrating women's programs more fully into the life of CIEMAL was on their agenda.

Latin church leaders grapple with the realities of their continent, culture and faith at a Quito, Ecuador conference

North-South dialogue panel: From left, Bishop Jesse DeWitt of the Chicago Area; Bishop Secundio Morales of Panama; and Bishop Federico Pagura of Argentina.

Church women have taken a leading role in human rights movements throughout the region and will continue to do so. "Jesus Christ is present in us as we take the struggle for human rights to the streets, especially for all the disappeared, and for the women who are beaten and abused."

In Bolivia, reported Bishop Eugenio Poma, women, blacks and indigenous people are doubly oppressed. Whereas the majority of Methodists in Latin America come from the urban middle class, in Bolivia over three–quarters of the population, as well as the Methodist church membership, are Aymara or Quechua.

According to Bishop Poma, these groups had a long history of being marginalized from national realities. Inspite of that, he explained, "there is a new awakening among the indigenous people, a new recognition of our culture, history, and religiosity," which would affect evangelization. "In our history," said Poma, "the church has been part of the systematically organized massive intervention of western culture, exterminating our cultural values, encouraging our children not to see themselves as Indians anymore."

Bishop Poma claimed that in Quito, "along with schools, language, and mass communication, the church entered the indigenous communities and told people they had to accept its package of teachings and beliefs. This process of evangelization conflicts with the self–esteem of indigenous peoples, who believe that their culture has something of value to contribute." In response to this conflict, Bishop Poma explained, the indigenous people are tempted to completely reject western religion and return to their native religiosity.

As an alternative, Bishop Poma reported that the church is developing an "Andean theology," a Christian reflection based on the cultural and historical values of the Andean people. But the process is a slow one for the lack of indigenous theologians. Poma reported that there are currently "only outside theologians looking in, describing the landscape." He said that this new theology will incor-

What is Ciemal?

Newly elected board members of CIEMAL, from left: the Rev. Clory Trinidade de Oliveira (Brazil), executive secretary; Bishop Isaias Gutierrez (Chile), vice president; Bishop Miguel Hernandez (Mexico), president; Ruth Rodriguez (Dominican Republic), secretary; and Juan Fajardo (Panama), treasurer.

For the first 100 years of Methodism in Latin America, our southern neighbors remained linked to the "mother church" in the United States. Then Methodists in Mexico and Brazil, where the two largest churches were located, became autonomous in the 1930s. In the rest of Latin America, however, the traditional relationship held.

In the 1960s, things began to change throughout the region. Political and economic tensions grew between the U.S. and Latin America. With the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, all U.S. missionaries and almost all Cuban pastors left for the U.S., abandoning the church on the Caribbean island nation. The Cuban church declared itself autonomous.

According to Brazilian Bishop Paulo Ayres Mattos, "the experience of the church in Cuba made it clear to us that the system we had lived with until then couldn't continue." Other churches declared themselves autonomous, a process which Bishop Mattos says was "conflictive, painful, and full of misunderstanding."

Yet the Latin Americans were determined to learn from the 30–year experience of Mexico and Brazil, where, according to Bishop Mattos, Methodists had felt isolated since declaring their ecclesiastical independence. So the concept of an organization of autonomous churches evolved. It would provide for fraternity and cooperation among its members, and "help the churches feel like adults," said Bishop Mattos. In February of 1969 the dream took form: CIEMAL held its first Assembly in Santiago, Chile.

The first few years were occupied with strengthening the identity of individual member churches, as well as exploring the possibilities of connectionality. Later, CIEMAL strove to form a common identity as the Latin American Methodist family. In this phase, a new bilateral dialogue began with The United Methodist Church in the U.S.

CIEMAL is now exploring its relationship with other members of the world Methodist family, explained the Brazilian bishop. Indeed, several representatives of European Methodism, as well as the executive secretary of the World Methodist Council, attended the Quito gathering.

Since that first gathering in Santiago, the Assembly has met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1973); Alajuela, Costa Rica (1978); and Lima, Peru (1983). Between Assemblies, the work of CIEMAL is carried out by working commissions on evangelism, education, and human promotion. Those groups are responsible to an executive board, which meets at least twice during the quadrennium. It is composed of a delegate from each member church, and includes bishops, pastors, and lay persons. The Assembly also elects an executive secretary to supervise the activity of the working commissions.

Today, the CIEMAL family includes Methodist churches in Mexico, Costa Rica, Cuba, Panama, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Guatemala, and the Caribbean, as well as the United Evangelical Church of Ecuador, the Dominican Evangelical Church in the Dominican Republic. The National Evangelical-Primitive Methodist Church of Guatemala and the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA) are new members, added in February.

Methodists are a small denomination in Guatemala, and have suffered both from political and ecclesiastical persecution (see February, 1988, **New World Outlook**). The other new member, the MCCA, is a sprawling expanse of 581 churches in the Bahamas, Jamaica, Haiti, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean islands, as well as Guyana, Belize, and the Atlantic coasts of Panama and Costa Rica. With well over 200 years since English preachers arrived with the Wesleyan Gospel, their Methodist history predates the rest of CIEMAL. Although English is widely used for worship services, MCCA's ministry is carried out in regions where French, Spanish, and Dutch are also spoken.

porate "some valuable aspects of western culture which we can benefit from, but we've got to be the ones to do the analysis and the choosing."

In a daily Bible study led by Brazilian theologian Rui de Souza Josgrilberg, delegates examined the irony of the fact that many had gone out to evangelize the poor and the oppressed, and were themselves evangelized by those to whom they ministered. He suggested that the mission of the church was a *caminata*, a "walk," and that the people we encounter on this journey are the women, the children, the landless, the blacks and the poor; they are our neighbors, and daily they are condemned to death like Jesus on the cross. Like Christ, he claimed, "they offer us true conversion to the God of life."

Reflecting on the assembly's theme, "The meaning of our conversion today in Latin America," De Souza said that Methodists are "learning anew how to be a church" as they struggle against domination and poverty throughout the region. By responding to the Gospel's invitation to the abundant life, the faithful were being converted, just as John Wesley was, to ever deeper levels of discipleship.

CIEMAL's rethinking of mission does not signify a retreat from aggressive personal evangelism. Indeed, the membership in CIEMAL churches has been increasing over recent years. And member churches, so long at the receiving end of mission efforts, are involved in creative outreach to spread the liberating news of Jesus Christ.

Methodists in Brazil, for example, have on-going mission projects in Mozambique and Angola, where Methodism was planted by the U.S. church. Today, dialogue across the Atlantic is facilitated by a common language, and fraternal workers from the Brazilian church have gone to Africa for short-term mission projects. Some Methodist students from the African countries are studying in Brazilian seminaries.

Yet the traditional understanding of mission as the "white man's burden" has not died, say CIEMAL leaders. One of the issues examined in the assembly was the Mission Society's presence in several Latin American countries. A conservative group within The United Methodist Church in the U.S., the Mission Society disagrees with official church mission policies, and sends its own mission workers abroad. Although a few delegates were supportive of the Mission Society's presence, most were not. But the assembly agreed unanimously to urge the U.S. church to resolve its lack of unity. Failure to do so, the delegates stated, had destructive implications for the life of the Latin American Methodist family.

The traditional understanding of mission as the "white man's burden" has not died, say CIEMAL leaders.

A discussion of this issue, as well as other facets of the relationship between Latin America and its giant northern neighbor, were taken up during a panel discussion on "North–South Dialogue."

"Dialogue isn't where one speaks and the other listens," Bishop Isaac Rodriguez Aco of Brazil told the delegates. One of the goals of genuine dialogue is "to unmask the myths that justify the imposition of economic, political, and military power," he told the group.

One of those myths is the suggestion that social struggle in the Third World is a product of East–West conflict. The real battle is a "North–South" one, said Rodriguez Aco. Calling foreign debt "an instrument of oppression" exercised by the North, he said that much of governmental aid directed at poor countries meant "death and disgrace" to recipients. He asserted that "rich countries continue to get richer at the expense of poor countries." Rodriguez Aco also criticized conservative elements in the U.S. church which "utilize religion to justify new forms of colonization."

Claiming that "the growth, vitality and theological processes of Third World churches are a threat to the churches in the North and to our own government," Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt of Chicago, representing the United Methodist Council of Bishops, spoke of how certain sectors within U.S. society insure that the church will not be left free to focus its attention on issues of justice and peace. He also stated that the "strong materialism and success models" in the U.S. make "extremely difficult" the task of "theologizing around basic human concerns." This, according to Bishop DeWitt, "tends to weaken our global sensitivities and center our concerns upon ourselves."

Praising God, as one assembly participant commented, is not something that utilizes just the voice. Indeed, the Psalmist would have been pleased to witness the energy and joy with which the delegates played a conglomeration of instruments, sang an assortment of songs, and danced to a variety of rhythms. And it was not uncommon to hear, intermixed with the music, a selection of jokes about the hemisphere's dictators.

Yet the festive celebration and worship was not escapism. It was not divorced from the harsh realities of poverty and death discussed during the working committees and plenary sessions. An organic connection was evident. One church leader told me, "Through the open, lacerated veins of Latin America flows the blood of a suffering people. But," he said, "we are a people who know that the reign of God is breaking into our midst, no matter what Pinochet or Reagan or the International Monetary Fund do to us. So we celebrate. We have no other choice." □

The Rev. D. Paul Jeffrey is a United Methodist missionary serving as a program interpreter with the Evangelical Committee for Aid and Development (CEPAD) in Managua, Nicaragua. Prior to his assignment to Latin America in 1985, Mr. Jeffrey and his wife, the Rev. Lyda M. Pierce, had jointly pastored United Methodist Churches in Satsop and McCleary, Washington.

The Deaconess Century

by Brenda Webber

"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well." Romans 16:1–2

Deaconesses are commissioned during the spring 1988 meeting of the General Board of Global Ministries.

1988 is the centennial year for United Methodist deaconesses, a corps of United Methodist women who, following God's call, chose to commit their lives to Christ and Christian service, after the pattern of Phoebe, the first recorded deaconess in the New Testament.

The years have brought drastic changes for these women, including a sharp drop in membership and, recently, the threat of dissolution. However, this lapse has failed to dull their individual spirits or overshadow the vital contributions they continue to make.

No longer do deaconesses wear traditional garb—long black dresses and bonnets—nor do they receive training under the tutelage of older deaconesses at established training centers, but still, their influence is felt far and wide and their message of mission continues to take hold among the ranks of young United Methodist women.

Sarah L. Carr is a recently commissioned deaconess. She stood outside the Metropolitan–Duane United Methodist Church in New York City, following her commissioning last March, and pondered the question of why she had decided to become a deaconess."

"I guess I'm a person with a sense of history," she said after a moment of thought. Mrs. Carr explained that she had read the record of deaconesses and observed "the supportive community" of women at work throughout her native West Virginia Annual Conference. "I wanted to be part of that history. I guess I share a sense of what I feel the mission of the church is all about: a servant role."

Mrs. Carr, a church and community worker with the National Program Division, was commissioned a deaconess at the General Board of Global Ministries' 1988 Spring meeting. Her eldest daughter Margaret is named for an older deaconess much admired by Mrs. Carr.

Deaconesses young and old will be celebrating this August when a centenary convocation is held at Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri. It was in May 1888 that the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted to establish the Office of Deaconess, an office of the total church, to which lay women are commissioned.

But long before then, in the first century church, the Apostle Paul spoke of "Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae," and admonished that she be received "as befits the saints," for she had helped many, including himself.

Deaconesses have long uplifted the service of women in the life and work of the church. They were recruited, trained and deployed through the former Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions to carry out the programs of the division's agencies. The scope of the work of deaconesses has broadened through the years. However, they continue to make a life–time commitment to providing educational, parish and community service, and advocacy work through church–related agencies or institutions.

"They were doing many things long before it became part of our regular society; they started early

Deaconess Fran Lynch

Women commemorate 100 years of dedicated service to their church and society

in providing early childhood education," notes deaconess Flora Clipper, day care director at Wesley Community House, Lousiville, Kentucky. In fulfillment of their calling, deaconesses work as nurses, social workers, teachers, and administrators in schools, hospitals, parish ministries, neighborhood community centers, and in Christian education.

"The purpose for all of them is to help the people with whom they work in the community to identify problems paramount in their lives, and to organize around those issues in order to improve their lives," observes Betty Letzig, mission personnel coordinator in the National Program Division. She was also the first American deaconess to participate in the International Deaconess Exchange program in England in 1961–62.

Ms. Clipper also comments on the fellowship to be found among deaconesses: "One thing I have enjoyed about being a deaconess has been to be with a group of people that recognizes people as people."

The deaconess story is told through the lives of the people they serve: Christian young women nurtured and trained by deaconesses; naturalized Americans who were imprisoned as immigrants, awaiting legal residency status in the United States; children and older people who are cared for daily at care facilities across the country; and current church leaders who, as youngsters, learned their Bible lessons from deaconess teachers.

"A lot of people still have recollections of these women," Christine Brewer, executive secretary for deaconesses and home missionaries, said as she recalled several bishops who credit deaconesses with having influenced them during their formative years.

Fran Lynch, assistant director of Open Door Community House, Columbus, Georgia, and a deaconess for two years, is a United Methodist young woman who is following the path taken by so many before her.

"I'm learning so much from these older deaconesses about how to be about mission, how to conduct myself; learning from their past experiences about how to work with people, what kinds of things to try, what kinds of things work and don't work. The support system among deaconesses is important. The way we bond and link up with each other is important," she said.

Deaconesses serve in all five jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church. "There were deaconesses doing all kinds of things. They were in local churches, in the schools, and in ecumenical agencies. There were so many opportunities and so many things the deaconesses could do, and places they could go," continued Lynch.

The future, however, is tenuous as the church deliberates what is to become of the office of deaconess. For the past 25 years, deaconesses have been plagued with questions about employment, theological training, salaries, financial security, restructuring, and the inclusion of new types of career women into the sisterhood. There have been many studies by different committees.Currently, the future of United Methodist deaconesses is under consideration by the General Conference Commission for the Study of Ministry. This is not a new initiative.

A gradual decline in the number of deaconesses over the centuries led to their full disappearance from the world church community in the 13th century. However, through the efforts of a 19th century German pastor, who recognized the vital need for deaconess service, the office was revived. He started by opening a hospital and training school for nurses where he called the workers deaconesses. Thus revitalized, the movement spread and "motherhouses," where young women lived and trained, sprang up throughout Europe, including in the Methodist Church in Germany.

The deaconess movement expanded into the United States also. The Woman's Home Missionary Society opened the National Training School for Missionaries and Deaconesses in Washington, D.C., in 1891. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, opened its first training school, Scarritt Bible and Training School, in 1892.

Today, a worldwide ecumenical society of deaconesses is united through the World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Sisterhoods. The thread that unites them is commitment to service in Christ.

This unity, however, is not without its tests and trials. Changes in the role of United Methodist deaconesses became most visible during the 1960s with a restructuring of what was then the Board of Missions. Responsibility for administration of the office of deaconess was shifted from the Woman's Division to the National Program Division. In the midst of this restructuring and shifting of personnel, some deaconesses lost their positions at the agencies where they worked, and retiring deaconesses went unreplaced.

This is not solely a United Meth-

"We would like to see deaconesses more intentionally involved in national mission endeavors."

Christine Brewer

odist concern though; deaconesses in most countries and denominations are grappling with the same issues.

"Many of us felt that diaconal workers especially empathized with marginalized people because we ourselves tended to be marginalised even by the churches under whose auspices we serve," a European deaconess wrote in the DIAKONIA News, a World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Sisterhoods publication. Several articles in the News dealt with deaconess efforts to change their lifestyles and ways of working, and acknowledgment that diaconia exists "in the midst of the uncertainties of modern life."

