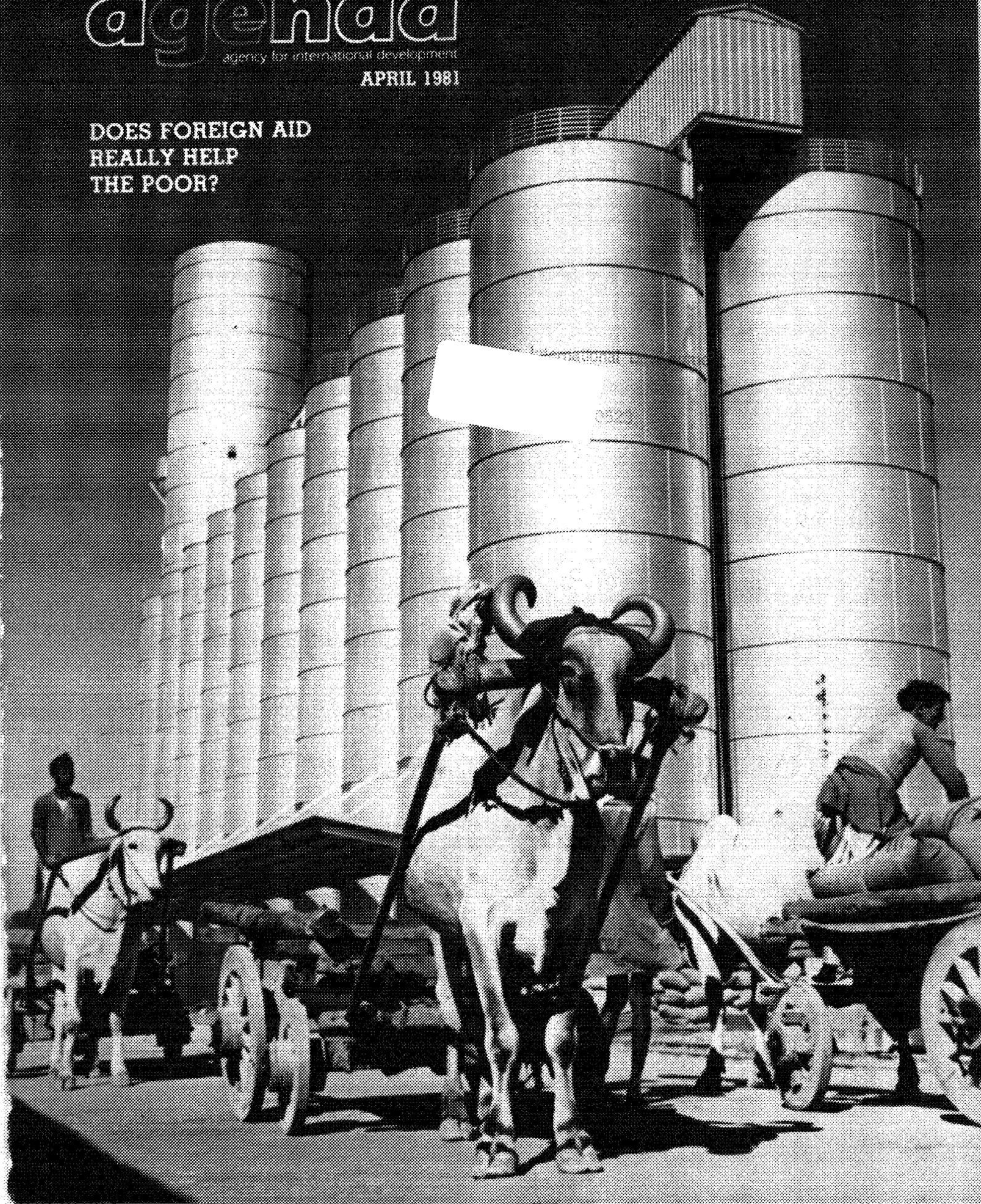


agenda

agency for international development

APRIL 1981

DOES FOREIGN AID
REALLY HELP
THE POOR?



DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

A Woman's Lot (cont.) "Carrying water is a task that only women perform," says Eddah Gachukia, member of Kenya's parliament. It becomes even more arduous and time-consuming when women are being encouraged to practice better hygiene in the home, and their need for water correspondingly increases. The improvements demand that they travel to and from the river several times a day, or carry two or more water containers at a time. This is very strenuous, especially for the old and for expectant mothers."

Nearly 30% of the world's population—814 million people—cannot read or write, according to a UNICEF report.

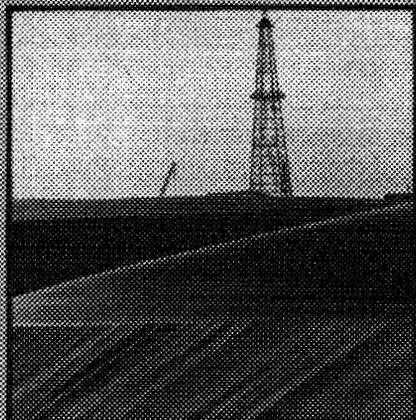
Rapid urban growth is common throughout the Third World: Cairo, Lagos, Jakarta and Mexico City are among the fastest growing cities in the world. But only in Latin America do cities contain the majority, or nearly the majority of the national population. For example, in Argentina 61% of the people live in cities of 100,000 or more, Chile 50%, Columbia 57%, Mexico 51%, Venezuela 60%. Mexico has added six million to its population in 15 years. According to the Population Action Council, half the world's population will live in cities by the year 2000.

The International Labor Organization estimates that 55 million children under 14 worldwide are forced to work for a living.

In our own interest: Chicago banker Roger E. Anderson says the United States should seek to narrow the widening economic gap between richer and poorer nations "in our self-interests. . . . Every world trader understands this," he said in a speech before the National Foreign Trade Convention. "So should every political leader." Anderson maintains that a sharp increase in aid without proper planning could aggravate global inflation. "However, a well-balanced expansion of world trade offers a less inflationary way of stimulating activity in most countries than increasing domestic public spending."

The new Administrator of the Agency for International Development is M. Peter McPherson. At the time of his appointment by President Reagan, McPherson was acting White House counsel. He also served as general counsel to the transition. McPherson brings to his new position a background in foreign aid. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Peru from 1965 to 1966, coordinating 45 other volunteers in working with AID's school feeding program in Peru. He was also on the staff of the AID mission's private enterprise office and worked with the Peruvian credit union system. In 1977, he was sworn in as a member of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development, whose responsibility—in cooperation with AID—is to encourage U.S. universities to participate in stimulating food production and sound nutrition in developing countries. In 1969, after receiving a master's degree from Western Michigan University and a law degree from American University, McPherson became a tax law specialist in the Internal Revenue Service. Six years later, he joined the Ford White House as deputy director for presidential personnel and special assistant to the President. In 1977, he joined the Washington office of an Ohio-based law firm.

agenda



Cover: Ox carts juxtaposed against modern grain elevators in India reflect the complexities of, and occasional paradoxes in, development. Today more and more people are asking the question: Does foreign aid really help the poor? AID's John Sommer takes a hard look. See article on Page 2.

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DOES FOREIGN AID REALLY HELP THE POOR?

It is time to answer questions like this—candidly.

by John G. Sommer

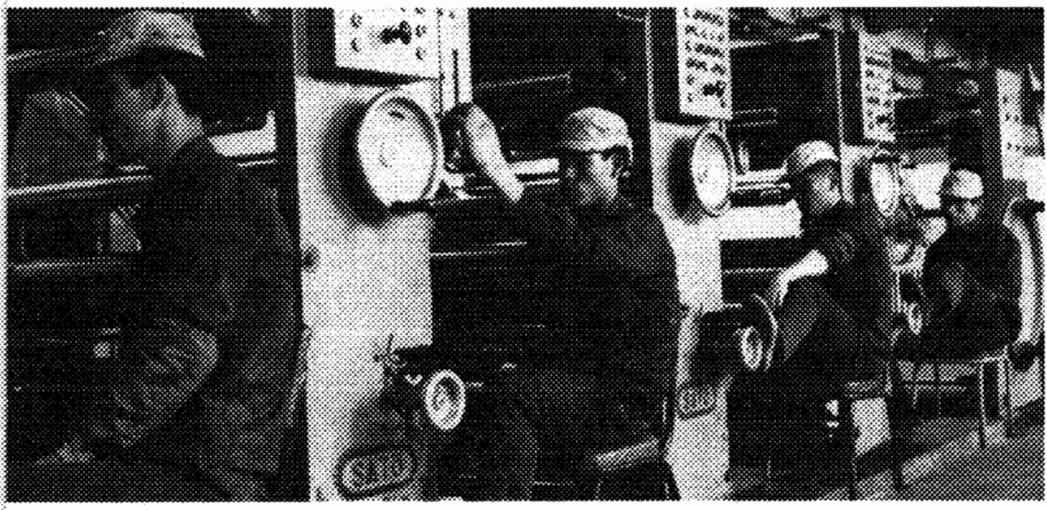
Does foreign aid really help the poor? And if so, does it point toward self-sufficiency over the long term—or merely trap the poor in a state of continuing dependency?

In these times of increasing scrutiny of the effectiveness and efficiency of government programs, such questions need to be asked—and answered with candor.

More than seven years have passed since congress enacted the

"New Directions" legislation of 1973, focusing U.S. foreign assistance efforts on helping the Third World poor meet their basic needs (food, shelter and health care, for example). The "New Directions" represented a departure from the "trickle-down" approach to development, which assumed, often incorrectly, that large-scale capital investments (dams, industrial plants, and the like) would benefit the poor

Korea, once called a "basketcase," is prospering today.



over time by creating new employment and economic growth—that the benefits would "trickle down." This fundamental change in the thrust of U.S. development assistance reflected both doubt that the "trickle down" theory held water, as well as a new concern with meeting the immediate needs of millions of desperately poor people. The change has been followed by somewhat similar redirections on the part of other donor nations and multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank.

While efforts have been made recently to focus all forms of assistance on meeting basic human needs, each form is distinct from the others and merits elaboration. *Development assistance* (approximately 31% of the total) is what its name implies; it is allocated primarily on the basis of need and the ability and commitment of the country to put assistance to work to help the poor. *Economic Support Fund aid* (approximately 39% of total) is motivated by the United States' more frankly political, national security interests; in recent years most of these funds have helped to buttress the Middle East peace process, largely to enable Israel and Egypt to stabilize and develop their economies while cementing their new-found peace with each other. *Food for Peace* (approximately 30% of total) meets three types of need: humanitarian and economic need, often imposed by disaster; national balance-of-payments problems, whereby food substitutes for cash to help the country conserve foreign exchange otherwise required to buy food; and U.S. political, national security, and trade needs.

The following discussion will deal only with the category of development assistance since it alone is directed exclusively toward helping the poor.

The first question inevitably is: Where does AID's money go? Eighty-one percent of AID's in-country development assistance funds are provided for countries with per capita incomes under \$625 per year, and

61% to those with incomes under \$360. However, it is wise to remember that per capita income both excludes key areas of economic activity—subsistence farming, for example—and masks discrepancies in standards of living between rich and poor, so that countries enjoying high per capita incomes may include large numbers of very poor people.

The second and more important question is: How effective are our foreign aid efforts? This can be assessed in two ways: first, by the extent to which aid contributes to a country's overall economic growth, and, second, by the degree to which aid fosters social justice and equity. For development to occur, both growth and equity are clearly necessary. The results of growth without equity can be seen from much of the 1960s experience of development. Then, countries as diverse as Brazil and Pakistan saw their economies grow, but they also saw the numbers of their poor increase rapidly and the gap between rich and poor widen. The results of equity without growth are just as visible in countries such as Tanzania and Jamaica: the gap between rich and poor diminishes to varying extents, but at a lower level for all, and with national bankruptcy never far away. Indeed, the perils have become even greater since the dramatic oil price rises since 1973, the worldwide inflation that ensued, and the staggering burden this has placed on poor countries in particular.

To the extent that a country's economic growth is a precondition for helping its poor people, foreign aid has proved successful in many areas of the world. For example, India, described until recently as the world's archetypical "basket case," last year achieved the ability to produce all the food grains it will need for the next 20 years, according to the World Bank. While this achievement is due primarily to India's own efforts, it also is due in part to the United States and other donors for new high-yield varieties of wheat

and rice, for the creation of Indian agricultural training and research institutions, for expansion of fertilizer production, and for the needed storage facilities. India is not alone. Korea, in the 1950s, also was known as a "basket case." In 1963, its per capita income was \$82; by 1980 it was \$1,500. The country is now a world competitor in several industries, with exports totaling over \$15 billion. Nine Korean companies are listed among the Fortune 500. Visitors returning to Korea quickly see how much better off rural areas, too, have become. To Korea's achievements the United States contributed policy guidance on land reform and

Research and years of work have enabled India to feed itself.



Through family planning, 675,000 fewer babies are born in Indonesia each year.



capital mobilization, and financial assistance for fertilizer production, irrigation, and management training, among many other forms of assistance. In 1980 Korea "graduated" from the AID rolls.

Important gains in social services have contributed to both growth and human welfare. Last year the World Health Assembly announced that smallpox had been wiped out, thus saving 10,000 lives a year by some estimates. The United States, having contributed \$27 million as well as technical assistance and leadership to the eradication effort, shares much of the credit for this victory. The U.S. investment has been repaid many times over already. Because routine vaccination is no longer required, that same \$27 million is now saved—in the U.S. alone—every three months. Worldwide the savings amount to about \$1 billion each year.

In the area of population planning, AID-supported programs have had some effect. For example, 675,000 fewer babies are born each year in Indonesia, as a result of that country's population growth rate declining from 2.4% in 1969 to 1.9% by 1980. Slower population growth means there are more resources available to each person and family—an important consideration in a country which, notwithstanding its oil wealth, is still very poor.



In Colombia, building roads has meant jobs and higher income for many people.

If the case for AID's success in promoting growth is relatively easy, the case for equity is more elusive. In part, this is because AID's explicitly equity-oriented projects are relatively recent and therefore still difficult to pursue. Lastly, it is because the poorest groups have endured discrimination for so long that reaching them, and gaining their confidence and involvement in development activities, is difficult.

Nevertheless, there has been progress. An impact evaluation of an AID-supported roads project in Colombia, for example, shows that not only did the roads open up isolated, economically depressed areas, but road construction also provided work for hundreds of previously unemployed people. These people have used their new earnings to improve their houses and buy fertilizer and seeds for their fields. Higher income was the major long-term result of the road project, since the roads both lowered the cost of transporting produce to market and stimulated more production. To be sure, not all road projects are as successful as the one in Colombia. Problems occur when the local people are not encouraged to participate in the project, since their in-

terest in using and maintaining the road is essential. Problems also occur when no thought is given to the availability of seeds, fertilizer, social services, and other facilities needed to complement the new road.

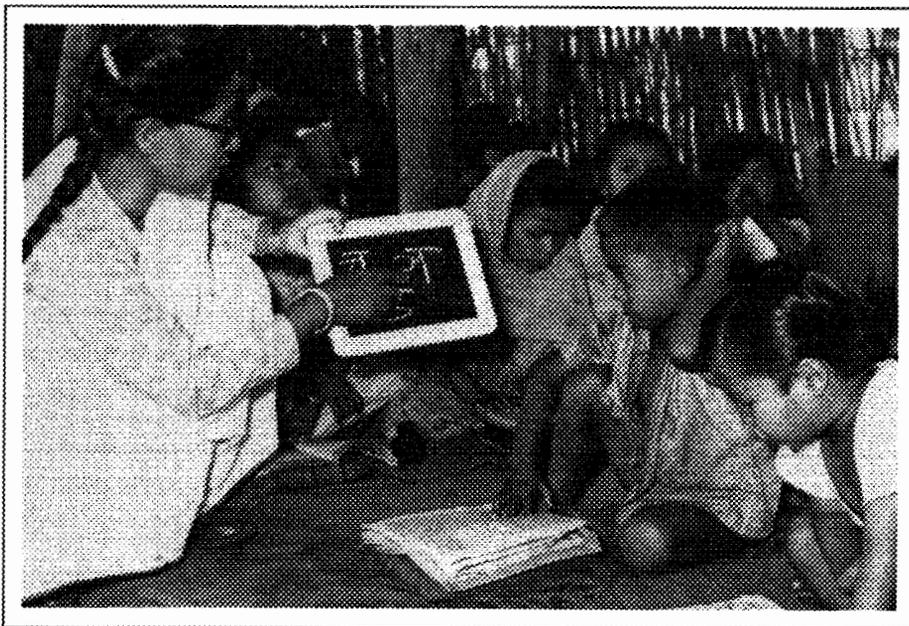
As any traveler in the Third World—or indeed, in much of the western United States—can attest, a critical barrier to growing food is lack of water. Much of India's success can be traced to irrigation, primarily in large systems in the relatively better-off parts of northwestern India that have generated the recent grain surpluses. Do the poor also benefit from such efforts? According to a 1980 AID impact evaluation of a small-scale irrigation project in the Philippines, more than half of those who directly benefited were subsistence farmers below the Philippine poverty level. While they were not the absolutely lowest income group, they constituted the group best able to improve their own lives—and also to increase agricultural production, particularly rice production, to make the country as a whole self-sufficient.

One could argue, of course, that a proper concern for social justice would have suggested focusing the project exclusively on the poorest of the poor. Yet the poorest people gen-

erally own no land—thus the value of small scale industries, or of road projects, for example, that can open up other opportunities to them. Or they may have land but lack the education needed to adapt to new methods. Training and setting up demonstration projects on nearby farms can help. But experience suggests that agricultural projects focusing initially only on the very poorest groups are less likely to succeed than those that begin where progress is surer and can be adapted later for use among the poorest. In Kenya, the introduction of hybrid maize seeds proved relatively less profitable to small landholders than to larger landholders, because the latter, with more land, had resources to invest in new seeds. However, the small landholders also increased their maize production and improved their standard of living.

Some foreign aid critics have argued that unless projects benefit the poorest groups at the expense of ruling elites, the result will be greater inequity; in other words, for the poor to advance, the elite must cede their status. Even if the assumption were correct, practical experience points to at least two difficulties: First, in the countries where this has been tried—Cuba, for one—the resulting equity has been achieved only with vast, continuing amounts of foreign aid (Soviet aid, in the case of Cuba) or with the people living at bare survival levels. Second, the political interventionism implicit in donors' suggesting what is tantamount to revolution would be unacceptable to most countries; elites, in short, do not self-destruct.

AID's strategy has essentially been what in U.S. terms would be described as affirmative action. For example, a number of AID's country programs include projects that either directly or indirectly support land reform, which enables the landless to receive productive assets for self-sustaining development. In the Mahaweli Basin of Sri Lanka, for example, AID is cooperating with other



Nepal's national education system was started with U.S. assistance.

donors in providing (over several years) \$85 million to build an irrigation system that will bring into production 128,000 acres on which 110,000 people, nearly all landless, will be resettled. In Swaziland, AID is contributing technical assistance and institution building support to help in the purchase of expatriate-owned properties for redistribution among tribal groups. In El Salvador, which has recently been severely buffeted by violence and extreme political tensions, AID has helped transfer official land titles to some 200 renters or landless in the first phase of that country's ambitious land reform program. In addition some 212,000 families have directly benefitted from land distribution. In a number of other countries, AID has supported studies and analyses that can help set the stage for land reform initiatives.