Many changes in society account for the fact that so few women today are commissioned as deaconesses. Mrs. Carr was one of two deaconesses commissioned last March. "Originally, the only official relationshp that women could have through The United Methodist Church was as a deaconess," explained Ms. Clipper. That changed as women became ordained, and in more recent years, have chosen the route of diaconal ministers. Also, the process of recruitment, training and deployment changed, along with women's need to earn wages comparable to men.

"We would like to see (deaconesses) again more intentionally involved" in national mission endeavors, says Miss Brewer. "When this occurs, I don't think we will have any shortage of young women wanting to respond to God's call through the office of deaconess." □

Brenda Webber is a writer and editor based in New York City.

Deaconesses have a history of community involvement. Photos clockwise: Marilyn Benson, also a church and community worker, at the Pocahontas Co-op Parish, W. Va., in 1984; above, Waunita Trickett, right, former literay tutor; Flora Clipper of the Wesley Community House, Louisville, Ky.

Special Section

America's Third World

Poverty in America. The words still don't quite ring true for most Americans, who still want to believe that the U.S.A. is the land of unbounded opportunity, where even the few who cannot make it are well taken care of by a generous government.

Yet slowly but surely, the frightening reality of a seemingly permanent, even expanding, underclass has begun taking hold in the United States. Although we are loathe to admit it, there are increasing pockets of "Third World" society here in America. It is an acknowledgement that few care to make.

All these years, Americans have viewed poverty as an affliction for other countries—it happened elsewhere, in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Poverty American-style has been seen as an anomaly, such as America's inner cities, or something temporary at worst, like the Depression.

But no more. Painfully, we are realizing that for a growing number of Americans, white and black, middle-class and working-class, poverty is rapidly becoming a way of life. The transition to a post-industrial society, in which service jobs have come to far outnumber evaporating industrial jobs, has not been kind to the United States. The locked-gates of factories, the growing unemployment lines and urban dislocation are harbingers of American poverty in the late 20th century.

At the same time, by all accounts, the much-vaunted "safety net" created to ensure the welfare of all Americans has been tested and found wanting, or non-existent.

In city after city, we are witnesses to the widening armies of the homeless. Whole families, single men young and old, derelict women, the mentally ill, all find shelter in cardboard boxes or in church-run havens, while generations of children mature in dilapidated welfare hotels. In the meantime, drug addicts roam the ghettoes and streets.

Out in the heartland, the story is not pretty, either. While industrial workers are laid off, family farms are being auctioned off to meet staggering debt, as giant farming corporations buy up the land. Small businesses are failing and leaving declining small towns in their wake.

Moreover, our current malaise has proven to be an equal-opportunity affliction. It affects all races, men and women, all age groups. Yet, as always, the hard times reserve their worst fury for the aged, women, people of color and children.

Why?

The answers are many, complex and controversial. No single answer can explain the spreading blight of poverty unfolding all across America today. These articles in our special section seek to provide some understanding of the nation's poorest counties, so mired in economic stagnation that survival for their residents is a daily battle, leading to the steady sapping of physical, emotional and psychological reserves. Now, more than ever, it is time for the church to raise its voice in support of these beleaguered communities, promoting awareness of their plight, and seek through creative programs to empower them to improve their lives. But the first step must be to acknowledge fully that there are indeed patches of "Third World" society right here at home—areas of extreme want and deprivation normally associated with poor countries overseas.

—The Editors

America's Third World Part I

The 25 Poorest Counties

by Nelson A. Navarro

They come with tell–tale names—Apache, Lee, Sioux, Buffalo, and Zavala—that evoke America's diverse ethnic heritage and turbulent past. They are located in remote mountain areas and desolate border regions hundreds of miles away from the nearest metropolitan centers. They neither grow bountiful crops nor manufacture anything of much value. Plagued by chronic unemployment, they provide their impoverished citizens, if at all, inadequate housing and substandard public services.

They are America's 25 poorest counties.

According to a recent major study commissioned by the National Program Division, they constitute the nation's most disadvantaged counties by every known demographic and social indicator, beginning with the primary gauge of per capita income, to such factors as race, median age, household size, housing, medical services, crime and unemployment.

In many ways, these predominantly rural counties share the brutal realities that have always haunted New York's Harlem, Chicago's Southside and Los Angeles's Watts—the better–known urban metaphors for the searing hopelessness of poverty in the midst of the world's richest society.

Whether urban or rural, these enclaves of the American poor harbor a growing and increasingly permanent underclass of people that today appears to be way beyond the pale of any meaningful social reform. Not only have the 25 poorest counties ranked last for the past many years, most of them (22 out of 25 counties) have in fact suffered further economic decline since 1981. At best, their future prospects seem bleak, if not outrightly disastrous.

A brief capsule of one of these poorest counties, based on the statistical data, shows a high proportion of residents who are not in the mainstream of society. Invariably, these persons have larger families, find themselves out of work more often, earn little money and live under inadequate housing conditions. Their difficulties are not transitory. Something *systemic* prevents them from gaining an economic edge that would allow them to move out of the cycle of poverty.

Why are the people who live in these counties poor and why do they remain poor? This was the vital question posed by the National Program Division study. Some of the disturbing answers the months–long project found were:

- There is a limited political and/or cooperative basis for development;
- There is little incentive for change because of very limited life chances for at least half of the residents of each county;
- The geography and politics (internally and externally) work against creating wealth;
- The church is absent or perpetuates the social, cultural, and economic problems of at least half of the county residents.

Clearly, the study indicates, poverty at the bottom end of the American economic ladder tends to be highly representative; that is, inclusive of whites as well as other ethnic minority groups. It is an age–old phenomenon that seems self–perpetuating on account of geography and entrenched economic and social relationships.

Although the 25 poorest counties are spread over 12 states, they are in fact clustered in two or three remote areas that have historically been pockets of poverty in rural America: South Dakota with 9 counties, Kentucky and Texas with 3 counties each, and Mississippi with 2 counties.

The racial dimensions of this geographic spread of poverty are evident in that fact that 8 of the 9 South Dakota counties, for the most part, encompass Native American reservations, the Kentucky counties are poor, white Appalachian communities, the Mississippi Delta counties are black, and the Texas counties are overwhelmingly Hispanic.

Income–wise, people in the poorest counties earn as low as one half or even a mere quarter of the average per capita income in their respective states. In Texas's Starr County in 1986, the per capita income was only $3,388 compared to the state average rate of $11,141. Apache County in Arizona has a per capita income of $4,743, the

A major study commissioned by the National Program Division shows that these are the nation's most disadvantaged counties by every known demographic and social indicator.

highest among the 25 poorest counties, but that amount represents barely half of the state average rate of $10,455.

Furthermore, in 22 of the counties, per capita income in 1986 was in fact *lower* than it had been in 1981. In Harding County in South Dakota, the 1986 figure was less than half of the 1981 per capita income.

A much younger population base with a largely unskilled labor force perhaps explains the low income levels that prevail in the 25 poorest counties. Thirteen of the counties have median ages of 25 years or lower, indicating the presence within the population of a relatively large number of teenagers and children. This implies that the average household size in these counties are larger than usual, usually resulting in more crowded living conditions.

So substandard and crowded are living conditions that in Texas, particularly in Zavala County, 17 percent of homes lack plumbing facilities and people live in houses four times more crowded than the average house in the state. These housing conditions are equally bad in Appalachia and in the Mississippi Delta counties.

Overcrowding, having more than one person per room, was most prevalent in counties with relatively large numbers of Hispanic and Native American residents. According to interviewees, these conditions contribute directly to the significant problems of alcoholism and family abuse in those counties.

As for health services, these are practically non-existent in 11 of the counties, which have no hospitals whatsoever. In all the 25 poorest counties, the number of physicians available was quite low compared

to the average in the state. These two health statistics indicate that the poorest counties have less access to health services than the average person in the state; similarly, these statistics suggest the probability that persons will die or suffer needlessly from curable diseases because of a lack of health care, especially medical care, in these poorest counties.

The three counties with the highest unemployment rate in 1987—Mora, Starr, and Maverick—are composed primarily of Hispanic residents. The difference between unemployment rates of the poorest counties and the states in which they were located was higher than the state's unemployment rate in 16 of the 25 counties. In Mora County, New Mexico, this difference meant that the county had more than three times unemployment than the state's average rate, or 30.7 percent compared to 8.9 percent.

Statistics, however, tell very little of the *actual* unemployment situation in some of the counties. In interviews among the Native American leaders, it was noted that perhaps as much as 60 percent of Native Americans did not hold jobs. The same interviews noted that poor people have so little hope of finding jobs that they do not apply for jobs anymore, which eliminates them from the unemployment rolls. Once they quit looking for work, they are no longer an unemployment statistic.

Is their a way out for the 25 poorest counties?

Plainly speaking, The National Division study holds out little hope. But it does point to some ways in which churches and other concerned groups could redirect programming and assistance to poor areas of the United States. Concretely, it calls on the United Methodist Church, which has small congregations in 17 of these counties, to "begin functioning as a healer and hope giver."

Much more has to happen, according to the study, in terms of concerted community development efforts, paralleled by reforms in government bureaucracy and leadership training among the people themselves for the poorest counties to reverse their legacy of poverty and underdevelopment. □

America's Third World Part II

Lee County, Arkansas:

The Dynamics of

by James R. Owen

A farmer in the Arkansas Delta near the Mississippi River, where Lee County is situated.

# of Poverty

On the surface, Lee County, Arkansas, doesn't have much going for it. Situated hard against the Mississippi River in southeastern Arkansas, it has no major industries, no outstanding public institution or university, no breadbasket source of employment. It has no interstate highway running through it, and has only two major resources: its flat, fertile farmland and its people. Cotton, wheat, rice, soybeans and sorghum grow well here. Unhappily, though, the destinies of land and people have never been married to create widespread prosperity.

Under the surface, Lee County looks even gloomier. Officially it ranks as the 20th poorest county in the U.S. Illiteracy in this county of some 16,000 residents runs as high as 40 percent. Unemployment ranges upward of 25 percent; for blacks, up to 50 percent. Welfare has become a way of life for thousands of Lee County residents, who live from check to check. The county is suffering a steady population drain, as untrained workers and the skilled, upwardly mobile leave for the same reason—jobs.

And 123 years after the end of the Civil War, Lee County and its county seat, Marianna, remain essentially a racially separate place. The county is named for the brilliant Confederate general, and a monument to him, and his cause, stands in the town square. Blacks outnumber whites, 55–45 percent countywide. But whites still control a majority of the businesses, although blacks have achieved success in city government, police, and the schools.

Marianna's many churches are segregated, with one minor yet notable exception (St. Andrew's Episcopal has a handful of black members). First United Methodist Church, a prominent congregation in an even more prominent building downtown, is all white. Livingston Chapel United Methodist Church is an all-black, faltering congregation of primarily older worshippers.

Folks say that racism in Lee County is not a predominant factor in its problems and poverty, in the stupor that a lifetime or even generations of being on welfare have helped to create. More than one resident says, probably quite rightly, that folks in Lee County are no more racist than anywhere else. And more than one invoked an old saying to describe race relations in Lee County: "In the South whites hate the black race and like individual blacks; in the North, whites love the race and hate individuals."

"The hang-up is not with us, it's with the outsiders," says Mayor Martin Chaffin of Marianna and Lee County. With a population of 6,000 residents, Marianna is the county seat.

The mayor was expressing his frustration with the stubborn "poverty" label that his town and county can't shed. From Mayor Chaffin's vantage point, that poverty reputation often translates into a negative image, which exacerbates his major mission: attracting industry and jobs to Marianna and Lee County. "It's jobs, plain and simple," said the mayor. "There just aren't enough jobs, not nearly enough jobs, to go around." Lee County has been painfully unable to exploit one of its only key abundant resources: raw, untrained labor.

The result in Lee County is what sociologists have called "the permanent underclass," a segment of society that has effectually given up hope of supporting themselves. In Lee County, there are families who have subsisted entirely on welfare for several generations.

The chronic lack of employment opportunities has perpetuated the welfare state there. People have come to accept it. And in large part, much of the poverty suffered in Lee County can be attributed to one simple word: cotton.

"Wherever you go in the South where there's cotton, you also find poverty," observed Lon Mann, one of Lee County's most prosperous cotton farmers. Much of the poverty that afflicts blacks in the Mississippi Delta, cotton country, is a legacy of slavery. Blacks stayed on in the Delta after emancipation, but little, if anything, was ever done to emancipate the black population economically. The system was altered, but the lifestyles for many didn't change much.

When mechanization replaced the largely black workforce that had harvested cotton by hand for generations, the stage was set for an institutionalized poverty from which Lee and other counties like it have yet to escape.

What followed was the tenant farmer and sharecropper system, in which black farmers eked out livelihoods by farming parcels of land owned, generally, by white landowners. The sharecropper "shared" the profits with the landowner, very often to the distinct disadvantage of the sharecropper.

That system, too, is in decline today. Many blacks from rural Lee County have moved into Marianna or other area towns, seeking work or more comfortable surroundings.

There are other things that have given Lee County notoriety, events

A conspiracy of history and geography still torment this rural Mississippi Delta county

that most residents would just as soon forget. In the late 1960s, blacks in Lee County began asserting their rightful place in decision making—they began to work for their piece of the pie aggressively, some say militantly. Blacks sought and won spots on the Lee County School Board, the city council, and they tried opening businesses. But when they felt their concerns were not being addressed by the whites, who still wielded most of the power, they organized an effective boycott of white businesses that led to a devastating split in the entire county.

The high school, which was by that time predominantly black due to flight by white students to private academies, was shut down by the boycott. Several white-owned business failed during the boycott, and there was random violence. The already low tax base shriveled, and the economy was at a virtual standstill. Lee County had achieved a small measure of fame as a place where race relations were "rock bottom," a reputation that Mayor Chaffin and others, black and white, hope will fade quickly.

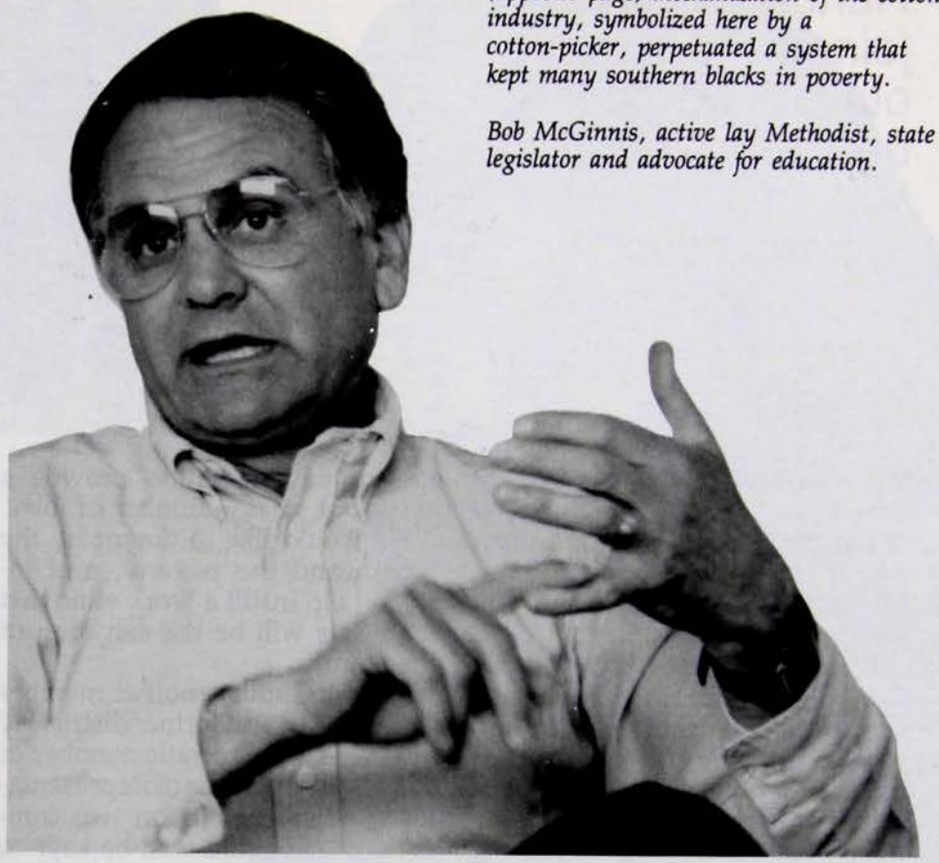
In the meantime, though, the cycle of poverty seems insurmountable to many. Most community leaders, black and white, agree that the growing dependence on public assistance lies at the heart of the poverty cycle. In turn, that dependence breeds another set of problems that reinforce the cycle.

"The big problem is, if you're poor, you can make more on welfare today in Lee County than you can in most jobs," says John Eason, director of the county cooperative medical clinic. He blames social breakdown of the family, school and church.

Eason, and many others inter-

(opposite page) mechanization of the cotton industry, symbolized here by a cotton-picker, perpetuated a system that kept many southern blacks in poverty.

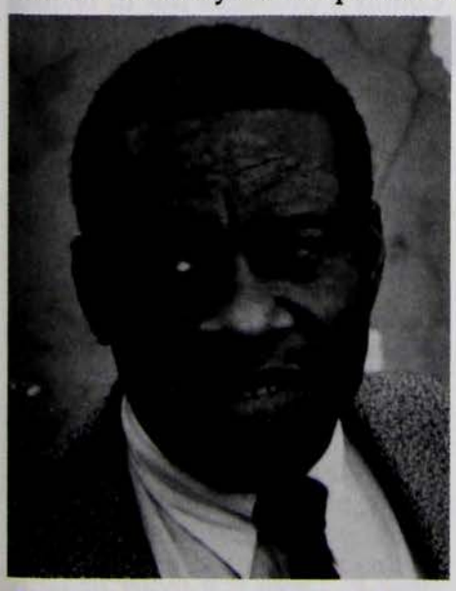
Bob McGinnis, active lay Methodist, state legislator and advocate for education.



viewed in Lee County, blame the welfare system for breaking up families. As long as the current rules on public assistance, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), prohibit aid to intact families where the husband or father is present in the home, there will be scant incentive for people leaving the welfare system. To get welfare, you split the home, destroy the family, and help tear apart the fabric of society. There's simply no incentive to get out. It's the perpetuation of the 'plantation mentality,'" says Eason.

Olly Neal, a black attorney in Marianna, says "the system we've created reinforces the welfare ethic. My people are forced to live on assistance, and they are, in effect, pushed away from self-sufficiency."

Neal remembers the boycott years well, and in his own way, is still battling the white establishment in Marianna. He says racism has moderated in Lee County, but that it is still very much a presence.



Olly Neal, attorney and advocate for a bigger role for blacks in area businesses.

His top priority is getting more blacks elected to public office, and seeing blacks get ahead in the economic system.

"Blacks must work to empower themselves, because the system as it is now won't do that. It's a form of racism, the status quo. It's like saying, 'for blacks to be poor is the way it's supposed to be. It's acceptable,'" said the lawyer, whose practice serves a predominantly black, poor clientele.

Do the poor want to work, get jobs and support themselves in Lee County? It's impossible to know. Certainly many are mired in despair, have lost hope of finding employment that could sustain their families.

Hazel Green, 40, says "I'd much rather work than be on assistance. When the check does come, you owe it all anyway. There's a lot of people here who want to work, there's just no jobs for them."

Green, all but one of whose eight children have grown up and left home, may not be typical of the poverty cycle in Lee County. But her story indicates some of the obstacles. Divorced long ago, Green has spent much of her adult life on public assistance. Several years ago, she had a sewing job in a nearby town, 30 miles away. She was earning a living then. But when her aging car broke down and required over $400 in repair, she couldn't manage the repair costs and had to quit her job.

Green remained on welfare until this past spring, when she got another chance: she was hired to help sort clothing at the Local United Volunteers (LUV) cooperative store through a Private Industry Council grant, which paid her a $3.35 hourly wage for a four-month period. Even then, she received some food stamps and subsidy for her rent.

Hazel Green's co-worker, Sheila Allen, 26, represents a younger generation of women for whom having a baby while still a teenager is almost a rite of passage. Never married, Allen had her only child at age 21.

Allen is working hard to get ahead. She is just a few credit hours short of earning an A.B. degree from nearby Phillips County Community College. She doesn't want any more children, she says, and only wants to "get off welfare for good."

Still, the odds are stacked against her in Marianna. With no real job experience, and few available jobs to begin with in Lee County, she is facing what she calls the inevitable decision—to leave Marianna, where she was born. In doing that,

Hundreds have joined the exodus out of Lee county because of chronic lack of opportunities

Hazel Green hasn't had much to cheer about: she had to quit the only job she's had in years when she couldn't afford to have her car repaired last year.

she would join many hundreds of others like her, who growing tired of the chronic lack of opportunity, join a steady exodus out of this Mississippi River delta county in search of something better.

For many young women in Lee County, as well as surrounding communities, getting pregnant while still in their mid–teens is quite commonplace. In fact, Lee County's teenage pregnancy rate hovers right around the top in the nation. For many, having a baby means "making it." It also means the first step in the poverty cycle—with each new baby, an increase in the monthly welfare check. "Some mothers actually want their girls to go out and have babies," observed Sheila Allen.

Lee County does have its boosters. Not surprisingly, some of the most enthusiastic are white and reasonably well off. Some of them are United Methodist. Lon Mann, the cotton farmer, was born and raised in Marianna, and is a member of First United Methodist Church. His has been a consistent voice for reason and a kind of gritty optimism on behalf of his birthplace. His own farming and cotton–ginning operation provide a small but steady number of jobs.

Lon Mann, local cotton farmer, active Methodist and Lee County booster.

He would like to downplay the racism and the poverty, and instead help instill a work ethic that he insists will be the salvation of the county.

Bob McGinnis, another member of First UMC and former district lay leader, is a Democratic member of the Arkansas House of Representatives, where he sits on two committees that could well be keys to Lee County's future—education and agriculture. "Education is the most important thing. We've got to do better in Lee County and in Arkansas," says McGinnis, who also farms about 2,000 acres of cotton and other crops.

Still, McGinnis concedes that "race relations aren't what they should be. There are irresponsible people on both sides, but I'm convinced that overall we all share a lot of common ground in hoping for improvement." He comes back to education: "Uneducated folks will believe almost anything they hear, and that's why we have to give our education the best we have," McGinnis said.

The churches of Lee County and Marianna are not playing a major role in community development or reconciliation. First United Methodist has many community leaders among its congregants and is no doubt in a position to take the lead in breaking down barriers. Its pastor of four years, the Rev. Gerald Rainwater, is sometimes frustrated with the slow pace of integration in his community, but there is little he can do about it.

"The problems are so overwhelming here that some folks just want to give up," said Rainwater. "I would say that the greatest deterrent to progress in Lee County is the continuing level of racism here. Hopefully, we will see signs of a gradual coming together."

As E.D. Davis, pastor of the all–black Livingston Chapel UMC put it, "things happen slowly in Marianna." Blacks "would be happy" to worship with whites, but "social standing gets in the way," said the soft–spoken minister.

The Rev. Arnold Hearn, the recently arrived rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Marianna, whose congregation has taken tentative steps toward integration, is also committed to the integration of the town's two ministerial associations—one black, one white. "We've held some meetings and see some signs of hope," said Hearn, who led an effort last Christmas for an interracial music and worship service among the town's churches.

For John Eason, the 53–year–old black who has become successful through running the county co–op health clinic, the answer to Lee County's problems lies in realism and sincerity. He acknowledges that racism has hurt him, and the county. But he also understands that ignorance and fear have undermined efforts at recovery.

"There is racism in Marianna and the county," he says. "But that's everywhere. It's hypocrisy and ignorance that get us into trouble. If we face up to our problems and approach them, and each other, with genuineness, we can accomplish a lot. What we need is honest hard work and pride." □

James R. Owen is a writer living in New York City.

Struggle for Survival in Pine Ridge

by Larry D. Hollon

America's Third World Part III

Wilma Colhoff

Her deep, resonant voice and calm outward manner mask an inner struggle that shapes her life each day. Wilma Colhoff is a Sioux woman, a mother, wife, community health worker and sole support of an extended family in one of the most desperate places in the United States, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, (Shannon County) South Dakota.

In each of her roles she confronts a multitude of conflicting values and expectations, for the systematic destruction of the Sioux culture and the dependency bred by the reservation system has taken its toll in human terms. It has nearly stripped a proud people of their self-esteem and their ability to survive.

Yet, Wilma exudes resolve and determination that seem both appropriate and paradoxical, for life on the Pine Ridge does not instill confidence, it undermines and eventually snuffs it out.

In well-modulated tones, she speaks slowly and softly. She is a tall woman, whose flowing black hair, high cheekbones and dark skin witness to her Sioux heritage. But it is her penetrating deep brown eyes that punctuate her words and reveal both her resolve and her pain.

The child of an alcoholic father, she has lived with the destruction alcohol inflicts on Native American families. She sees beyond the stereotypes about Indians and whiskey and offers a more compelling perspective toward overcoming this ongoing scourge. Quietly she speaks of the need to help people secure training to find jobs that would restore self-esteem.

"Drinking is a common problem," she says. "A man who can't find work feels like half a man. He has nothing to do. He visits his

A man who can't find work feels like half a man. The problem is compounded when a woman is able to find work, and the man cannot.

friends and they drink together. It becomes a pattern, day after day. Before long he is robbed of his self–esteem. He feels worthless."

A relative close to her has not worked for six years. He suffers from internal bleeding, yet continues to drink. When she asked him why, he responded, "What else is there to do?"

The problem is compounded when a woman is able to find work and the man, traditionally the provider, cannot. Her first husband drank heavily and frequently beat her. It was his frustration at not having a job, and his anger at her for finding one, that contributed to the violence, she says. Spouse abuse is common here.

She noted change in her husband when he found work for a short time. He was proud, he was active and he wanted to get out of the house to do things.

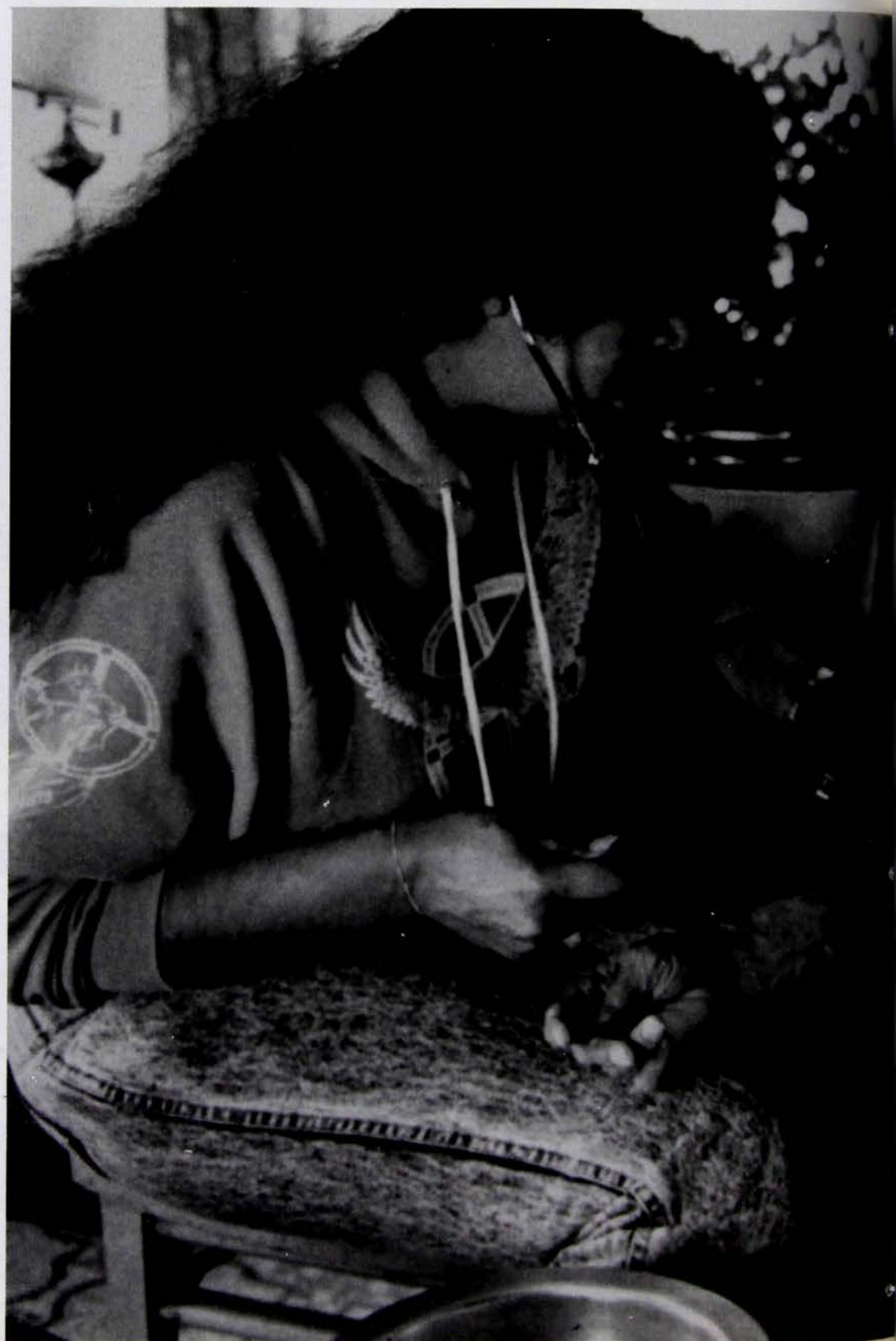
When his job ended he became morose, complaining of nothing to do but stay home, watch television, and babysit the children. He said he did not feel like a man.

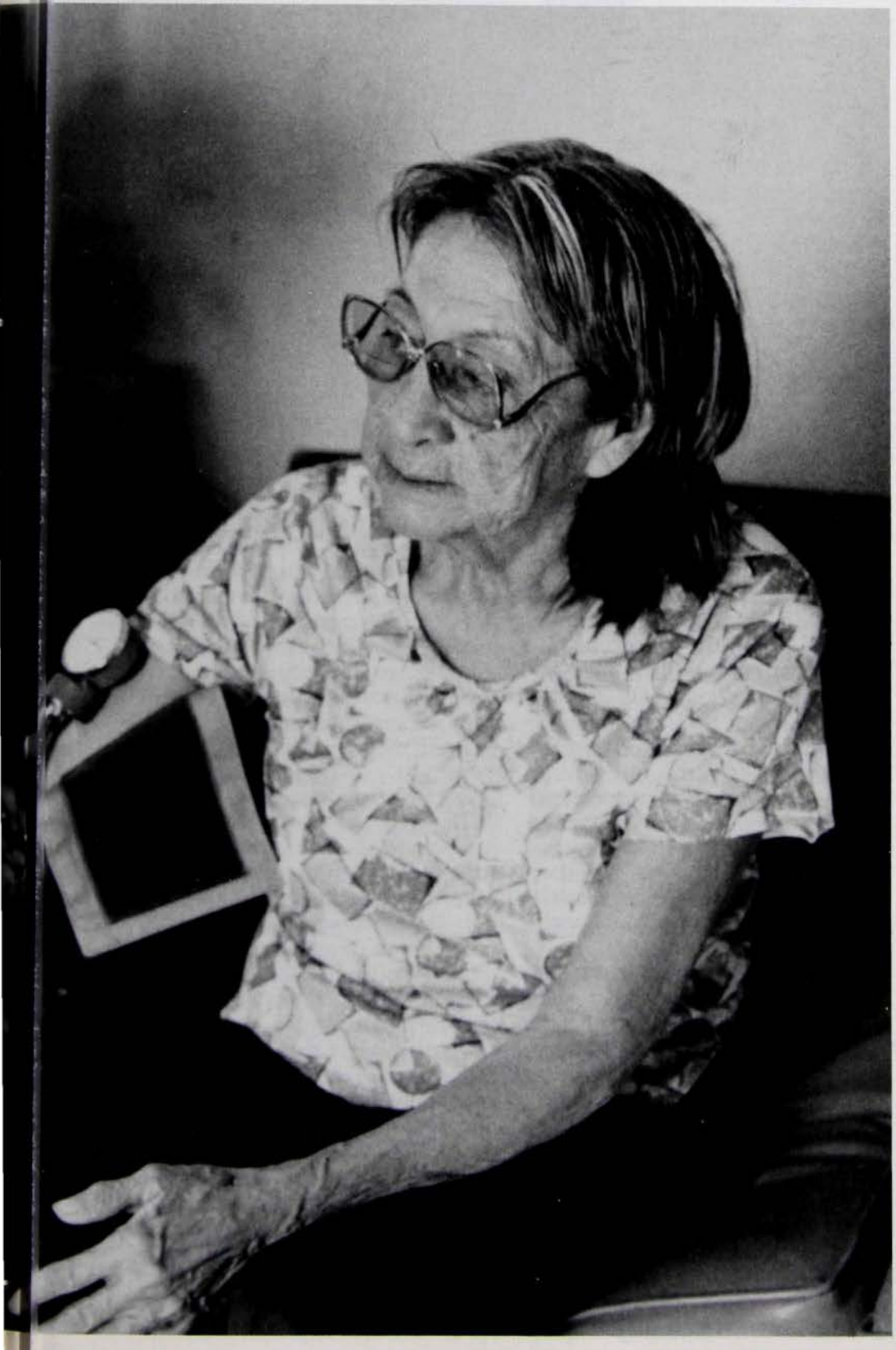
Wilma says it is a common plaint of Sioux men. When she speaks of the importance of self–esteem, it is not psychological jargon but hard–edged experience prompting her.