Another example of affirmative action to achieve social justice is AID's work in education. In both Jordan and Nepal, for example, AID's role in establishing and assisting national systems of education is well known. Inevitably, in the early stages, the wealthy are likely to benefit more than the poorest; their children can afford to spend time in

school rather than in the fields or in other work, and they have generally had more contact with the modern sector and thus know the value of education as a way to advancement. But as education systems expand, the poor increasingly participate. And with that participation, enhanced knowledge of nutrition, better health, employment, and improved standards of living generally follow. Insofar as education also leads to rising expectations and to new awareness of the social and economic context, in many cases the poor have come to push for equity through the political process as well. Indeed, it is not surprising that those Third World countries enjoying the greatest degree of democracy—Sri Lanka and Jamaica, for example—also have the highest rates of literacy and overall education.

In addition to AID's direct project assistance, two other forms of contribution should also be noted. First, some 10% of AID's development assistance (as well as a substantial share of Food for Peace managed by AID) is given through private and voluntary organizations. These groups, with their highly motivated personnel, have a reputation for both reaching the grassroots poor

and encouraging their participation in the development process. This people-to-people emphasis helps voluntary agencies to ensure whenever possible that those most in need are favored. Second, AID tries whenever possible to work with multilateral and other bilateral donors to help host governments on the policy issues that influence development. Policy may be more influential than any number of field projects in realizing either growth or equity. For example, if governments offer too low a price for farmers' crops, those farmers will not be encouraged to grow more, whether or not they are offered better seeds or irrigation facilities through AID or voluntary agency projects. Because Third World governments inevitably face their own internal political constraints, policy assistance is difficult to both give and receive. Because of the particular sensitivities surrounding the issue of equity (elites do not self-destruct), policy guidance in this area inevitably must be subject to compromise. In many countries, progress toward social justice is admittedly slower than desirable; many people have said the same about the United States. In this sense, seven years under the "New Directions" legislation is a short time. Yet even in this span, most Third World governments have come to recognize the need for equity, and significant numbers of Third World officials and citizens have received policy and management training and have been made aware of the issues and alternatives.

AID's role, beyond its projects, is to participate with host governments in constructive policy dialogue that recognizes the plight and the rights of the poor—and their role in achieving peace. It is not an easy task or a fast process. But in the absence of a better way, it appears the only right course to follow. □

John G. Sommer is executive director of AID's advisory committee on voluntary foreign aid.

by Peggy Streit

ONE MAN'S LEGACY

AID's Frank Parker cultivated India's Green Revolution.

Progress in developing countries is the result of the efforts, ideas, perseverance, courage and inspiration of many people. But occasionally a single person, or a small group, provides the driving force for a decisive step forward. Today "old India hands" recall the work of such a group of Indians and Americans 30 years ago and give it major credit for the fact that India is now self-sufficient in food-grain production. In 1950 India grew 52 million tons of food grains; today it grows 133 million tons, permitting the country's food production to keep slightly ahead of increased population—an awesome achievement.

At the center of that group was a former official of the Agency for International Development—Frank W. Parker, a tall, white-haired, self-effacing, grass-roots aristocrat, now savoring retirement in the blue-gray foothills of South Mountain near Gettysburg, PA. "In my view," says Erven Long, with AID's Office of Development Support and a colleague of Parker's in India, "Frank Parker is the most influential American of-



"I am haunted by memories of the India I knew when I was posted there in the 1950s and 60s," remembers an American journalist. "I used to drive frequently from New Delhi to Chandigahr in the Punjab region. On the way I passed a large town dump where women fought with dogs for scraps of food. Even then the Punjab was known as the breadbasket of India, but somehow that dump seemed to embody the hopelessness that appeared to characterize the country. Hungry, sick, emaciated people and animals—scraggly fields, filthy wells, antique agricultural practices. . ."



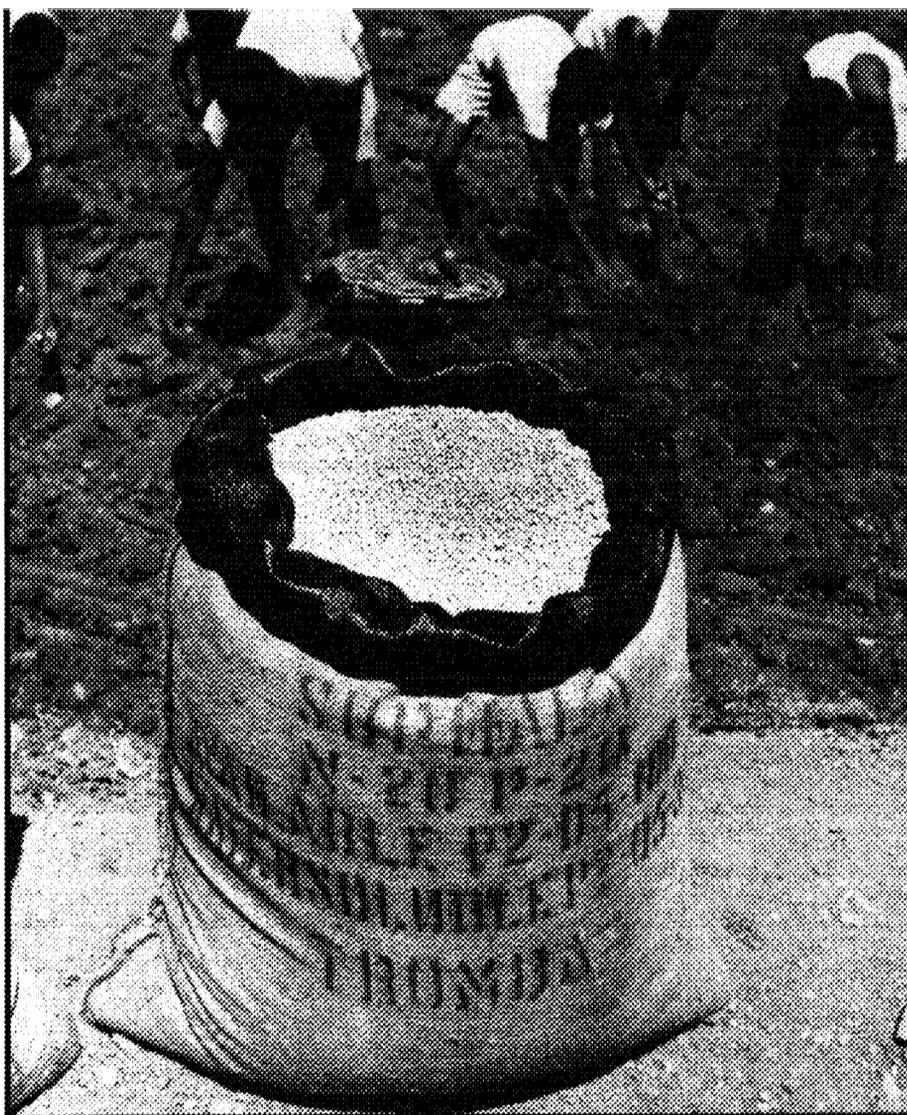
ficial ever to serve in India. I am convinced that back in the early 1950s he put Indian agricultural development on the right path."

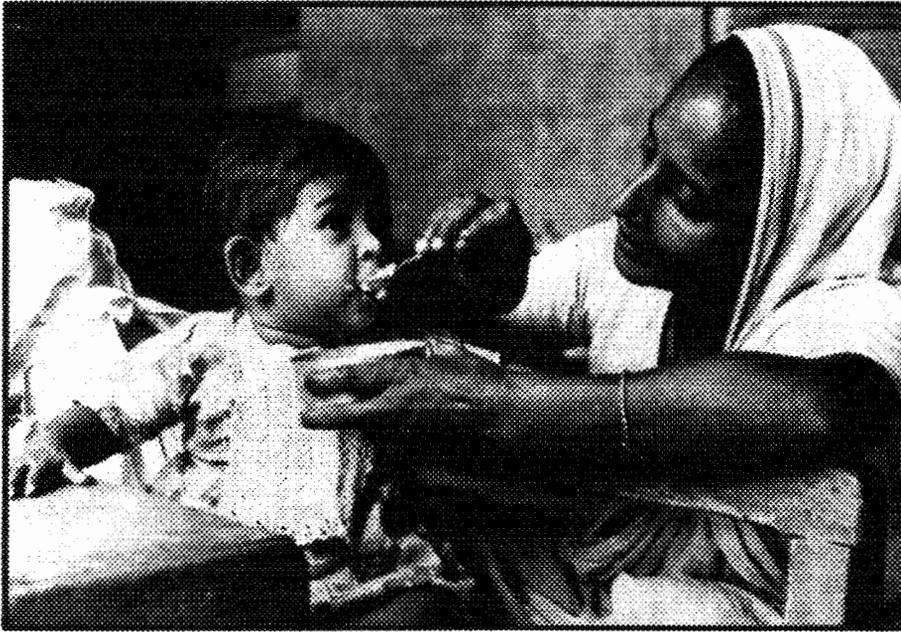
John Malcolm, AID's expert on fertilizers, speaks with frustration and exasperation of American cynicism about the U.S. foreign aid program. "Americans should know what Frank has done," he says. "They should know the contribution the United States has made to India's progress. The Indians know."

And the Indians, indeed, are generous with their praise.

In a letter to Parker, C. R. Ranganathan, former executive director of the Fertilizer Association of India, wrote: "It is not often that it can be said of a single man that he brought about a profound change in the attitudes and thinking of a technical ministry like the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in the short space of five or six years, but I do believe it is true of you. . . ."