She became a mother as a teenager, and she knows the struggles of caring for a child while living on "welfare." She lived from hand to mouth. With no skills and few prospects for work on the reservation, she felt trapped in a dead–end pattern even in youth.

Eventually she began to do volunteer work after her first marriage broke up. Later she remarried and, determined to find a way off welfare, was admitted into a program to train para–professional health workers to deliver rudimentary community–based health care.

Wilma Colhoff checks the blood pressure of Madeline Too Too, one of many clients Colhoff visits in her job as a community health worker. It was, she says, her ticket off welfare.





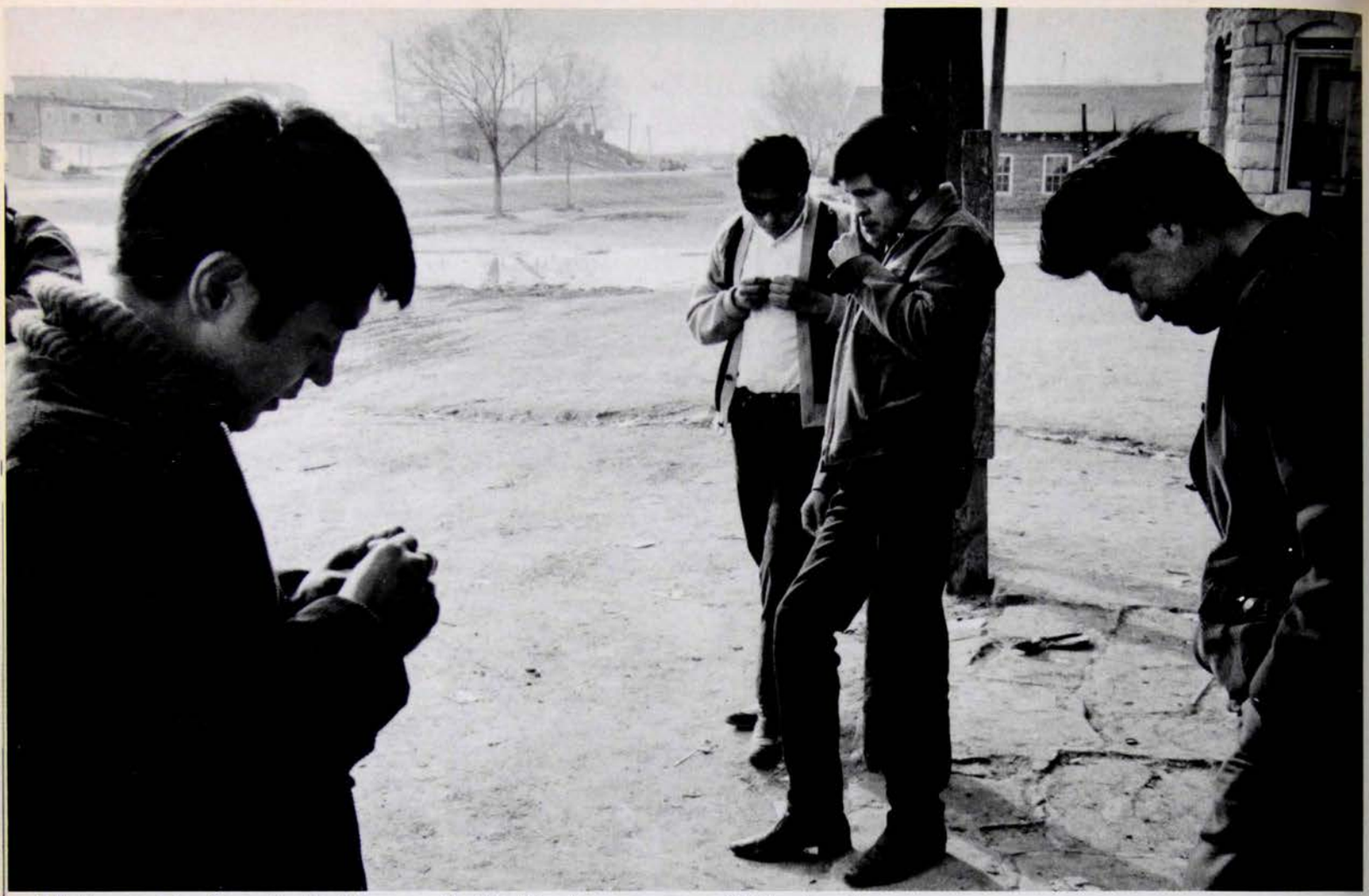
Her struggles are far from over. The job pays slightly above minimum wage ($4.88 per hour). In a virtually universal pattern, reflecting commitment to the extended family and belief in sharing material things, Wilma, as the sole wage–earner, supports several family members and friends.

Sometimes, the obligations of those who work can seem so overwhelming as to make work itself seem a disadvantage. Needs and demands far exceed the precious little income a wage–earner brings home.

Voicing resignation commonly heard, Wilma said, "Nothing ever gets any better, even if you get a raise. If you work you are penalized for it by being charged more for rent and food stamps. Sometimes I run out of money for fuel, and that makes my husband mad."

Tragically, her story is not unique. Ask any Native American on the reservation and a common picture of life here emerges. It is a picture of massive and chronic poverty, unimaginably high unemployment (between 80 and 90 percent), poor education, substandard housing, economic stagnation, poor nutrition, disease, high infant mortality, inadequate government services, insufficient roads—the list seems endless.

In stark contrast to the general affluence of the United States, living conditions on the Pine Ridge rival those of many developing nations in Africa, Latin America or Asia. It is a world in which people must struggle daily merely to survive. Sicknesses and diseases long conquered elsewhere still bring suffering and death here. In 1986, for example, 29 cases of tuberculosis were identified in the state of South Dakota. Twenty–four were



Idle time and few hopes for the future are the lot of far too many young Native American men.

Native American and more than half were from Pine Ridge. Overcrowded living conditions, poor nutrition and alcoholism were cited as contributing factors, according to a report prepared for the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church by Dr. James B. King and Dr. Joseph H. Sahmaunt, entitled *A Study of the Twenty-Five Poorest Counties in the Continental U.S.A. in 1986.*

Health workers probably see the most complete picture of life throughout the reservation because they visit people in their homes. They paint a dreary, depressing scene of elderly people unable to repair dilapidated houses with broken windows, leaking roofs and faulty plumbing. They have discovered people without heat in the bitterest winter months. Some live beyond electrical and telephone lines. One family with no clean water source must travel 18 miles to the nearest tap or take drinking water from the creek.

The Pine Ridge Reservation is approximately 5000–square miles of rolling pine forests and rock–laden hills in Shannon County, in the southwestern corner of South Dakota. Shannon is the poorest county in the nation. Per capita income is $3,200 in contrast to $8,400 for the state as a whole. Ten of the 25 poorest counties include, or are adjacent to, Indian reservations in South Dakota, North Dakota and Arizona.

While poverty is no respecter of ethnic groups, its sting is particularly painful, and bitter, to Native Americans whose land has been seized, often through illegal settlement by whites in outright violations of treaty agreements.

Having won a legal battle that would pay them damages for the illegal seizure and settlement of the Black Hills, the Sioux Nation continues to press for return of unoccupied lands under federal control. Legislation by Senator William Bradley (Dem. of N.J.) would return 1.3 million acres to the Sioux, require them to cede 6 million acres which the Sioux also claim and which is held privately. In return, the Sioux would be paid $17.1 million, awarded by the Indian Claims Commission, plus interest for the past 110 years. The tribe, with assistance from California businessman Phil Stevens, has proposed amendments to the Bradley bill which would compensate the people through rents on 6 million acres, pay damages and royalties for gold and silver extraction and require royalties for future extraction.

The Sioux are pressing the issue in part on the practical basis of compensation. The monetary difference between Bradley's bill and Stevens' amendment is substantial. The Bradley bill would potentially result in payment of $191 million to the Sioux. The Stevens proposal would result in $2.7 billion, plus royalties.

But this is not merely a fight for money, and the monetary compensation should not overshadow more fundamental principles and issues. Mario Gonzales, attorney for the tribe, says the massive poverty of the Sioux is directly attributable to the confiscation of the Black Hills and the deprivation of basic human rights that have occurred during the past 110 years. In a recent survey by the *Lakota*

Times, a newspaper published on the reservation, 65 percent of those Traditional culture is vanishing, and the feeling expressed by more than one concerned Sioux is that it has been stolen from them. Cedar Face says this may be at the root of much personal frustration and conflict. "Frustration comes from not being able to break away from our basic needs. It's a continual cycle of struggle to meet the most simple needs of survival. At one time there was a commonality of sharing—food, garden produce, whatever was needed. Now we're coming to a point where we're like the dominant society in our personal needs. But we can't meet them."

A nascent movement is underway to preserve and reclaim traditional culture as an important foundation for survival.

"If we had our culture, and if we saw the possibility of self–sufficiency, we could be independent," Cedar Face said. "Communal values are all that have helped us to survive."

If frustration is ever present, Wilma Colhoff and her colleagues manifest another presence. Influenced by communal values, which they express in their daily contact with people, they demonstrate concern and a caring attitude that reaffirms human worth and offers the opportunity for people to reclaim human dignity. It is an attitude that permeates the foster grandparent program as well.

"This job is like caring for your family," Wilma said. "You go into a home and you find out about the people's problems and you automatically become concerned. So you go back and keep checking up on them and you stay concerned."

An attitude of sharing and concern, perhaps even more than money, may be the key ingredient in turning around the quality of life according to Jack Runnels, a Sioux who works in the economic development agency of the tribe. That, and learning business acumen.

"We are not equipped to compete in the outside world," he said. "When you're raised on the reservation you're really aware of position in life. You don't talk to people (outside the reservation) as equals. There are stations in life and you have to treat people humbly."

He says there are qualified welders, carpenters and mechanics on the reservation but skills alone are not enough.

"You can't just take off and find a job and survive. Even if you have the work skills, you also need job–hunting skills, or you must know someone, or know how to approach someone. Generally speaking, we don't," Runnels said.

He lived and worked off the reservation for 26 years before returning only recently. He believes the tribe must develop business abilities and adapt to the realities of competition in the outside world, yet he recognizes the enormity of the challenge. There is no successful model for Native Americans to emulate. The record of Indian economic development is dismal.

But the alternative is for things to questioned said the return of the land was more important than the cash settlement.

Treaties were made and broken as quickly as gold was discovered in the hills. The very dependency that now entraps the Sioux results from agreements they made with the government when their land was seized, for they lost both the land and their right to hunt upon it. In return they received the guarantee of subsistence aid and resettlement to reservations. Today, basic assistance grants amount to $46 per month, the sole income for many Sioux.

For many, frustration has given way to resignation and resignation to despair. For others the strong assertion of their rights seems a necessary stand in the struggle to survive. It is a struggle of honor, equity and justice.

Wounds are deeply felt and close to the surface of collective memory, as close as the memories of living grandparents who were punished in reservation schools for speaking their native Lakota language.

Reginald Cedar Face, board chairman of Okichiyapi (Help Each Other), which pairs foster grandparents with special and exceptional children in a tribal–run day care program, calls this "legislative genocide." In its attempt to acculturize Indians to the dominant culture, he says, policies were instituted by government agencies that required Indian children to learn English and prohibited them from speaking their native language. They were even prohibited from speaking to other children from their own districts. Language, according to Cedar Face, was the key to the culture.

In addition, education of the young was taken away from the elders and assumed by the government, which provided boarding schools or worked in conjunction with mission schools run by churches. Among other things, the children studied white and west European history and culture and were required to dress as white people, giving up traditional dress.

Under the tutelage of the elders the children learned values shared by the tribe; sacramental unity with the land, spiritual connection with all things, respect for the common stories and visions that shape life together, and respect for the elders. Based on oral tradition, it offered continuous existential and spiritual training for life. The imposition of western formal education with its orientation toward "book learning" undercut human relationships, perceptions about life, and spiritual values.

The third cornerstone that was undermined was native religion. The people were told their religion was pagan and they were encouraged, or coerced, into accepting white people's religion, which was based on another book, the Bible.

To a great degree the program of de–culturization achieved its intended effect, according to Cedar Face. It undermined the traditions, values and beliefs of the people. stay as they are, and that is no alternative at all.

"Here in the U.S.," Runnels paused reflectively, "to live in Third World conditions. There's no reason for that."

The worst wound poverty inflicts is indignity. It breeds dependency, and dependency destroys self–respect. Wilma Colhoff, Reginald Cedar Face and the foster grandparents, Jack Runnels and others are a humanizing presence in the face of poverty's inhumanity. Each day that they struggle to make life on the Pine Ridge better they can claim a small victory, for they have not yielded to the despair that settles as quietly and as completely on these gently rolling hills as the winter snow. □

The Rev. Larry D. Hollon is Director of Communications for Church World Service. He is an elder in the Nebraska Conference.

Abuse of the Elderly

by Thomas and Marlene Templin-Marsh

The woman's death was not unexpected. She had suffered several prior strokes, was neither young nor in good health and this, her latest stroke, could understandably have been too much for her weakened condition. What was shocking, however, was the fact that she lay incapacitated on her kitchen floor for three days before she died, even though her son lived in the apartment downstairs.

Media coverage concerning child abuse and neglect is frequent and extended, but there is, at the other end of the age scale, parallel abuse and neglect of the elderly that receives inadequate publicity.

This abuse of our older citizens has increased by 100,000 new cases every year since 1981. However, let us first define what is meant by the term "an abused or neglected elder." Using both the terms "neglect" and "abuse" may actually be redundant since neglect is just one form of abuse—abuse by willful or intended omission of needed care. Abuse of the elderly can take the following forms:

- physical—beating, bruising, withholding medication or needed physical care (as in the case of the stroke victim cited earlier)
- psychological—verbal assaults and threats, provoking fears, isolation
- material—swindling, misuse

of funds, theft

- violation of rights—eviction from home, auctioning or selling of possessions, denying freedoms

The lines separating these types of abuses are sometimes thin. Verbal assaults can lead to physical problems and violations of rights would certainly cause psychological stress and material abuse. The repercussions are endless.

A recent study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services shows the most prevalent forms of abuse to be confinement, isolation, and withholding food and medication. It is more difficult to prosecute in these cases because "intent and willful" are difficult elements to prove. In one case, an 80–year–old man, just released from a hospital, and too sick to get out of bed, succumbed to a post–operative infection a week later. His five children, all of whom live in the same Midwest town as their father did, claimed they were "too busy or forgot", or thought one of the others would assume the responsibility. Another real–life situation involved an older woman who died of a non–malignant (and easily removable) lung tumor. Her two adult children "just never got around to" returning her to the doctor's office. Prevalent but hidden, these cases constitute the biggest problem. Physical battering of the elderly still occurs, of course, but is less prevalent than cases of neglect.

Of course, not every older person is neglected. In fact, 80 percent of all care of the elderly is undertaken by their families. Among which types of families, then, does abuse and neglect occur most often? Generally such families live in rural and metropolitan areas, not in suburbia, and there is likely to be unresolved conflict between the older person and family members. Almost always, economic stress is also part of the picture—the older parent may be supporting the adult child, who feels dependent and powerless or, conversely, the adult child may be supporting the parent and finding it difficult to meet medical and care–taking expenses. The adult daughter or daugther–in–law is often employed full time. There is likely to be a history of other abuse in the home also. Education and race, however, seem to have little or no consequence.

According to Elizabeth E. Lau (director of Protective Services, County Hospital, Ohio) and Carol Miller (nurse at Lutheran Medical Center, St. Louis), who addressed the National Conference on Abuse of Older Persons, "the abused victim usually has a mental or physical impairment, is female and 75 years or older, emotionally and/or physically dependent, living with a relative." Also that "the abuser is alcohol or drug dependent, has medical or financial problems, is stressed, lives in the same household as the abused, and may have been abused as a child." The abuser is frequently a middle–aged female of middle–class status and is a relative of the abused in 80 percent of the cases. The abusers view their situation as a never–ending burden.

The church can help diminish the incidence and impact of this often silent but painful problem

Let us now explore the reasons why the church family is such a logical and effective intercessor in these tragedies. At a recent symposium, *When the Clergy Face the Older Congregation*, Edward .A. Powers, assistant dean of the University of N. Carolina and Barbara Payne, director of the Gerontology Center, Georgia State University pointed out that "many religious groups, particularly main–line churches, have large numbers of older members. Anywhere from a third to a half are 55 or older and 15–25 percent are at least 65 years of age. Congregations in inner cities and rural areas are especially likely to be older. In these settings it is not unusual for a congregation to have at least half its members in the 65–or–older group." These statistics, coupled with the increasing prevalence of abuse and neglect, make it inevitable that some elderly members of practically every church are victims.

One of the first steps in stemming this mistreatment of the elderly is to make others aware that the problem exists. This can be accomplished through church bulletins, Sunday program inserts, speakers from local agencies, or germane articles posted on bulletin boards. Ask a local human services agency to supply a list of criteria for identifying abuse; many abused older persons will attempt to hide or deny abuse out of shame or fear of increased mistreatment. Most of the signs, however, are obvious: poor hygiene, bruises, multiple hospital admission, malnutrition, tearfulness, fear of others, and begging for help.

The next step for the church is to fulfill the pervasive need of all older persons—attention. The Rev. Edwin R. Beck, minister at the Lindenwald United Methodist Church, Hamilton, Ohio, makes it a point to visit or call older church members. He believes it develops a relationship that makes the senior feel part of the church family. Diana Bueker, Director of the Adult Services Division at the Butler County (Ohio) Department of Human Services, also stresses how important a simple phone call can be to an isolated person. In her experience with the elderly she has found " . . .that often one phone call is the high point of their day: They even get out of bed and get dressed in anticipation of the call." Building on this importance, a phone–call network can be established by church volunteers who call daily. A network of elders calling elders can also be managed by church volunteers who call the first older member of a phone chain. That person is, in turn, responsible for calling the next person in the chain—and so on. Then the last senior on the list

completes the phone–call chain by calling the volunteer. This ensures that the chain is unbroken and everyone is okay. One or several of these chains can be established according to need. Periodically new volunteers can be recruited and names on the chains moved about. Ms. Bueker points out that "Eventually, not only will each senior feel more secure, but each will know, and can converse with, many others in similar circumstances." The feeling of isolation is lessened, and they receive attention from a caring friend.

This phone–call chain can also be a way of disseminating vital information—where seniors can find emergency shelters. Information about their own situation will also be more freely given by the elderly. Ms. Bueker says in this regard, "Crucial trust is established and the abused elderly are more likely to acknowledge abusive behavior to someone with whom they've been conversing daily—especially if it is another elderly person who can reassure them. In turn, this trusted person can also better persuade the abused elderly to accept services we have available for them." The Rev. Beck has found that sometimes an elderly church member wants the minister to call but does not want to ask him. They will, however, willingly impart this information to a phone contact person who can then let the minister know of the senior's needs. He recalls a specific instance when the contact person was very helpful. An elderly member of his church was hospitalized after being taken to the emergency room. Neither the church nor the minister was notified. She understandably felt neglected by the lack of any support from her church family. The volunteer visited her home, learned she was in the hospital and notified Mr. Beck. She was delighted with his visit that afternoon.

Telephoning can also be expanded to include spontaneous or planned home visits. The latter can be scheduled and managed by trained volunteers. These home visitors can help with weekly menu planning, medication schedules, and useful household hints (how to store things so they're more accessible); bring food; run errands, etc. Using the Lindenwald United Methodist Church as an example again, they have a loosely

Every church can give what all older persons need and thrive on—some caring attention

organized shut–in visitation program. There is a chairperson who keeps track of who is being visited and how often. The volunteers decide their own schedule and simply report to this chairperson. Mr. Beck states that it is "the unsung work of the church." As in any other segment of the population, some shut–ins are a joy to visit while others can be quite challenging to one's patience. Nevertheless, volunteers are usually very faithful to their commitment. One such volunteer enjoyed it so much, she continued to visit her shut–ins after she transferred to another church.

If these phone–call chains and home visits are established by active and able–bodied older persons, it is imperative that they are not overwhelmed. They, too, may need someone or some group to whom they can turn if need be. However, cautions Bueker, "a formal, authoritative arrangement, whether by church members or trained volunteers, should be avoided. A caring and personal approach needs to be maintained to prevent feelings of inferiority or a stigmatized position for the abused or neglected person. If the elderly person is in need of more than the phone call or visit can provide, appropriate referrals can be initiated."

Mr. Beck feels that even if the church does not establish a year–round program for the elderly, it should strive to provide personal contacts around the holidays. Holidays can be very lonely and stressful times for those who live alone. The United Methodist Women at Lindenwald United Methodist Church plan and provide for gifts, and a personal visit at Easter and Christmas if the senior is a shut–in.

But before you begin *any* program, be it minimal or large scale, Ms. Bueker suggests contacting locally established agencies. She cites several reasons for doing so:

- they may already have a similar program you can join and support thus eliminating duplication of effort.
- they will put you on their phone and mailing list for information dissemination and their services, phone numbers, locations and contact persons can be listed as part of your support network.
- it is possible to evaluate all that is available and better connect the abused with the correct agency. Prepare a booklet to list currently available service as well as other helpful information.

Some churches are also providing day care centers for the elderly. It is an opportunity for the older person to socialize, but just as important, it gives the family "time off" from care–giving responsibilities or allows working adult family members to continue in their jobs—possibly defusing a potential build–up of stress and its abusive outcomes.

Just as the older persons' day care center parallels the pre–school day care center, another new concept also has its parallel service with the young—foster homes. It provides a way in which abused adults, not needing the skilled care of a nursing home, but unable to remain in their present situation, can find suitable living conditions outside a nursing home. Adult foster home care can be established to provide emergency shelter or long–term living arrangements.

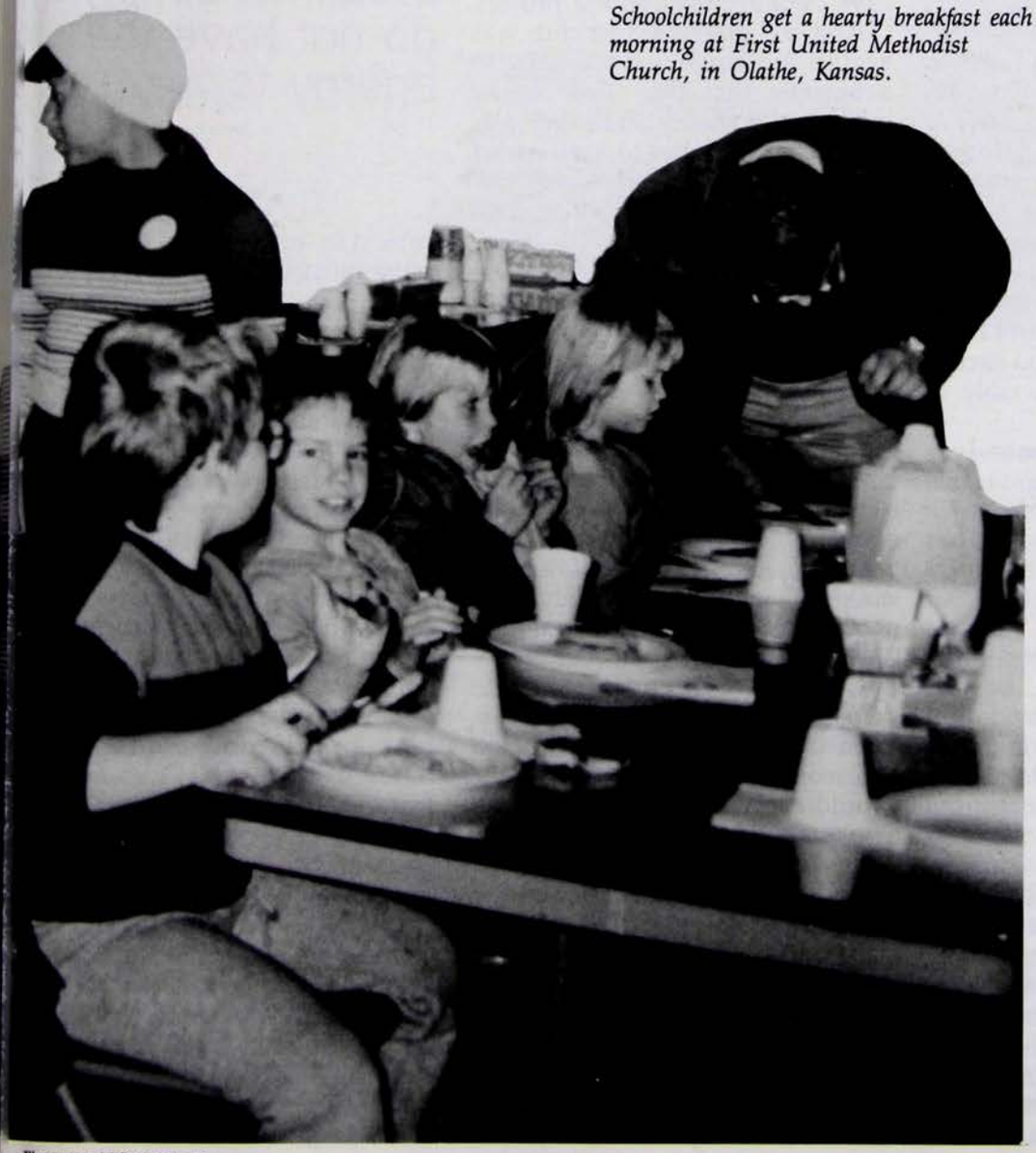
Of course, no one church can pursue all the suggested avenues to alleviate abuse of the older person. But every church can give, to some degree, what all older persons need, desire and thrive on—attention! □

Thomas and Marlene Templin-Marsh are free lance writers based in Fairfield, Ohio.

A Breakfast Mission

Text and Photos
by Russ Ann Moore-Opperman

Children start the day off right at First United Methodist Church in Olathe, Kansas



Schoolchildren get a hearty breakfast each morning at First United Methodist Church, in Olathe, Kansas.

Illustrations by Betty Howard

They came straggling in alone, in groups of two or three, and parades of 20, carrying backpacks, violins, and lunch boxes. The most important decision is where to sit. For a girl to sit next to a certain boy would mean she liked him. After a Goldilocks ritual ("this chair's too soft, this one's too hard"), the children settle down for a prayer and a meal. It's amazing how much talking can be done with full mouths.

This is Sunshine Breakfast Club operated by the First United Methodist Church in Olathe, Kansas. The church serves a free breakfast to approximately 150 grade school children every day when public schools are in session.

A typical day begins early at the Breakfast Club. At about 6:15 a volunteer arrives to light the stoves, turn up the heat, and arrange tables and chairs to seat 150 students. The cooks show up soon after to begin the formidable task of cracking eggs, peeling apples, and buttering toast—no mean task when one is used to cooking for a family of four. As an additional service to parents, the church encourages parents to drop their children off when they leave for work so that the children are not left at home unattended. Beginning at 7:00, the smells of breakfast begin to drift out into the church hall and mingle with the sounds of children reciting multiplication tables and spelling words as they wait somewhat patiently for breakfast.

At the same time, the buses are coaxed and cajoled into starting as are the cold and sleepy drivers. The buses pick up students at a few stops in each neighborhood and bring them to the church hall. After the first shift has eaten, the children are herded into the buses and delivered to their schools. The buses then head back out to pick up the second shift from different schools. In all, the church, running like a well–oiled machine, shuttles four buses back and forth from seven schools delivering children to breakfast and returning them in time for school.

Technical problems do arise. Today the electricity was off in half of the eating area which was no big deal. However, no one was aware that the clock had also stopped working. It was controlled chaos as the director, Marcella Luetkemeyer, realized that it was 8:05 and not 7:40. Of course, the children were thrilled to think that they might be late to school and were in no hurry to finish eating.

Although a typical day has been outlined, there really is no typical day. As Luetkemeyer says, "The children's moods vary from day to day and even minute to minute. A full moon, a change in the barometer, the first snow of the season, anything can change their behavior. Today someone brought a mechanical chirping cricket, which I finally had to threaten to take. We have too many kids to control and a cricket seemed to be a good excuse to run and scream from table to table."

As one soaks up the scene—kids laughing, kids wrestling, adults breaking up the wrestling, milk spilling, eggs scrambling—one has to wonder where the will was found to begin such a venture, but as Mariellen Sawava says, "There's a need and you just do it."

In the spring of 1984, several unrelated events occurred that eventually led to the beginnings of the breakfast club. First, Mariellen Sawava arrived at the parish from the Trinity United Methodist Church (TUMC) in Des Moines. While at TUMC, Sawava had been involved in a similar operation and knew that such a venture could and did work. At about the same time, several teachers in the Olathe congregation mentioned that it was hard to teach children who had not eaten a proper breakfast; they simply did not have the energy to learn. Finally, others had noticed that some children were helping themselves to coffee and sugar in the church office. "The children would fill a coffee cup half full with coffee and then pour in huge amounts of sugar," says church member, Dee Ann Heptas. "We knew that this mixture couldn't taste good, and we also noticed that kids who weren't hungry didn't do this. Only hungry kids did. We knew that we had to try to do something to help."

With all this in mind, church member Lois Waters, Heptas, and Sawava visited the congregation in Des Moines to observe how the breakfast program was managed there, and returned with the determination to launch a similar project. The group went to the Missions Commission and the Social Concerns Commission of the Olathe church and asked for their help and support. The two commissions saw this as an opportunity to bring mission work home in an important and positive way and gave their approval to the project.

And so, the breakfast club was begun. No surveys were done to determine that the need or the interest was there. No money was in the church coffers to fund such a project. No volunteers were beating on the doors offering to cook and drive buses.