In 1970 The Punjab Agricultural University conferred on Frank Parker an honorary degree of doctor of science. The citation read: "Dr. Parker





A child in a Calcutta orphanage is fed U.S. food.

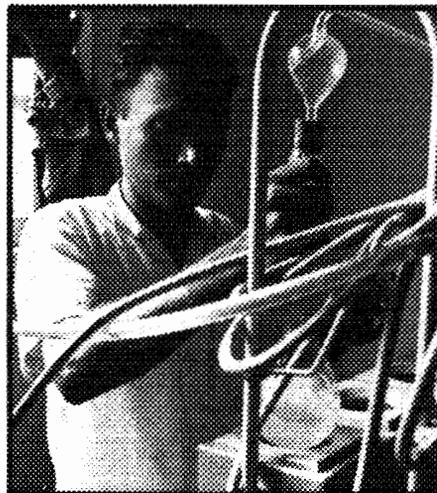
is a distinguished American, an outstanding world citizen and great friend of India. He has played a key role to further the cause of agricultural education, research and development in India."

Two Indian historians, writing in "A History of Agricultural Universities," say this: "Dr. Frank W. Parker (of the Agency for International Development) and Dr. R. W. Cummings (of the Rockefeller Foundation) are the two great figures of the history of agricultural education in India. . . . The USAID programme . . . has been of considerable significance in this period of unprecedented institution building."

Parker's American colleagues sing a similar tune. "I always think of Frank as the catalyst for many of the critical decisions and actions that were made in those early days," says Erven Long. "He was the right man in the right place at the right time. He had vast experience in the United States with soils and fertilizers and the impeccable credentials the Indians admire. He brought people together, gave them confidence, inspired them, manipulated the foreign aid bureaucracy and made it work. He had the big picture and the forcefulness of personality to bring it to

life. The Indians were also blessed with talented and dedicated men, and one of their talents was having the vision to recognize Frank for what he was and put the mantle of leadership on him. He became adviser to the minister of agriculture—with his office in the ministry, right next to the seat of power."

And Frank Parker? What are his memories of those early days of investigation, analysis, planning and creation? "India's land had been farmed for millenia," the 83-year old man recalls. "Year after year crops had been taking nutrients from the



A technician tests flour for protein content.

soil and nothing had been replacing them. Increased food production depended on millions of subsistence farmers who had never used fertilizers, didn't understand why they should, and didn't have the cash to buy them even if they had understood. India had a small fertilizer industry—but nothing compared to what was needed to do the job."

"Early in the game," recalls another colleague, James Blume, "I made a trip with Frank to a plant that manufactured fertilizer. Bags of it were lying on the floor rotting, and the Indians were about to cut production because the farmers weren't buying. 'Why don't you cut the price instead?' Frank suggested to the Indians traveling with us.

"'We'd lose money,' they answered. 'But fertilizer is vital if you're going to get food production up,' said Frank. 'And at least you would get some of it moving and some use from it.' A few weeks later we were in Bombay a thousand miles away and read in the newspapers, 'Government Slashes Fertilizer Prices.' Frank chuckled. 'You have to watch what you say around here,' he said."

Parker's urging led to the creation of the Fertilizer Association of India and a national soils testing program. (Without such a program fertilizer can be useless or wasted.) He also recognized that to get the required fertilizer production, the efforts of both government and the private sector were essential and that the private sector must be greatly strengthened. Today India is one of the world's largest producers and users of fertilizer.

But probably the centerpiece of India's agricultural revolution has been its integrated agricultural education system. "Thirty years ago," recalls Erven Long, "the Indian state extension services were separate from research and teaching. Animal husbandry, agriculture, horticulture and forestry were all in separate departments. The theoretical was

separate from the practical. It was all but impossible to get quick and enlightened decisions. I remember one day in Mysore State where I was working, I asked the Indians for a meeting of all the different governmental ministries and departments needed to get one small decision made. A dozen officials showed up, looked at each other and said, 'We can declare this a cabinet meeting.' Obviously an integration of these public services was vital. The best instrument for this integration was an agricultural university on the American land-grant model."

Frank Parker says that the genius of the American land-grant college agricultural system is the integration of teaching, research and practical agricultural extension work within one institution. This means, among other things, that teachers are teaching practical agriculture and research people are seeking and finding solutions to practical problems. Parker and the government of India arranged for an Indo-American team to study agricultural research and educational institutions and programs in the United States and India. The result: Five American agricultural universities—Ohio State, the University of Missouri, Illinois, Kansas State and the University of Tennessee sent teams to India to advise and help establish an American-type system. The teams were there for 16 years and left when the Indians were ready to take over.

And what of the subsistence farmer—the basis upon which any agricultural revolution must be built? "Tradition is hard to break," recalls Parker. "Indian farmers are very cautious about innovation—afraid to try something new because they can't afford to have it fail. But they're smart and they'll believe what they can see. Among the first things India's agricultural extension agents did was set up a large number of demonstration plots to illustrate new farming techniques—among them the use of fertilizers.

"I remember watching one of the



The centerpiece of India's agricultural revolution has been its integrated education system.

Indian agents explaining fertilizer use to some skeptical farmers one day," Long recalls. "He was pointing to two plots of millet, side by side, one tall and sturdy and the other short and scraggly. The farmers looked and listened with disbelief, unable to accept the fact the fertilizer had made the difference. 'It must have been the rain that made that millet grow,' said one farmer, pointing to the good crop. 'But the rain didn't just rain on that piece of land, and not on this one,' said the Indian agent with exasperation. And before my eyes, I saw the beginnings of a modern farmer."

Today the seeds sown 25 to 30 years ago are being harvested. Writing in the *Times of India*, Askok Thapar reported: "The agricultural revolution . . . is growing into what can only be called a 'rural revolution.' New ideas are gnawing at the roots of tradition in almost every walk of village life. What is emerging is a new style of living. . . With each new technique he has adopted, the farmer's ideas have changed. . ."

An Indian journalist—a quarter of a century after the American journalist described a dispiriting trip over the same road—reports in the *New Delhi Statesman*: "The four-

hour drive from New Delhi to Chandigarh leaves one almost suspicious that it is a stage-managed show meticulously presented to impress the visitor. . . . It is difficult to spot a single acre of land on either side of the road which has been left uncultivated, where something or other has not been sown. Dotting this landscape . . . are advertisements for high-yielding fertilizers, farming equipment, weedcides and pesticides, the beaming face of a farmer often providing the pictorial element. . . . No, there is no conjuring trick there, the evidence of prosperity is verifiable."

The fact that India today produces enough to feed its people does not mean that poverty and malnutrition have disappeared. Despite the availability of food, many people are still too poor to buy it. Nor have the new farming techniques reached all, or even most, farmers.

But India's productive agricultural system is the foundation upon which the future must be built. The foundation is there and Frank Parker, American, was present at the creation. □

Peggy Streit is editor of AID's "World Development Letter."

The *Global 2000 Report to the President*, issued eight months ago, offered a gloomy view of the world 20 years from now if governments fail to act. The result of three years' analysis of probable changes in world population, resources and environment through the end of the century, the report warned that unless nations do something now to alter the trends, the earth's capacity to support life will decrease while population growth continues to climb; there will be a steady loss of croplands, fisheries, forests, and plant and animal species; and there will be degradation of the earth's water and atmosphere—all in the next 20 years.

The *Global 2000 Report* identified the problems; it did not attempt to find solutions. *Global Future: Time to Act* is the next step. Published in January, and prepared by the Council on Environmental Quality and the State Department, this latest report answers how—how to change course and reach a different end.

Global Future is a collection of new ideas for actions the United States could take, along with other nations, for a vigorous response to urgent global problems. For example, by doubling the use of family planning services in the developing world before the end of the decade, the world could hold its population in 2000 to half a billion lower than the projected 6.3 billion.

Another idea: Sufficient reserves of basic food should be available for prompt response to a major shortage. The United States ought to join in this year's effort by the International Wheat Council to agree on the concept of nationally held reserves with international coordination at times of market strain.

The report points out that foreign assistance, while vital, is only a part of the complex pattern of trade and monetary issues, domestic policies and needed investment that influ-

GLOBAL FUTURE: TIME TO ACT

New ideas for action to avert global disaster in 2000.

ences economic development in developing countries. To improve the U.S. ability to respond to global resource, environmental and population issues, the report recommends that development and coordination of U.S. policy on these issues be centralized in one agency, preferably in the Executive Office of the President.

The study also calls for establishing a "hybrid public-private institute" to supplement the government effort, to stimulate independent analysis and discussion among industrial, labor, environmental and academic groups and the government. The Population, Resources and Environmental Analysis Institute that it recommends would have several roles, all designed to enlist private sector groups in the solution of global problems. A major part of the institute's program would be to supplement the government's capability to make accurate projections. This capacity appeared lacking in the *Global 2000* study. The institute



would also further analyze government policy and "stimulate independent analyses of long-term global problems."

Why should the United States or other comfortable countries, with a seeming wealth of resources at their command, take an urgent interest in global resource impoverishment and environmental degradation? "First, the resulting poverty and misery for hundreds of millions of people is a matter of serious moral concern," *Global Future* answers. "Then, there is a profound human interest in protecting the earth's resources for generations to come. Finally, there are impelling reasons of national self-interest. U.S. political and economic security, broadly defined, is already being affected by global resource, environment and population problems—more so than is commonly understood. The effects will become far greater with time, if present trends continue."

Here is a summary of recommendations:

Population

Problem: By the year 2000 there will be almost 2 billion more people in the world. Ninety percent of the growth will occur in low-income countries, where most people are young and have their child-bearing years ahead of them. At the very least, explosive population growth makes it harder to provide decent conditions. In some areas, it is already overwhelming efforts to provide education, housing and jobs. And the attempts of growing numbers of people to wrest a living from the land is eroding the very soil,

water and forests on which long-term stability and improvements in standard of living depend. Population growth in richer countries, though much slower, is also of concern because consumption per capita (especially of energy and other unrennewable resources) is much higher.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Together with other donors and international organizations, intensify family planning over the next decade, by doubling resources and

improving maternal and child health care.

- Provide more government assistance for research in contraception, suited to the needs of individual countries.

- Develop a national population policy that includes attention to stabilizing population; making family planning programs available; drafting just, consistent and workable immigration laws; improving information; and ensuring continued attention to domestic population issues through institutions.

Food and Agriculture

Problem: Population increases will strain the world food supply. While food production may expand 90% (that is optimistic) by the year 2000, the per capita increase will be less than 15%. This global estimate disguises regional disparities; food availability and nutrition levels may scarcely improve in South Asia and the Middle East and may actually decline in the poorer parts of Africa. Of particular concern is the ability to improve world agricultural yields in the face of degradation of soil and water resources and the conversion of some of the best cropland to other uses.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Expand development assistance

in the area of food in low-income countries.

- Establish an Interagency Task Force on World Agricultural Lands (on the model of the Interagency Task Force on Tropical Forests) to assess world trends affecting agricultural productivity; review current national and international responses; recommend a coordinated U.S. strategy, as part of international efforts; provide the foundation for an international plan of action.

- Lead by example in protecting and managing U.S. agricultural lands; elements in the program should include:

- Federal technical and financial assistance to state and local governments wishing to develop land preservation policies and soil and

water conservation programs.

- An Agricultural Land Conservation Fund to help finance state and local conservation programs.

- Financial incentives to help preserve farmland and encourage conservation.

- Examination by federal agencies of programs affecting agricultural lands (for example, federal loan and loan guarantee programs, sewer, water and highway programs) to ensure that their actions do not unnecessarily encourage farmland conversion.

- Examination and use by state and local governments of growth management tools to discourage farmland conversions.

- Propose an international technical conference on conversion of agricultural lands.

- Strengthen national and international programs to preserve crop germplasm.

- Through assistance, cooperation and research programs, domestic and international, encourage the use of sustainable agricultural management techniques, including integrated pest management, more efficient use of commercial fertilizer, and biological fixation of nitrogen.

- Work actively toward a better international food reserve system.



Renewable Energy Resources and Conservation

Problem: While most of the world, rich and poor, must adjust to soaring oil prices, developing countries without their own oil are hardest hit. They are now spending \$50 billion a year to buy oil—almost twice the amount they receive collectively from all outside sources for development assistance. At the same time, the world's poorest half, most of whom rely mainly on firewood and agricultural waste for fuel, face another energy crisis: dwindling supplies of firewood. This combination is aggravating already severe economic and ecological problems and adding to the difficulty of achieving economic growth.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Support recent World Bank proposals for a major increase in assistance for growing and conserving fuelwood. AID should substantially increase its assistance for planting trees.

- Encourage the World Bank to accelerate lending for renewable energy and conservation activities and support the idea of a new World Bank energy facility.

- Develop mechanisms by which developing countries can take advantage of new energy technologies developed by the U.S. government and, so far as possible, by corporations.

- Study ways to make U.S. government technical experts in renewable energy and conservation more readily available to developing countries, including a voluntary program of short-term technical assistance that would tap the private sector.

- Participate actively in the 1981 U.N. Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy.

- Establish an interagency task force to develop a realistic strategy for achieving the goal of 20% of U.S. energy from renewable sources by 2000.

Tropical Forests

Problem: The conversion of forests to farm land and the demand for fuelwood and other forest products are depleting the world's forests at an alarming rate—as much as 18-20 million hectares (one hectare = 2.5 acres) each year (or an area half the size of California). Most of the loss is in the tropical regions of developing nations, where some 40% of the remaining forests may disappear by 2000. Hundreds of millions of people are already directly affected by this extremely serious and growing global environmental problem.

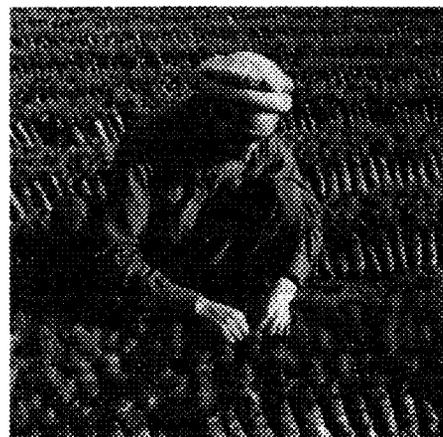
Recommendations: The United States should:

- Press for an international plan of action on tropical deforestation.

- Provide financial and technical assistance to enable the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization to fulfill the international leadership role.

- Coordinate U.S. programs closely with the FAO and World Bank to make the best of resources.

- Designate and support the Forest Service's Institute of Tropical Forestry (Puerto Rico) and Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry (Hawaii) as "national centers" for tropical

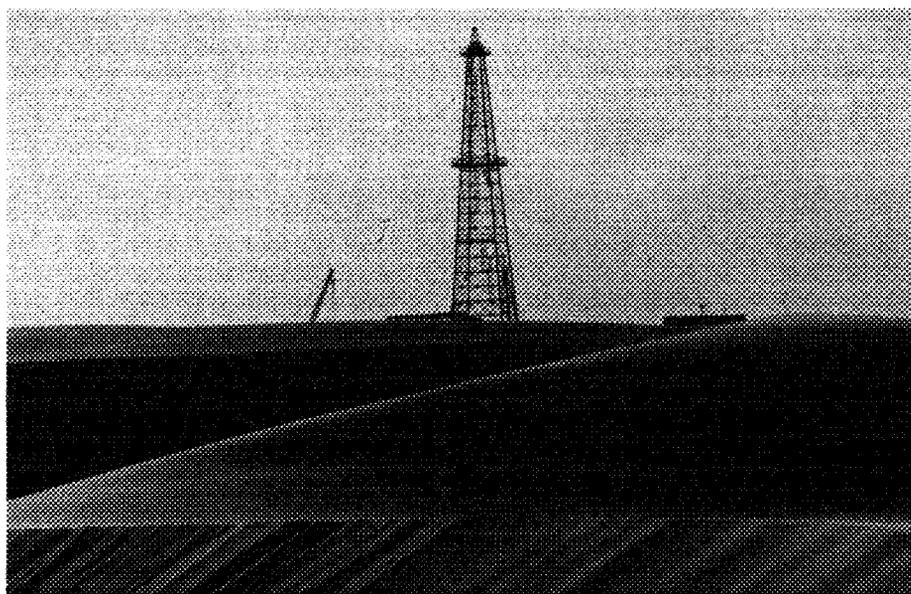


forest research, education and training.

- Call upon the World Bank to design and support an international program on reforestation of large watersheds.

- Expand the tropical forest management ability of AID and the Peace Corps.

- Pursue, through the U.S. Interagency Task Force, a new partnership of government and private industry to broaden the base of U.S. planning and improve U.S. technical contributions to international programs.



Biological Diversity

Problem: The accelerating destruction and pollution of the habitat of wild animals and plants means that in the next 20 years many species will disappear—on an unprecedented scale, as much as 15 to 20% of all species on earth. About half would go because of the loss and degradation of tropical forests, the rest principally in freshwater, coastal and reef ecosystems. Estimates of species loss often include only mammals and birds, or all vertebrate animals. The estimate here also includes insects, other invertebrates and plants.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Establish a federal Interagency Task Force on Conservation of Biological Diversity to develop a long-term U.S. strategy to maintain biological diversity.
- Increase U.S. support to on-



going international programs to set priorities for protecting biological diversity.

- Consider establishing an international fund to help developing countries protect and manage critical ecological reserves, especially in tropical forests.
- Increase support of national and international efforts to inventory the

world's plants and animals and to collect species and germplasm.

- Increase training assistance for wildlife management and conservation professionals in developing countries, especially at selected institutions in those countries.
- Expand its ability to offer technical expertise in conservation of biological diversity.

Coastal and Marine Resources

Problem: Urban and industrial development leading to destruction of productive coastal wetlands and reefs; pollutants washed from the land, dumped or discharged in the ocean or deposited from the atmosphere; and exhaustion of world fisheries are growing threats to coastal and marine ecosystems. Fish harvesting—a major component of the world's food supply—has leveled off and by the year 2000, fish may be contributing less to the world's nutrition, on a per capita basis, than it is today. Adding to the concern is the lack of data regarding the degree of pollution and disturbance in the open oceans.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Set up a U.S. technical conference to review and improve ecologically sound strategies for fishery management.
- Expand support of fishery man-

agement in developing countries bilaterally and through increased funding to FAO.

- Inventory and map coastal resources and assess the amount and the effects of major pollutants spilling into coastal and marine areas from land; cooperate with other countries to do the same.
- Increase efforts to establish marine sanctuaries and seek an international agreement on protection of habitats of migrating species.
- Support a moratorium on all commercial whaling until the continued survival of whales can be assured.
- Do the research needed to implement the Antarctic Living Resources Treaty; continue efforts to assure that Antarctic minerals will not be exploited until a decision has been made on the basis of sufficient information that such development is acceptable.