To attract families to this unsolicited meal, fliers were distributed to the two schools selected for the trial run. Children and parents were encouraged to stop by the church to see if the project was something that would work for their family. No papers were to be signed, no statements affirming a religious background or even belief were issued, and no proof that the children were truly needy was requested. The doors opened in that spring of 1984 and the breakfast averaged 50 children for the remainder of the school year.

"That first month we had no idea if anyone would show up or if 100 would come," says Heptas. "Our cooks would say let's cook for 50 today and 50 would show up. The next day we would cook for 35 and 35 would come.

Pastor Don W. Frogge adds, "What we are trying to say here is that sometimes you just have to act. Most committees start with a group that prays for guidance, then meets to discuss the problem, then conducts endless surveys and analyses to guarantee the success of the project. In this case, the process was reversed. The church saw a need and reacted."

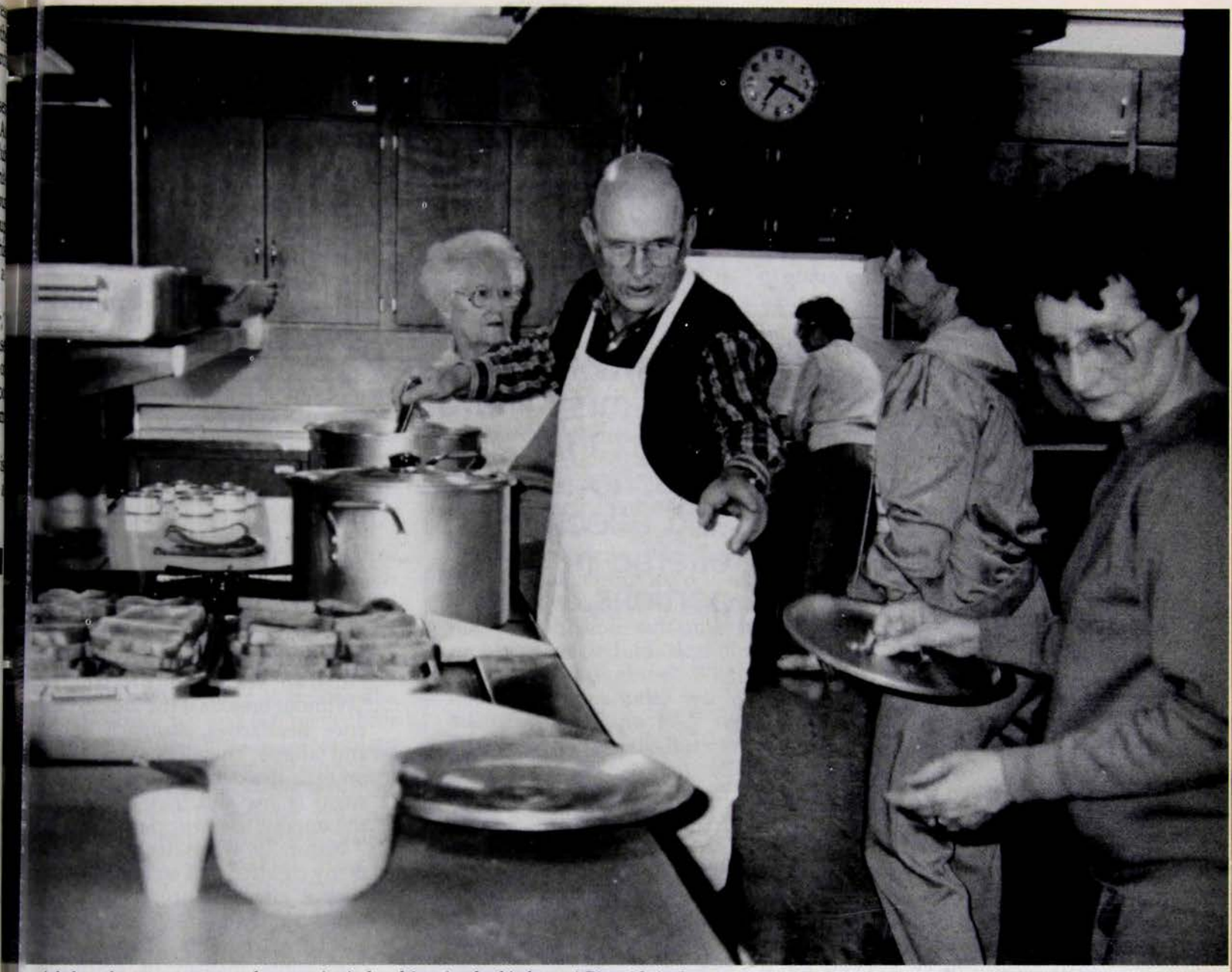
In fact, a prayer group has arisen directly from this project. As Heptas says, "This breakfast club requires a daily spiritual commitment. As the project grew and our involvement grew, a prayer group grew also. We all feel that this project gives us at least as much as it gives the children."

"Social action led to prayer," Frogge explains. "I would advise other churches to forget some of the hesitancy that comes from too much planning. I would urge them to simply jump in."

As would be expected, money is always a problem in running a project as ambitious as this. Funds must be available to pay for food, utilities, buses, insurance, maintenance, tables, chairs, and paper products. And this is where the community of Olathe steps in. As Heptas states, "This is not simply a First United Methodist effort. We work closely with Catholic Social Services as they provide assistance and recommend needy families to us. We also receive money from the Optimist and Kiwanis Clubs. Many other churches contribute to our efforts. Mitten trees placed at churches help to insure that each child receives a new hat and mittens for Christmas. One of the buses that we use is loaned to us from St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Olathe. We keep the bus all week and they just 'borrow' it for use on Sunday."

Luetkemeyer enthusiastically agrees that this is a community effort. "Several grocery stores donate their day–old bakery items and bread as do local bakeries and nursing homes. Sometimes we don't receive enough food and sometimes we have too much. Any

Children who do not have a proper breakfast simply do not have the energy to learn.



Adult volunteers prepare the morning's breakfast in the kitchen of First United Methodist Church in Olathe.

surplus food that we have is sent to the Red Cross and other local agencies. We try not to ever waste any contributions that we receive."

As word of the breakfast program spread thorughout Olathe, Luetkemeyer has become a contact for several organizations in the area. At this Christmas time, K–Mart has contacted Luetkemeyer asking for the names of 12 families for K–Mart employees to adopt for Christmas. The Federal Aviation Administration air traffic controllers have arranged, anonymously, to pay the utilities through March for a family whose utilities were to be shut off. The Johnson County Bar Association Auxiliary and the Westview Santas have requested and received the names of more needy families. The First United Methodist congregation has begun an Adopt–a–Family program of its own. And so Luetkemeyer's two hours of breakfast club management have grown to four, five, and six hours a day as she tries to match families with sponsors. In many ways, this is a more demanding job than her breakfast duties. As she earnestly states, "I don't like to do this. It's like playing God as I decide which families most need the help. I try not to be judgemental as I evaluate one family's needs against another's."

As FUMC's efforts have become known, other churches have expressed an interest in beginning similar projects. At this time, FUMC is involved in discussions with bus–loaning St. Mark's Lutheran Church. St. Mark's is trying to work up the nerve and funding to take over two of the schools presently served by First United. It is hoped that this will relieve the overcrowding at the breakfast each morning and free volunteers to devote more time to the children. But as Luetkemeyer ruefully states, "I'm sure that the void created by the departure of two schools will quickly be filled by other schools wanting to get into the program."

And, as Heptas adds with a grin, "We've become a mother. Our first child is the breakfast club at the Metropolitan United Methodist Church in Wyandotte County, Kansas." This new breakfast program has been in operation since November 23, 1987. At present, the church serves breakfast twice a week to about 40 children. "We're very excited and proud of our effort," says Pastor Jan Rhind. "The seeds of the project were planted five or six years ago, but this is the first time that we've felt able to start."

The Metropolitan effort has been much appreciated by the affected families and has been enthusiastically endorsed by the local school officials. "The president of the school board came to our opening day," remarks Rhind. "He had contacted several service agencies about such a project but had met with no success. He said that he had never thought about asking for help from churches and is going to actively seek the help of other churches in the district."

In January, Metropolitan hopes to expand their days of service and has the funds and volunteers to feed twice as many as they are now serving. "In fact," says Rhind, "we have too many volunteers right now. We're bumping into each other at breakfast, but I hate to discourage them from coming because the time will come when I will need them."

Of course, these children are bringing more than hunger to breakfast each morning; they are bringing the stress of parents who can't adequately support their families, the anguish of single parents who have neither the time nor the money for their children, the knowledge that the utilities might be turned off at any time in their homes, and the awareness that their clothes, their homes, and their families are different from those of more affluent classmates. And so perhaps the most important commodity served each morning can't be picked up from a store and fried in a pan. Hugs and friendship are offered in large portions with second and third helpings encouraged. Birthdays are enthusiastically celebrated with "Happy Birthday" sung between bites. Luetkemeyer seems to be everywhere. Hugs aren't polite tentative touches here; they are full–body bear hugs with the child patting the adult's back and the adult kneeling down to catch the child's every word.

With 150 students attending breakfast each day, it is easy for them to become lost in the shuffle of prayer, food and bus rides, but some students have special problems and work their way into the hearts and lives of the volunteers. One such child is "Karen." Karen is overweight, extremely sensitive, and hits those who taunt her. Through social services, Luetkemeyer has learned that counseling is available to Karen, but her family has no way to get her to the sessions. Luetkemeyer told church members about Karen's problem and a volunteer has stepped forward as a driver.

If one wonders if the breakfast is important to the children, look no farther than "Matt." When Matt missed the breakfast bus, he ran several miles to the church hall because it had been a long time since lunch the day before and he was hungry. Or ask Pastor Frogge about "Steve." "Steve was a rebellious boy who caused trouble on the bus every day. Finally I sat Steve down and told him that he was going to have to do better. To my dismay, Steve was reluctant to get on the bus the next day. I got out to see why and discovered that he was picking up discarded cans and trash. He was beaming and quite pleased with himself. We gave him a "Gold Slip" (a slip of paper awarded for particularly good behavior) and have had no more trouble with him. Sometimes these kids are so starved for affection and attention; we just have to find the time to give it to them."

Consider "Mary" and "Kim." These girls live with their dad and don't have much "girl stuff." The church keeps combs for them in a special drawer so they can fix their hair.

And finally, ask Washington School nurse, Jeanette Hollrah, if the breakfast makes a difference. "It does make a difference," Hollrah states emphatically. "Without breakfast the kids experience headaches, stomach aches, and fatigue. They'll put their heads on their desks because their blood sugar is low and they don't have the energy to participate."

Naturally, when dealing with so many children and so many sets of special circumstances, all is not light. Students aren't always appreciative, parents often express complaints instead of gratitude, and volunteers can become disillusioned. But as Frogge says, "I grew up like these kids. I know that they sometimes act and look different. They come in here with chips on their shoulders that we sometimes can't budge. If you're looking for warm fuzzies, this may not be the project for you."

Still, as one looks around, it is readily apparent that much good is being accomplished here. While some of the children are indeed "hard core," some are simply "hard shells" with softer cores that respond to food and affection offered in equal portions. As Karen heads to her counseling and Steve clutches his much–coveted Gold Slip, one can't help but feel that Jesus' admonition to feed His lambs and to care of your brother is being take to heart here in Olathe. □

Russ Ann Moore–Oppermann is a free lance writer based in Olathe, Kansas.

It is readily apparent that much good is being accomplished here. While some of the children are "hard core," some are simply "hard shells" that respond to food and affection offered in equal portions.

Power Through the Eagle Feather

by Charles E. Cole

Of the ten leading causes of death among Native Americans, five are related to alcohol: cirrhosis, accidents, suicide, homicide, and alcoholism.

Of the nearly one million Native Americans living on or near reservations in 11 states, age–adjusted death rates in 1980 exceed rates for the rest of the U.S. population by 50 percent for pneumonia and influenza; by more than 200 diabetes mellitus; and 600 percent for tuberculosis. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is the source for these grim statistics.

But it can be pointed out, not without irony, that few Native Americans die of cancer. They do not live long enough to get it.

What are we to make of these facts? What many people make of them is that Native Americans are "bums," that they are drunkards, and that they are to blame for their own problems. A Native American acquaintance relates that when he was traveling he asked around a certain neighborhood for a friend of his, who is also native American. The person of whom he asked directions assumed he was looking for a bar and told him where it was.

However, any intelligent reader of history knows that westerners exploited Native Americans, abused and oppressed them, brought the alcohol and the diseases that killed large segments of their populations. But this is not the first instance of blaming the victim for the crime. And if we ask what can be done to enhance Native American health, we will not find the answer easy to come by.

One answer that is slowly becoming clear is that the solution to alcoholism, in particular, lies more in Native American ways than in western or North American ways. By this I mean that the conventional approaches to alcohol abuse that are used in the mainstream culture may not be as effective as other approaches. In fact, the mainstream culture itself is struggling with alcoholism, with more than ten million suffering from problems related to alcohol and other substance abuse. Whatever notions of superiority we in the mainstream culture had, we are rapidly becoming disillusioned as we experience continual violence, drug and alcohol addiction, and other forms of spiritual decay.

In contrast to our own sense of helplessness, many Native Americans are experiencing a new sense of integrity. This rediscovery seems truly remarkable when we consider how warped and distorted our official histories have been and how Native Americans themselves were often persuaded that their ways were inferior.

Native Americans Affirm the ties between humans and their natural world

I was fortunate enough to experience this quest for a renewed Native American culture when I was included in a group of 35 participating in a Talking Circle. We were in a health ministry workshop, and some of the leaders in our group arranged a healing service. The service began with singing Christian hymns and reading of scripture. We then took part in the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and prayer.

The service then turned to the Talking Circle. Perry Jackson, a Native American from Phoenix, lit leaves of cedar in a seashell and went from person to person, "smudging" us with its fragrant smoke. He then brushed with an eagle feather, praying for a clear head, a strong heart, and good relations for each of us. He also played the drum and sang a song in his native tongue.

The most moving part of the service was the passing of the eagle feather. As the feather was passed from person to person in the circle, it gave the right to persons to say whatever they wanted to say. Many expressed thanks for the healing service. Others talked about brokenness in their lives. Some wept. Some smiled. The spiritual energy in the circle registered itself in our intense emotions.

At the end of the service, each of us walked around the circle twice, shaking hands and embracing twice. The first time we *gave* to the other person. The second time we *received*.

How long did this service take? If you measured it in western time, it was about three hours. But if measured in Native American time, it seemed about right.

Such a service does raise some questions. What do cedar leaves and eagle feathers have to do with Jesus Christ, with salvation, and with the Holy Scriptures? As it turns out, quite a lot, but you would have had to be there to appreciate the relationship. Reading these words through tiny configurations of ink printed on highly processed paper that has been folded into a form known as a magazine is such a western experience that most of us are unconscious of its peculiar cultural basis. Yet, remember that all these tech-

nologies were unknown in the time of Christ—as was English, and yet we have found they are very compatible with Christian faith.

Here let us just note some of the more obvious ways that Native American spirituality offers possibilities for traditional ways of understanding Christian faith, particularly with regard to health.

Native Americans affirm the goodness of creation, the ties between humans and their natural world. They see that John 3:16 applies to the natural as well as the social world. And we need very badly to see ourselves "as being in harmony with one another, with the natural environment, and with God," as the Health for All statement puts it. Whereas traditional Christianity has often seen humans pitted against nature, struggling to dominate and subdue it, Native Americans see human life as part of nature and creation, thus making it easier to preserve our woods and waters, as well as our bodies.

Native Americans also affirm community, which can help us overcome the "tyranny of autonomy," the tremendous moral and social weight of having to do everything ourselves. Native Americans think and act communally. This approach seems consonant with our Christian understanding of community.

Native Americans affirm salvation as wholeness. We westerners often go to one of two extremes: Salvation is either strictly spiritual or it is strictly political. As spiritual, salvation is divorced from ethics and social problems. As political, it separates itself from the reality of God and the human heart. Native Americans have ways of bringing these things together. When you hold the eagle feather, you have power, but you have it as a transcendental reality.

Harmony, balance, wholeness—these are three gifts from Native American spirituality.

Do we need to hear these words? We do if we think of health as arising *out of* our faith and not brought *to* our faith from medical science. We do if health belongs to the community and not just to each of us as individuals. And we certainly do if we believe that disease, substance abuse and violence have their solution in powers greater than merely human.

George Tinker, who teaches at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, has edited a short book that treats Native American spirituality. In it he and his co–author, Paul Schultz, discuss some of the ways that traditional Native American religion and traditional Christian faith can be understood as compatible. One of their points is that Christian freedom enables us to receive some of the gifts of Native American traditions. I believe their comments are helpful because I believe that health has its roots basically in spiritual and not physical realities:

"We are free to abandon our Native traditions, and we are just as free to incorporate them into our Christian liturgies. Indeed, all things are ours in Christ Jesus, even sweet grass, cedar, and the drum." (*Rivers of life: Native Spirituality for Native Churches*, Minneapolis: Publishing House Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1988, p. 41) □

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media watch

Audio Visuals Aid Understanding of Significant Mission Issues

In 1958, a woman who had served in World War I as an American medic ventured into the New York offices of The Methodist Board of Missions' Audio–Visual Department. During the war, Methodist photographers recorded her and other medics attending wounded Allied soliders in France, and she had come to get prints of herself from another time and place.

Lola Camesas, the photo librarian, was still fairly new when the woman visited. Ms. Camesas wasn't sure if any relics from World War I were still tucked in the files, but optimistically started searching for them. Sure enough, the photos were there.

Many changes have taken place since then. The Board of Missions evolved into the General Board of Global Ministries, and its work around the world has expanded considerably. But Ms. Camesas is still photo librarian of the A–V Resources Department. "I don't think I would have remained intrigued with any other position for 35 years," she says.

And while the photo library no longer catalogues such dated material (old photos are in archives at New Jersey's Drew University), Ms. Camesas' diligence in retrieving the World War I photos is typical of one of the nation's oldest denominational A–V departments. An innovation when it was created in the 1940s, its staff is still involved in recording the sights and sounds of a church people in mission.

As the church's global mission mushroomed over the years, the A–V department's staff and responsibilities also grew. "We try to highlight all the work of the church and show how they're involved in mission around the world. The key word is mission," says A–V Resources Director Jeneane Jones.

This year, her hectic schedule included the creation of a video of the General Conference in St. Louis, taping Schools of Christian Mission around the country, setting up video showings to church agencies, and supervising post–production of all A–V projects.

To be sure, Ms. Jones' workload does leave her a bit jet–lagged. But she says her last two years have been far more gratifying, professionally and spiritually, than the ten years she spent as a TV news producer with stations in San Francisco and Atlanta.

"I grew up with a lot of plans to change some of the things that I saw going on in the world. I worked in TV news to do that. But, because of the way TV news works, I came away from the business feeling I hadn't been informing people," Ms. Jones says. "But The United Methodist Church has an amazing ability and structure to inform people about significant issues."

Ms. Jones spoke about the challenges of her work. "Often, I don't have all the right elements to go into a piece and I'm left helpless, without answers. For instance, I've had to go to other countries to tape a story where I didn't know the language and didn't know who my crew would be. In the end, that was where I got some of the most poignant footage I've ever seen. God does take care of you."

The A–V Resources Center is located on the busy 13th floor of the Interchurch Center in New York, one of four floors occupied by the GBGM. The department shares the floor with other communications and education units of Mission Education and Cultivation, and United Methodist Committee on Relief, both GBGM program departments. Also located on the 13th floor are the New York offices of United Methodist Communications and the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

Jeneane Jones

Lola Camesas

For 14 years this has also been the home base for staff photographer John Goodwin. His pictures from around the world have graced more than 75 covers of *New World Outlook* and many more pages of the Board's publications.

Goodwin takes between 8,000 to 10,000 photographs each year. His work keeps him traveling just about one–quarter of the year; he's visited 37 countries at last count. Yet he measures the job's difficulty mostly in human terms.

"When you photograph all these hundreds of people, the hardest part is the 'compassion fatigue.' It becomes a factor every time you meet impoverished children and later wonder if they'll survive, or what kind of life they'll have, or when you spend time with a guy in jail, hear his story and photograph him, hoping he'll get his life straightened out. I'll never know the answers."

While Mr. Goodwin is out on assignment, in–house photographer Archie Hamilton and photographic assistant Paul Gentile handle darkroom chores. Gentile, a 31–year employee, develops film and makes prints and slides. He also makes portraits of missionaries, and prints hundreds of pictures weekly for the Board's use.

Mr. Hamilton has been with the department since 1973, and was a traveling "shutterbug" for the Board until 1983. He now processes film, recommends A–V materials to congregations, and handles editing of soundtracks and other electronic media projects.

It's this contact with the industry that prompts Mr. Hamilton to observe that GBGM's media department is keeping up to date with technology as it makes quality mission A-V resources available to United Methodists. □

TONY CHAPELLE

Books

Mission in Christ's Way
Bible Studies
By Lesslie Newbigin
World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1987, 40 pp.
$2.90

Bishop Lesslie Newbigin has been a missionary, an architect of the union that resulted in the Church of South India, and a mission administrator. A prolific and provocative writer, he recently published his autobiography *Unfinished Agenda*. This small book was first given as a series of Bible studies to the synod of the Church of South India. The tension between vigorous evangelism and radical movements of social change found in the studies suggest a framework in which this tension can be creative not destructive. Any individual or group interested in mission evangelism would do well to study this book.

The book's approach is to take three versions of the missionary commission: Acts 1, John 20, and Matthew 28. Newbigin suggests nineteenth century Western liberal Protestantism separated the Kingdom of God from the name of Jesus and "thereby, turned it into an ideology." It was willing to pray, "Your kingdom come", he says, but was uncomfortable with the ancient prayer "Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus." He says the missionary of this liberal period identified the kingdom with the ideology of Western civilization in its heyday, the ideology of progressive capitalism. And he argues that the name of Jesus was not at the center. According to Newbigin, the center was not personal discipleship to Jesus Christ but the blessings of modern civilization, including its political institutions, technology, and affluence. Christians talked about building the kingdom of God as though "it were our program, not God's reign," and it was indistinguishable from what was then called "progress" and, lest we feel comfortable, since World War II we have called "development."

To some today, he says, the ideology of Marxism, "capitalism's rebellious twin sister," is more attractive. He describes Marxism as a secularized form of the biblical faith about the meaning of history in which the proletariat are the messianic people. In the present climate it is easy to translate "Your kingdom come " as "Power to the people," he warns. He argues that when the message of the Kingdom of God is separated from the name of Jesus, two distortions follow which are the source of deep division in the church today: one is preaching of Jesus simply as one who brings personal salvation, but who does not lead hearers to challenge the monstrous injustices of the day; the other is church action (in combating the evils of society) that becomes a mere ideological crusade.

"So words without deeds are empty but deeds without words are dumb." Mission in Christ's way will not be a success story as the world reckons success, Newbigin warns. He tells of experts from Texas who offer to come and "revive" his church in a fortnight. As pastor of a small church in Birmingham, England, he receives glossy literature that promises to teach him how to double his congregation in six months. This leads him to observe, ironically, "What a pity Jesus did not have some professionally qualified experts in public relations to help him. He could have avoided the crucifixion." The church won its way against imperial Rome not by the cleverness of its preachers and "certainly not by its program for social justice," but by the blood of the martyrs, Newbigin re-

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minds us. The most noticeable examples of Christian witness today, he tells us, are to be found in places where success in worldly terms is denied: the USSR, China, Latin America. "Success in the sense of the growth in numbers of committed Christians is not in our hands. It is the work of God the Holy Spirit to call men and women to faith in Jesus, and the Spirit does so in ways that are often mysterious and beyond any possibility of manipulation or even comprehension by us."

Newbigin finds it striking that Paul in his letters does not exhort the churches to evangelism. "For himself he knows that he cannot keep silent about the Gospel . . .Mission in other words is Gospel and not law; it is the overflow of a great gift, not the carrying of a great burden." Finally he examines Matthew 28: 18–20, the Great Commission which most of us think of as *the* mandate for mission. Newbigin suggests that it is only in the past two hundred years that this message has dominated thinking about mission. He cautions us to take this text along with other texts. If we take it alone, we see mission primarily as obedience to command, part of the law rather than an expression of the Gospel, "A burden carried rather than joy to be shared." And he warns us about the dangers in interpreting the words "to disciple the nations." First it doesn't mean they are to become like us and he reminds us that Christ makes originals not carbon copies. We have to be on guard against the idea that discipling does not require any change in behavior. Here he challenges those who would say that conversion does not necessarily mean a break with the culture. It certainly means a new kind of life and brings all aspects of culture into question, he assures us.

A gift, command, and an assurance is the way Newbigin sums up. Those who find this rewarding will want to go on to the autobiography and other books.

BETTY THOMPSON

Betty Thompson, until recently, headed the Mission Education and CultivationProgram Department of the General Board of Global Ministries. She is now director of the Board's public relations office.

Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America
by Jonathan Kozol
Crown Publishers, New York, NY, 1988. 261pp., $16.95

> "Tell Americans that we are ordinary people. What has happened to us could happen to you. Our children have done nothing to deserve this."

These were the words of a homeless Seattle mother to Jonathan Kozol only a few months ago, just after *Rachel and Her Children* was published. People should read this important book.

I first learned from Jonathan Kozol in the 1960s when he wrote about inner–city school children in *Death At An Early Age*. In this new book he once again speaks as a compassionate moral witness to desperate personal stories and shocking social facts. The title reflects Kozol's dual mission: to tell us about particular families and about the general situation concerning homeless families in America. In the process Kozol steps back from the individual to statistics and institutional contexts that turn these private tragedies into public scandals.

Anybody with good sense already knows that the President's notion that homeless people sleep on street grates because they prefer them, or the Vice–President's insight that the homeless are only the deinstitutionalized mentally ill, are more strategies to avoid public responsibility than descriptions of reality. Kozol and advocates in the field are urgently telling us that the homeless are, in ever larger numbers, working families that are simply unable to find affordable housing. The fastest–growing segment of the home-

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less is families with children.

Why? Because the policies of the current administration have systematically decimated the nation's already–ailing housing supply. Had the government even done as little as maintained the program that it had and held steady over the course of this administration, 560,-000 more housing units would have been built. As it is, a mere 47,000 housing units were built last year for low-income, elderly and rural citizens.

Second, incomes have not kept up with housing costs. Median rents have risen a staggering 137 percent since the mid 1970s, but median income has risen only 79 percent. Minimum wage earners have suffered from a 25 percent decrease in purchasing power since 1981, a 33–year low. The slightest family misstep or misfortune—a temporary layoff, an unexpected medical bill, a divorce—can send a family to the streets.

Kozol's homeless friends, mainly in New York City and Boston, tell compelling, almost unbearable stories of their lives. After reading this book I wanted to put it out of my mind: I wanted to put away the pain and frustration of innocent people in a constant state of movement, yet going nowhere, trapped in circles, in what Kozol calls the "kingdom of futility." I was infuriated at the obtuse people who run the welfare system, the illogical rules and irrational decisions perpetrated by what New York City Council member, Ruth Messinger, calls "one of the more bizarre government benefit programs ever invented."

You have only to read today's newspapers to learn about the greed that underlies these tragedies and policies. Since publication, one of the welfare hotels temporarily warehousing some of this book's homeless story tellers is being sold. The sale reveals that the corporate owners of the hotel made profits of $3-4 million annually, paid $3.3 million for it originally just six years ago, and now will sell it to the City of New York for a price between $10 and 15 million. Meanwhile, Rachel and her children are told to do the impossible: to find jobs while they tend their younger children, unearth apartments that cost a fraction of what the free market demands, to maintain dignity, and not steal while they are starving.

This book does not make welfare staff into monsters. It does not make the homeless into heroes. They are all people like us. I want to know what happened to the 36–year–old Vietnam veteran, Richard Lazarus. What circumstances conspired to trap the school teacher.

Reading this book evokes sharply the hope and prayer that Americans can move out of the moral tunnel vision of the 80's, the numbness and self–absorption that says there is nothing we can do to build a more equitable, just, and humane society. Real, practical first steps have been advanced by advocates such as the Coalition for the Homeless, and these recommendations need to make their way into public policy: sustained outreach to engage the homeless on their own terms; low–barrier drop–in centers, where food, clinical attention and refuge from the elements could be had; differentiated shelters to meet the special needs of subpopulations of the homeless; conversion of vacant real estate into low–rent housing; the public buying of welfare hotels to be turned into residences for the homeless ill and elderly; and with a new administration and congress, increased support for building new affordable housing.

We are reminded by this book that the truth about social and economic conditions is almost always spoken most eloquently, directly, and profoundly by the poor themselves. Access to media, forums, and print, where the hurt, anger, and dignity of these truth tellers can be heard is virtually censored by institutional shapers of the news. Jonathan Kozol, Rachel, her children, and her homeless brothers and sisters have spoken in this book for people who otherwise have no voices. It is a service, not just to them, but to all people of good faith, and to a public that is too often hard of hearing. I am grateful to him for making me listen to realities that must yet turn us all around.

JIM SESSIONS

Jim Sessions is the executive coordinator for the Commission of Religion in Appalachia, president of Southerners for Economic Justice, and chair for both the Committee on Religion and Labor and the Committee on Unemployment, Interfaith Action for Economic Justice.

Q&A ABOUT MISSIONS

Donald Struchen

Send, Don't Smuggle Bibles to China

We recently received a letter from a lady who read that we encourage people to give to the $75,000–a–year goal for the Amity Printing Press in China rather than to groups trying to smuggle Bibles into China. She felt giving to the Amity Press was O.K., but she would continue to give to the latter groups.

We wrote her saying that smuggling Bibles into China was against the laws of that country, and that if the Chinese government knew about the smuggling, they might decide to clamp down on Christians and prohibit meetings and activities. We feel it is better to work in cooperation with church leaders there and be guided by their requests, so as not to jeopardize the freedom of worship that Christians have been enjoying in recent years.

As a church we believe that in the long run the development and support of Amity Printing Press will make it possible for Bibles and other Christian literature to be printed and distributed legitimately throughout China for many years. According to Bishop K.H. Ting of China, they have printed 2.5 million copies of scripture in the past few years and expect to print over 100,000 Bibles a year when Amity Press gets into full operation.

The Rev. Ewing W. Carroll, Jr., director of the United Methodist China Program, interviewed Bishop Ting regarding this issue.

QUESTION: *Can Bibles be secured by Christians not actively supportive of the China Christian Council and the Three–Self Movement?*

ANSWER: Certainly. We serve all Christians . . .We Chinese Christians know better than anyone the problem of insufficient availability of God's written word.

Some critics outside China claim you are playing favorites with various evangelical groups abroad. Is this so?

We have friends all over the world, including many warmly evangelical individuals and groups. Observant China visitors know the church in China is predominantly evangelical in spirit. At the same time, to be evangelical in China is not to be anti Three–Self or anti socialist. We urge evangelicals and others abroad to grasp this uniqueness of China's religious people.

Are there not many Christian groups and individuals within China who oppose the "Protestant Three–Self Patriotic Movement?

Three–Self—self–government, self–supporting, and self–propagation—is such an obviously good and right principle that those who oppose it are bound to be few in number. When established in the early 1950s, it was a new thing in China and not everything it did was good or welcomed by all Chinese Christians. I suspect that is true of all human organizations. But Chinese Christians are not so unloving and so unforgiving as to want to stand against Three–Self, even to this day.

The Three–Self Movement, the China Christian Council and you personally, are frequently vilely attacked by certain groups abroad. How do you take this?