Water

Problem: The need for water will greatly increase over the next 20 years; in half the countries of the world population growth alone will cause demand to double. Information on water availability and quality is exceptionally poor, but it is clear that problems of water supply will be serious in many regions. Parts of the world, especially the Third World, already are suffering severe water shortages and drought, and water-borne disease is endemic. Unless a concerted effort is made to preserve water, reliable supplies will continue to disappear.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Establish an Interagency Com-

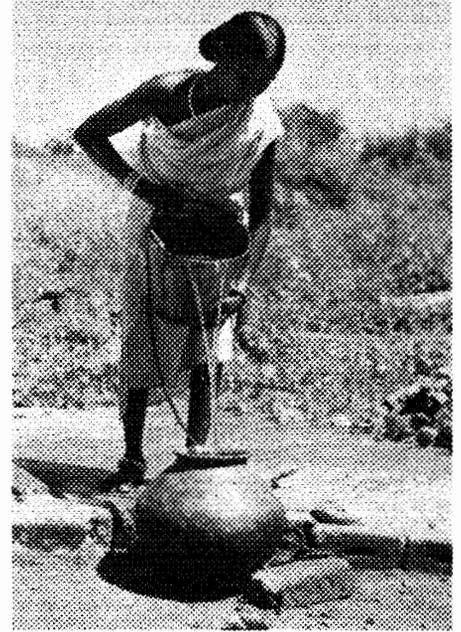
mittee on Global Water Supply and Management to assess monitoring of the world's water, identify potential areas of conflict and propose ways for the United States to cooperate with other nations to share knowledge.

- Improve bilateral technical assistance in water management and increase financial support of FAO for training in water management.

- Increase research to reduce the need for water for irrigation.

- Take part in international efforts to assure safe drinking water as a major development goal.

- Encourage arrangements to anticipate and resolve international disputes over water.



Global Pollution

Problem: Certain by-products of economic development and industrial growth threaten the earth's life support systems. Hazardous substances, nuclear waste, the buildup of carbon dioxide in the air, damage to the stratospheric ozone layer, and acid rain all could harm virtually every aspect of the earth's ecosystems.

Recommendations: The United States should:

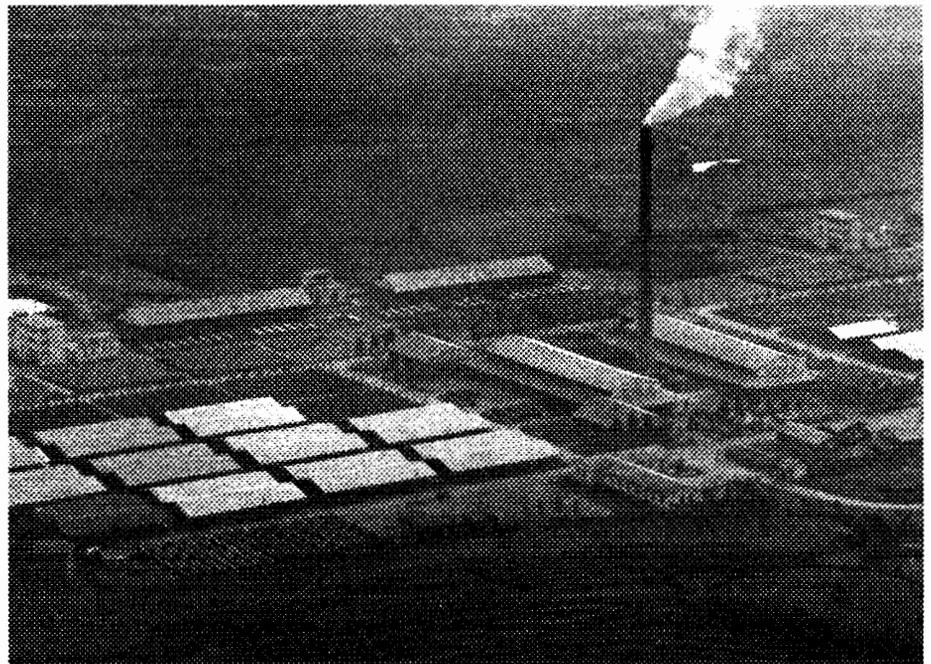
- Work toward improving international agreements to control hazardous substances and waste.

- Improve its system for notifying countries that hazardous substances banned for all or most uses in the United States are being exported to them, and, in cases of extremely hazardous substances, control their export.

- Improve its ability to handle hazardous wastes.

- Develop procedures for regulating the export of hazardous wastes.

- Take national and international measures to reduce amounts of nuclear waste and control their disposal.



- Protect against radioactive material.

- Analyze alternatives for the future with special emphasis on action to reduce carbon dioxide buildup.

- Support further research on acid rain, continue work with Canada

on air pollution, and intensify legal efforts to control acid emissions.

- Support more research on ozone depletion and encourage action by international organizations to protect the stratospheric ozone layer.

- Improve national and international climate programs.

Sustainable Development

Problem: Many of the world's most severe environmental problems are in part a consequence of extreme poverty: deprived people are forced to undermine the productivity of the land on which they live. They plant crops on poor soil, graze stock on marginal land, causing it to turn to desert, cut trees that are needed to stabilize the soil and the water supply, and burn dung needed to fertilize and condition agricultural soil.

Recommendations. The United States should:

- Make up its overdue obligations to the World Bank and other development funds and contribute its share to the World Bank's general capital increase.

- Expand its development assistance targeted to food, energy, population and health, and coordinate it with programs of other countries and international organizations.

- Urge the World Bank and other international organizations to integrate resource and environmental considerations more fully into their planning.

- Increase resource management expertise in AID programs and encourage all U.S. agencies with significant activity abroad to further integrate resource and environmental considerations into their decisions.

- Develop ways to use the scientific, technical, resource management and environmental expertise of U.S. government agencies more effectively both in AID programs and in other international cooperation programs.

Institutional Changes: Improving Our National Capacity to Respond

Problem: The U.S. government currently cannot adequately (1) project and evaluate future trends; (2) take global population, resource, and environmental considerations into account in its programs and decisions; and (3) work with other countries to develop international solutions to these problems.

Recommendations: The United States should:

- Establish a government center to coordinate data collection. This will ensure that policy analysis on long-term global population, resource, and environment issues will rest upon sufficient information.

- Improve the quality of data collection and modeling for global issues and promote wider access to data and models.

- Establish a federal coordinating unit, preferably in the Executive Office of the President, to develop federal policy and coordinate ongoing federal programs concerning global population, resource, and environment issues. Activities should include coordinating data and modeling described above; issuing biennial reports; assessing global population, resource, and environment problems; and serving as a focal point for

development of policy on long-term global issues.

- Adopt devices that force action, such as budget review procedures, a presidential message, a blue-ribbon commission, offices in each federal agency to deal with long-term global issues, or legislation ordering federal agencies to address long-term global issues, a federal coordinating unit, and a public-private institute.

- Create a public-private Global Population, Resources and Environment Analysis Institute to strengthen and supplement federal government efforts on long-term global analysis.

- Improve the budget process to make technical expertise of U.S. agencies more readily available to other countries.

- Assure environmental review of major U.S. government actions that significantly affect natural or ecological resources of worldwide importance; designate tropical forests, croplands, and coastal wetland-estuarine and reef ecosystems as globally important resources.

- Continue to raise world population, resource, and environment issues in appropriate international forums; work with and support appropriate international organizations and other countries in formulating solutions.

- Enlist business in formulating

responses to long-term global problems.

- Increase public awareness of global population, resource, and environment issues.

Global Future: Time to Act calls both for fresh starts and for continuing efforts. It emphasizes our special strengths—especially scientific and technical—and it looks to others for leadership in their areas of special strength. The report stresses that international cooperation is imperative in maintaining a productive and habitable earth. No one nation can tackle the problems alone.

In general, the recommendations in the report are the first steps in what needs to be done, efforts that must be duplicated, enhanced, repeated, and expanded upon many times over by other nations and international organizations, by private institutions, by business, and by industries. A guiding hand at the center of the U.S. government's share of the response is critical—not only for coordination but for staying power.

Copies of *Global Future: Time to Act* are available from the Council on Environmental Quality, 722 Jackson Place NW, Washington, DC, 20006. Please enclose a self-addressed mailing label. □

You could see it coming.

Two cars, racing down a highway in southern Lebanon, both hugging the center line, neither willing to give way.

A witness to the crash, a field coordinator for Save the Children, a private voluntary agency, rushed to pull one of the injured drivers out from behind the wheel. "Don't move him," another shouted. "Wait for an ambulance, for God's sake."

The words hung in the air before the desert imposed its harsh reality. Here, there would be no ambulance.

This lack of medical assistance is just one example of the disruption that exists today in Lebanon. The continuing civil strife that has engulfed this country since the outbreak of civil war in 1975 affects virtually every aspect of life. With \$6 billion estimated in property damage alone, it could be no other way.

Perhaps the most devastated area is southern Lebanon, where the thousands of villages and homes have been destroyed. The number of people displaced stands at over 200,000; most are children. Families once living in harmony are scattered throughout the country. Whole villages have been wiped out, crops and livestock have been destroyed and water supplies cut. The vast majority of the population—small farmers totally dependent on agriculture for subsistence—is left without any source of income.

But within this seemingly hopeless situation, there is some reason for optimism. Through a grant from AID, Save the Children, is working with the government of Lebanon to help farmers rebuild their lives.

It's not an easy task. Save the Children has focused on a target group with immense problems and few if any resources. War has wiped out small farms; small farmers cannot qualify for loans with which to start over.

Through a supervised rural credit program, serviced by Save the Children field coordinators and tech-

REBUILDING, REPLANTING, STARTING OVER

Lebanese restore farms torn apart by war.

by Betty Woodward



nical assistants, the farmers are beginning again. Venture capital has begun to flow into these ravaged areas, allowing the villagers to remain on their land. Many who fled during the fighting have returned home.