The history of the church in China since 1949 has shown how important self–government, self–support and self–propagation are to church growth. The church is alive and well in China. Under God's care it has grown phenomenally over the past 38 years without outside help and is more united than ever before. As long as God is using us in some small way for the cause of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our hearts are at peace. We pray for God's gift of love so that we can also say to those who attack us, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

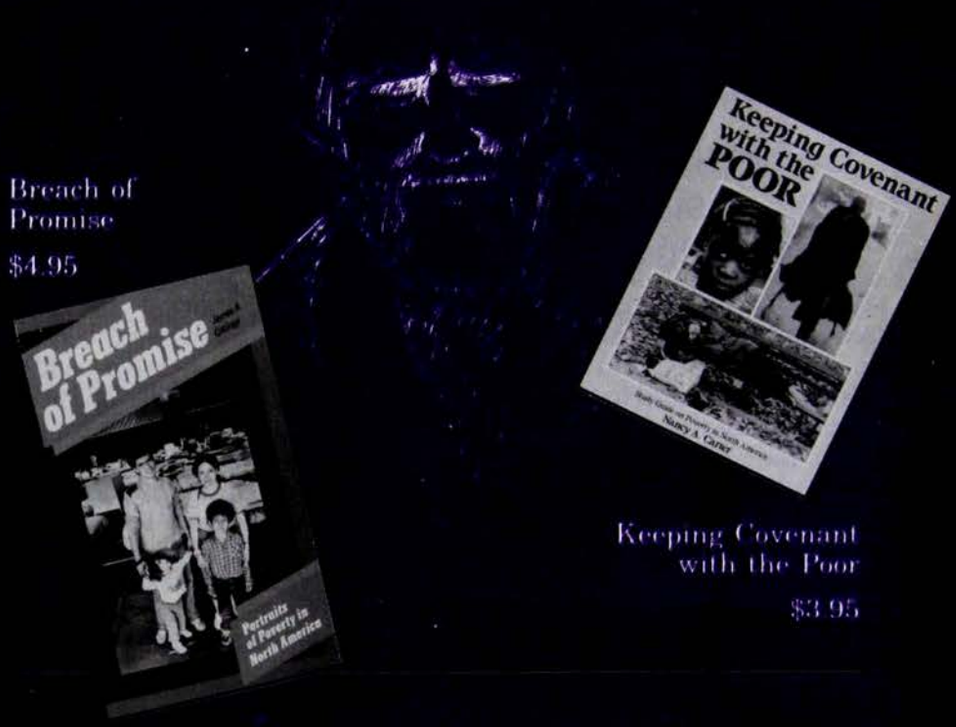
We have shared with you these questions and answers of the Rev. Ewing Carroll and Bishop Ting because more harm than good may be done to the cause of Christ when we act without understanding what the consequence may be.

Please send your questions and we will attempt to respond to them in future columns.

If you have questions about mission concerns, send them to me in Room 1405, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

Mission Study

Faces of Poverty in Our Midst



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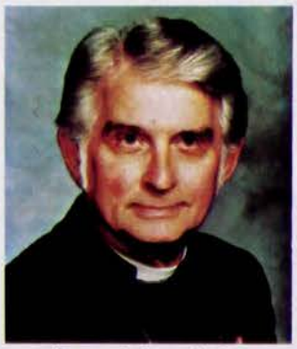


James Mase Ault

General Conference was positive and forward-looking

My view of the General Conference was from the "back bench" of the Council of Bishops, to the far left on the platform and to the far right as viewed by the delegates seated within the bar of the Conference. It is from this angle of vision that I would like to share some perspectives regarding this quadrennial gathering of the people called "United Methodists."

First, I remembered our heritage in The United Methodist Church.

I remembered that in less than a month Methodists around the world would be celebrating the 250th anniversary of John Wesley's Aldersgate experience.

I remembered learning as a child in Sunday School the time and place of this historic event, and have never forgotten these two simple facts: the 25th day of May, 1738 at 8:45 in the evening in a meeting of a society in Aldersgate Street. I remember my first trip to London as an adult, when on a walking tour I looked for the place where this experience of salvation by grace occurred.

I remember coming upon a bronze tablet fixed to the wall near the New Museum of London on which is cast this simple statement: "This experience of grace was the beginning of Methodism."

These thoughts were coursing their way through the gateway of my memory, while before me the stage was being set for the second week of debate of the items on the legislative calendar.

Meanwhile, during the afternoons and late in the evening, the legislative committees addressed the petitions and reports assigned to them.

The delegates came prepared and visitors crowded the legislative committee rooms to listen in silence to see if The United Methodist Church would be seriously divided or irreparably damaged by any issue. They had been told it would happen by more than one self–appointed "doomsayer."

But one legislative committee after another reported that the spirit of mutual respect, collegiality and responsible compromise prevailed in their deliberations. In particular, the Legislative Committee on Faith and Mission, where the New Theology Statement was debated, reported that nothing short of a miracle had taken place. A friend and member of the committee said that the spirit of consensus was due to the presence of God's spirit at work in the body. And the same spirit carried over into the plenary session. That is why this General Conference will be remembered as positive in climate and forward–looking in its decisions and direction.

A New Hymnal

The first United Methodist Hymnal was greeted with a standing ovation. Who would have predicted that 92 percent of the delegates present and voting would have supported this venture when earlier in the quadrennium the exclusion or inclusion of the hymn, "Onward, Christian Soldiers," caused such an emotional stir across the church? The revised Hymnal and Book of Worship offers the opportunity for spiritual refreshment and missional renewal.

A new Theology Statement will appear in the 1988 *Book of Discipline*.The Statement made clear that though Scripture is primary, "attempts to grasp its meaning always involves tradition, experience and reason." Concern for our denomination's ecumenical commitment is assured. Dialogue with other religions is not lowered by the statement but raised to a higher level of fellowship and understanding. Further, the statement noted the new currents of theology that have emerged in recent years to which The United Methodist Church is called to be sensitive and responsible.

Study, reflection and discussion of the New Theology Statement will contribute to the spiritual maturation and saving knowledge of each member and congregation. More than that, we will speak from a common center of belief and we will speak the words of belief with conviction and clarity.

The Africa Initiative

One of the high moments in the General Conference was the approval of a United Methodist university for Africa. Although American Methodists were instrumental in founding colleges in other sectors of the world, Africa was the only continent on which they did not.

The idea for this new venture originated within the heart and mind of the African Church. It was first shared in a meeting of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry. From that moment in October 1984 the idea gained momentum until by a vote of 855 to 121 the General Conference gave a resounding "Yes!" to the Africa Initiative.

Social Issues

United Methodists now have 50 new policy statements dealing with national social issues such as AIDS, the rural crisis, genetic science and alcohol and drug use.

Our father in the faith, John Wesley, would affirm our involvement with social issues that impinge upon the well–being of individuals and of society's systems. In his ministry and in his writings he always combined a gospel that is personal and a gospel that is social. While the Conference held the line on homosexuality, John Wesley would have smiled approvingly at these new words added to the *Social Principles*: "We affirm that God's grace is available to all. We commit ourselves to be in mission for and with all persons."

The future of our church looms bright and positive. Undergirded by confidence in who we are as a people, it is time to bring to a close the era of "breast-beating" over membership loss. We are called to CELEBRATE and WITNESS; that is, to celebrate God's grace and to witness for Jesus Christ. □

CALENDAR

JULY

Mission Intern Orientation; Drew University, Madison, NJ; July 5-15; Marymount College, Tarrytown, NY; July 16-20; New York City; July 21-26.

United Methodist Development Fund (UMDF) Board of Directors; San Francisco, CA; July 8, 9.

Jurisdictional Conferences of The United Methodist Church; July 12-16.

Frontier Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Mexico; Torreon, Mexico; July 12-17.

Missionary Conference; sponsored by the World Program Division of the General Board of Global Ministries; Marymount College, Tarrytown, NY; July 16-20.

Town and Country Ministries. National Network Leadership Group; July 27-31.

US-2 Orientation; National Program Division, General Board of Global Ministries; CARMA Conference Center; Washington, DC; July 28-August 13.

AUGUST

Centennial Convocation: United Methodist Deaconesses and Home Missionaries; Celebrating 100 years of service; Keynote address, Bishop Leontine Kelly; Regular jurisdictional meetings, recognition services, and personal and corporate worship; Also speaking, Mrs. Gwen White, Mrs. Ruth Daugherty, and Dr. James Logan; St. Paul School of Theology; Kansas City, MO; Aug. 3-7.

Black Youth Convocation; Ministry and leadership skills development conference for black youths and their advisors; Sponsored by Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc.; Clarke College, Atlanta, GA; Aug. 3-6.

Youth '88; Sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship. 5000 United Methodist youth from around the world gather for Bible study and discussion to share and strengthen their commitment to Christ; Western Illinois University; Macomb, IL; Aug. 8-12.

World Council of Churches' Central Committee Meeting; Hannover, West Germany; Aug. 10-21.

Reunion of Nigerian Missionaries; Westmar College; LeMars, Iowa; Aug. 12-14.

General Assembly of the Methodist Church in Panama; Bi-annual Annual Conference; Volcan, Panama; Aug. 12-15.

Conference on Older Adult Ministries, Southeastern Jurisdictional Council on Ministries; "A Mission to Match the Age: The Pioneer Generation;" Lake Junaluska, NC; Aug. 15-18.

Summer Intern Debriefing; National Program Division, General Board of Global Ministries; New York, NY; Aug. 19-21.

Purdue West '88, California-Pacific Annual Conference United Methodist Men Convocation IV; University of California; Irvine, CA; Aug. 26-28.

Great Moments In Mission...

1911. Professor John Wesley Gilbert of Paine College and the Colored (now Christian) Methodist Episcopal Church and Bishop Walter R. Lambuth of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South journeyed across the African continent together to explore the possibility of setting up a joint mission of the two churches in the former Belgian Congo (now Zaire). The two men become great friends but failed to establish a mission together. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South opened a mission at Wembo-Nyama, the agreed upon site, in 1914.

SEPTEMBER

Workshop on Education for Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation; World Council of Churches, Education; Luanda, Angola; Sept. 1-4.

Mission Interpreter in Residence Orientation; Annual Orientation for MIIR's working for the General Board of Global Ministries in the five jurisdictions; 475 Riverside Drive; New York, NY; Sept. 6-9.

Women's Division Orientation; General Board of Global Ministries; New York; Sept. 9-11.

Orientation of New Bishops; Lake Junaluska, NC; Sept. 12-16

Church and Society Consultation. World Council of Churches; "A Theology of Nature and Theocentric Ethic," to promote thinking which includes human needs, destruction of natural systems, environment and the abuse of animals under human domestication in the "integrity of creation;" Geneva, Switzerland; Sept. 11-15.

General Board of Global Ministries Organizational Meeting; Penta Hotel; New York, NY; Sept. 12-16.

Southeastern Jurisdiction Congress of the Deaf; "Mission for God," new life in the church for the deaf; Ministry by and for the deaf and hearing impaired; Lake Junaluska Assembly; Lake Junaluska, NC; Sept. 30-Oct. 2

OCTOBER

Appalachian Development Committee Executive Meeting; A dialogue with the Cooperative Ministry in Washington County; Marietta, Ohio; Oct. 10-11

General Board of Global Ministries Annual Meeting; Penta Hotel; New York; Oct. 14-21.

General Council on Ministries Organizational Meeting; Oct. 31-Nov. 4.

The Troy Conference celebrates "The Mission Spirit—Going Forth with Joy"; Dr. Randolph Nugent and Bishop Dale White to attend; workshops, competition among the districts for attendance points; Ackley Hall, Green Mount College; Poultney, VT; Oct. 22.

Meeting on Nuclear Power; World Council of Churches, Church and Society; Kinshasa, Zaire; Oct. 24-28.

Latin American Council of Churches Assembly; Brazil; Oct. 28-Nov. 2.

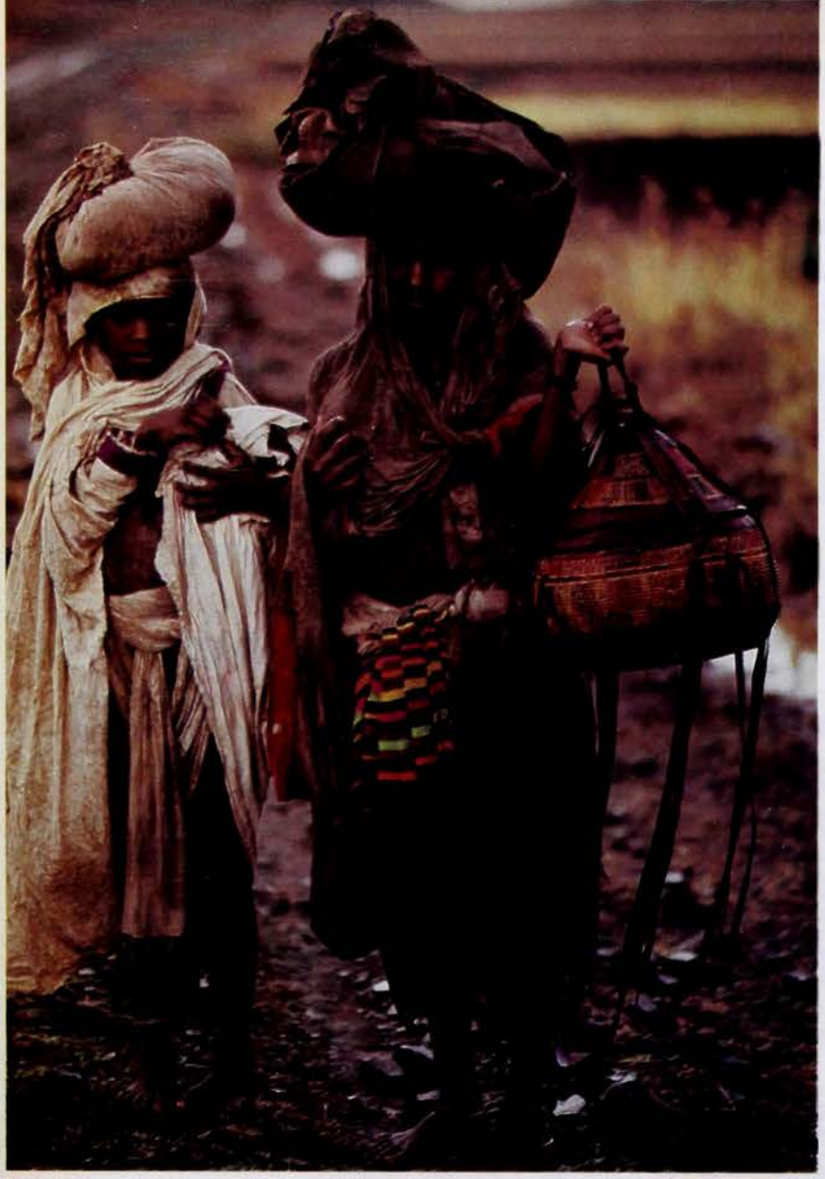
NOVEMBER

Commission on Religion in Appalachia annual business meeting; Lutheridge Retreat Facility, Hendersonville, N.C.; Nov. 1-3.

Introduction to Mission Vocation Event; Location to be announced; Nov. 5-11.

Appalachian Assembly VI; quadrennial assembly to focus on Appalachian issues, provide arena for sharing among projects, and set goals for the next quadrennium; Jackson Mills 4-H Center, Weston, WV; Nov. 29-Dec. 1.

To have your mission event or meeting listed in the NEW WORLD OUTLOOK Calendar, send details to: Calendar Editor, NEW WORLD OUTLOOK, Room 1349, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10115. Material must be received four months prior to the date(s) of the event(s).



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2 Two memberships in an educational and advocacy group (like Bread for the Worl

3 Three UMCOR Advance Hunger projec studied and supported

Send to:
UMCOR Hunger Challenge
Room 1374
475 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10115

Join Now!

Yes! Send Me More Information.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Local Church _____

UMCOR United Methodist Committee on Re
General Board of Global Ministrie
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