A typical beneficiary of the credit program is a full-time farmer who works a few hectares of land (1 hectare equals about 2.5 acres). He receives a grant of approximately \$2,200 either in cash or in-kind, seed, for instance. The loan interest rate is low—only 4% for a short-

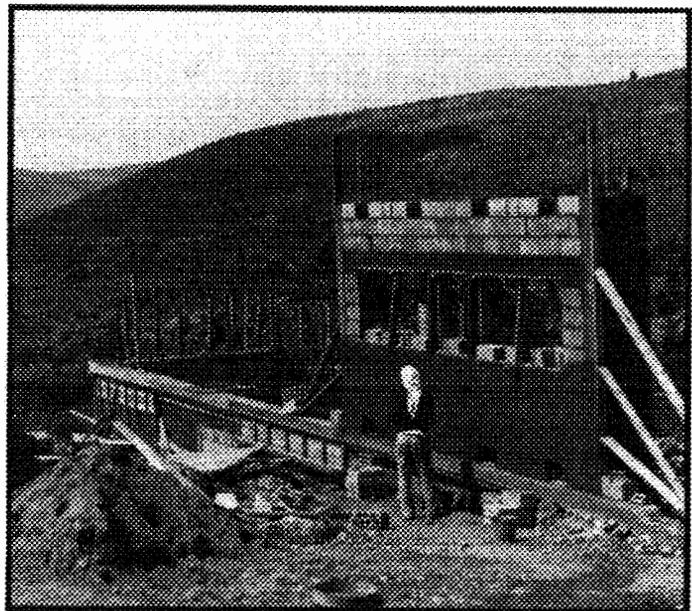
term loan of one year or less and 5% for two to five years. The program buys items such as fertilizer, sprayers and other supplies in bulk, and resells to the farmer at lower than market prices.

The farmer's loan application is processed quickly. This is essential; his needs are critical. In most cases, a check—or the in-kind item—is delivered within 120 days.

Farmers are encouraged to use their loans for things that will generate income rapidly and are easy to keep: bees, saplings or sheep, for example.

Perhaps the most important part of the whole program is the technical assistance that accompanies the loan. With AID funds, Save the Children has hired agronomists to advise the farmers. Thus, a farmer planning an olive grove first learns proper irrigation, spraying, fertilizing, pruning and harvesting to ensure a successful crop. In the town of Sufa, which was deserted in 1978 during the Israeli incursions, olive saplings are now taking root. Forty-seven individual loans have been made in this small town, and now the villagers are negotiating for a community loan—for an olive press.

In addition, informal training sessions focusing on specific agricultural techniques are held in villages.



Pest control, plant disease, maintaining livestock and identifying nutritional deficiencies are just some of the topics discussed.

As one of the by-products of the Agricultural Rehabilitation Program (ARP), field coordinators have encouraged villagers to seek help from other agencies for problems not directly related to farming. For example, the town of Ghandouriyye was leveled in 1978. Machine gun rivets mark anything left standing. There are still craters where bombs hit. With the help of the field coordinators, the farmers have applied to the Council for Reconstruction and Development for housing loans.

Save the Children has been able to provide a wide range of complimentary project activities as well. Community-based primary health care centers have been established in Ghandouriyye and other areas. The Save the Children health and nutrition coordinator out of Beirut is working with locally-based women to improve immunization coverage, nutrition care and family planning. A series of job-related training activities has been organized in several villages where ARP loans have been given.

In the town of Hebbariyye, the first solar-heated school in Lebanon is being built with an AID matching

grant, contributions from Save the Children and support from the Lebanese government. This school, which will house the 400 children currently squeezed into a private home and part of the village office building, will serve as a model for other solar construction in Lebanon.

One prerequisite for village selection for the Agricultural Rehabilitation Program is the formation of a community committee. The local committee manages the loans, selects any community projects that would require a community loan and decides who is eligible for individual loans.

Collecting loan payments is another crucial task of the committee. This would seem to be on paper a most difficult task. No security or mortgage is asked; just a promissory note is used. The recipients are usually small farmers who have suffered tremendous losses and live in areas where legal procedures for collection are useless. Yet the repayment rate is remarkably high. In most villages, it runs 95% or more on the due date.

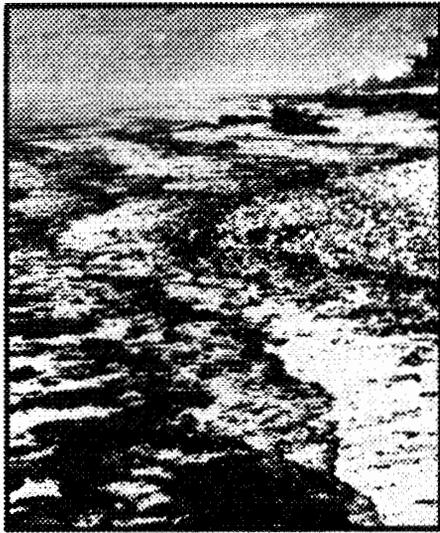
This impressive repayment record attests to the success of the program, for without generated income, the farmers could not repay the loans. Often the loans are immediately recycled for additional village

use. Over 1,139 individual and nine community loans have been made, with a total of over 35,000 Lebanese benefiting from the program.

The selection of villages and the overall allocation of funds is handled through a joint commission composed of Dr. Karam from Save the Children, the director general of the General Directorate of Cooperatives and the vice-president of the Union National de Credit Cooperatif. While the bulk of support comes from AID, other contributors include the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the Lebanese government and Save the Children partners in Austria, Canada, Denmark and Norway.

While the ARP program is benefiting thousands of poor rural Lebanese, many more still need assistance desperately. The Save the Children field office in Beirut hopes eventually to expand the program to help small businessmen affected by the prolonged conflict. Meanwhile, ARP remains the only successful, small farmer production credit program in the entire country. It also is one of the few non-political, socially beneficial activities reaching out to help the victims of war. □

Betty Woodward is public relations administrator for Save the Children.



by Michael Greene

A major oil spill could cripple struggling economies.

Hidden Hazard In the Caribbean

Throughout history, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes and floods have tormented mankind. During the past 10 or 12 years, a new disaster has come on the scene: the oil spill. While not the killer that the others often are, the spill can take a heavy toll nonetheless. In spewing thousands of tons of oil into the sea, it can kill wildlife, destroy natural resources, and critically wound a local economy.

The risk of an oil spill is highest where petroleum production and transport is highest—the Persian/Arabian Gulf, the Mediterranean, and the North Sea. Many of the countries in these areas have recognized the risk and, with help from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), have made regional cooperative arrangements for preventing and controlling spills. Regional Oil Spill Combating Centers have been set up on Malta for the Mediterranean and in Kuwait for the Gulf. Another is planned for South Asia.

The Caribbean is another matter. Petroleum production and transport is increasing rapidly in the Caribbean, and with it the risk of a serious spill. Unlike most of the countries bordering the Gulf, the Mediterranean and the North Sea, the Caribbean states are mostly small, poor and dependent on tourism and fisheries for their economic survival. Their coastlines contain mangrove swamps, coral reefs and other ecological systems highly vulnerable to oil pollution.

And almost without exception, they are unprepared to cope with an oil spill disaster.

To date, there has not been a major oil spill in the eastern Caribbean, where most of the poorest countries are. But the risk increases with each tanker that passes. According to a study recently done by Texas A&M University for the UNEP, 4,700,000 barrels a day, or 250 million tons a year, of crude oil is shipped to or through the Caribbean, including the eastern Caribbean. Half of this is shipped in super-tankers averaging

200,000 tons. The other half travels in mid-sized ships averaging 60,000 tons. In 1978, 12 spills were reported in the Wider Caribbean region. Extrapolation from experience in other parts of the world, in terms of numbers of spills per volume of oil transported, offers this prediction: 21 spills per year averaging 1,000 metric tons within 50 miles of land. Moreover, says the U.S. Coast Guard, because of ocean currents, a major spill in the heavily traveled tanker lanes of the eastern Caribbean would affect several islands within a few days.

What could happen if a super-tanker split open in Caribbean waters? An island's entire coastline could be coated, tourist beaches marred, birds, fish and natural areas destroyed. If no cleanup measures were taken, affected beaches could remain unusable for several years. If cleanup were mishandled, for example if too much beach sand were removed in the process of getting rid of the oily sand, it's very likely that what beach was left would wash away.

In addition to the damage to wildlife—particularly to seabirds, fish larvae and shellfish—mangrove areas, a source of life, could either be wiped out or so severely damaged that it would take five to 10 years to restore them. Although submerged coral reefs, so important to the balance of life in the sea, are not necessarily hurt directly by an oil spill, chemicals used to disperse the spill can kill coral. And after the spill? The reputation of an island as one with "dirty beaches" could last, with disastrous economic effects.

What of the economic impact of a major spill on small island nations already in economic distress? The costs of cleanup, of course, vary with the amount of oil spilled, the type of coastline involved and the cleaning method used. In 1968, for example, the Ocean Eagle broke in two in San Juan Harbor, Puerto Rico, dumping 45,000 tons of crude oil; the cost was \$500,000 for beach cleanup and \$2

million for salvage. In 1981, the cost for the same accident would be up to \$5 million, just for cleanup. Last year, the *Tanio* spilled 60,000 tons of oil on the French coastline. The cleanup cost: \$40 million.

Damage costs are even harder to estimate than cleanup costs. Compensation by the oil companies depends in part on the laws of the island affected. The tourist industry in many of the Caribbean islands is worth around \$100 million a year. The hotel whose beach has been damaged and which loses clientele as a result probably has recourse in the courts. But other hotels—on other coasts of the same island, for example, probably will lose business, too, in the wake of bad publicity. Their case will be harder to prove.

The most difficult claims to adjudicate relate to environmental damage. After a series of accidents, Puerto Rico sued the oil companies involved for compensation for the loss of each dead mangrove tree, all sediments and soils that had to be replaced, and every marine organism—at 6 cents per organism. But the oil companies replied that the only measurable loss is the decline in commercial real estate value; mangrove swamps are not commercial real estate. The case is still in court.

To their credit, petroleum industry representatives are generally quick to respond to a spill. Where the liability of a tanker owner is clear, the industry will mobilize resources and initiate cleanup, even take charge of the operation when no one else can. It realizes that prompt action is necessary to minimize damage for which it will be held accountable, and it can be relied upon to take effective action, bringing in its own resources where necessary. A consortium of oil companies operating in the Caribbean, called the Clean Caribbean Cooperative, has leased oil spill combating equipment in Boston. This equipment can be flown to a spill at the request of a member of the consortium. A limited amount of equipment available at oil com-



pany installations within the region also can be brought into play.

On the other hand, it is not to disparage the dedicated and extremely able cleanup experts to point out that their primary responsibility is to their employers, that is, to minimize liability and to limit cleanup costs. Their judgments may not always coincide with the best long term interests of the affected island. A possible example again is the use

of dispersant chemicals. Where they are effective, they are applied by boat or plane to a floating slick and cause it to break up and disappear from view. However, their effect on marine organisms, such as coral reefs, is at best controversial, and in some instances the oil may simply form clumps that submerge and continue their advance to the beach. In such an event, they can no longer be easily identified with the oil spill or

with the liable tanker owner or oil company.

It is clear that the danger is real. Caribbean countries have no real defense. A dual strategy is needed: national contingency plans and a regional program for cooperation and technical assistance.

The government of a nation hit by a spill has many decisions to make. Some of these decisions can be made in advance, and that is what is meant by contingency planning. As part of national planning, an Oil Spill Coordinator or On-Scene Commander (OSC) should be appointed and his or her training made a high priority of each state and territory of the Caribbean. However, to date only a handful of islands have even considered the question.

Other elements of national contingency planning are strategies and assignment of responsibilities for protecting sensitive areas, beach cleanup, disposal of oil, public relations, inventory of available equipment, negotiation with sources of assistance, and financial arrangements for cleanup. Providing money for cleanup is particularly important when it's not possible to pinpoint the source of the spill, or a company refuses responsibility, or settlement is delayed for any reason. Oil cleanup contractors, and even the U.S. Coast Guard, require payment "up front" before they will begin.

Generally it is not necessary for a territory to acquire expensive equipment; it is more important to know in advance where such equipment is

available and under what conditions. Even so, some equipment must be on hand: booms (barriers) to protect vital areas, absorbents and shovels and bulldozers, for example. It may be necessary to create stockpiles around the island. Such equipment is needed immediately in the event of a spill and is hard to import at short notice. Training and practice in using this equipment, particularly in laying booms from small boats, should be a part of the planning.

Regional arrangements and a regional plan can help take the burden off individual islands. Large oil spills are often discovered in international waters and must be tracked and monitored to determine points of impact. Since a large spill in the Caribbean is likely to affect more than one island, cleanup activities would have to be coordinated.

Under regional arrangements a spill would be monitored and islands in its path alerted; equipment and personnel readied; and cleanup activities and legal actions coordinated. A regional program would also provide for an up-to-date inventory of equipment and expertise, ongoing training courses for OSCs and their staffs, and for help with national contingency plans. Under the regional plan experts would advise governments on appropriate standards, legislation and international conventions. The regional program would also provide a forum for broadening areas of agreement and for maintaining liaison with the petroleum industry and with the international organizations active in the region.

In the past two years there has been some progress.

In early 1979, the Organization of American States sent a consultant to assess the state of oil spill preparedness of the six island states then members of that organization: Barbados, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. His report was discouraging; there had been nearly no prep-



A victim of an oil spill

aration for an oil spill emergency. The only country with an oil spill contingency plan in effect was Trinidad and Tobago, an oil exporter.

This report was presented to a special OAS task force assigned to come up with an emergency plan. At a meeting in Port of Spain in May 1979, the task force, including a representative from each country, plus experts from UNEP, IMCO, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the OAS Secretariat, and other private and international organizations, quickly agreed that regional action was urgently needed. It produced a "Framework of a Regional Oil Spill Control Plan."

Then, OAS joined forces with the U.S. National Committee for Man and the Biosphere (USMAB), and approached the U.S. Agency for International Development and UNEP for support. The response came quickly. Both AID and the United Nations provided funds to incorporate regional oil spill contingency planning into UNEP's Environmental Action Plan for the Wider Caribbean Region. IMCO offered to fully sponsor the activities and provide an expert.

The result was a program for concerted action. First, the smaller Caribbean islands were integrated into the process. A joint OAS/IMCO fact-finding mission was dispatched to these islands, and again the report was discouraging.

A workshop on oil spills for the smaller Caribbean islands was held in Puerto Rico in June, 1980. Participants were treated to a simulated spill and demonstration of oil spill technologies arranged by the U.S. Coast Guard and a local contractor. The smaller islands' representatives sat down and produced a revised version of the OAS "Framework," to reflect their own interests and their differences.

The region then had two distinct "Frameworks" for a regional plan. However, at a meeting in Barbados in November 1980, all the island governments agreed to a regional plan

to which all could subscribe and to discuss steps for implementation. It was agreed that a small technical unit of perhaps two professionals would be required and that it should be housed within an existing international organization or government of the region. There was a general feeling that the governments themselves should have a strong input into the management of the unit. The formula accepted provided for a regional council, composed of the oil spill coordinators of each territory, to approve the activities of the unit.

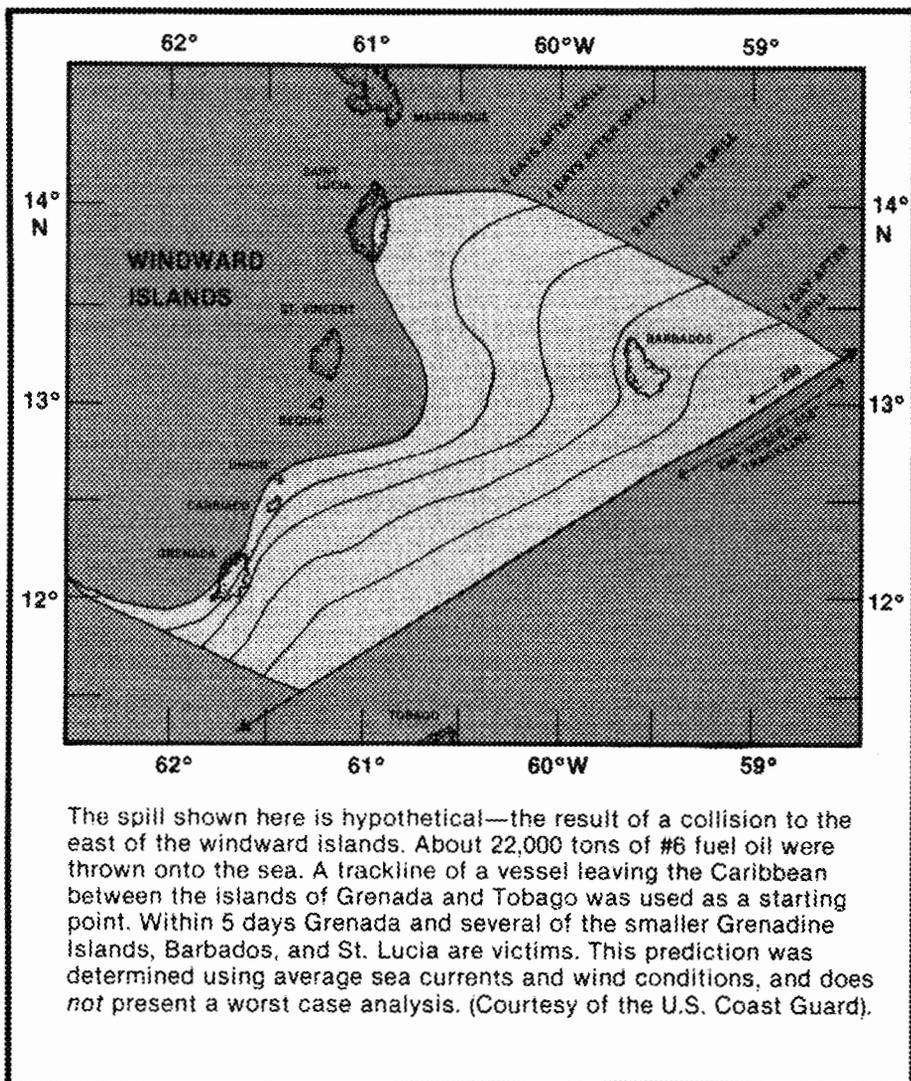
But the meeting has ended, and despite a promising start, at this writing no more than two Caribbean islands, apart from the U.S. and French territories, have operational oil spill contingency plans. Only one,

in addition to the British dependencies, has subscribed to the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund Convention, which establishes the right to up to \$60 million in compensation.

So what has been accomplished? The Regional Plan exists, created by experts from each of the island territories, but it needs an intergovernmental agreement to go into effect. That remains to be done.

One thing is certain: a major oil spill could happen at any moment—and it could spell disaster for more than one small, struggling nation. □

Michael Greene, formerly deputy director of the Department of Science and Technology of the OAS, is a freelance consultant.



ARE MEN THE FORGOTTEN PARTNER IN FAMILY PLANNING?

Yes, according to a Worldwatch study.



Cyclists in Pakistan can't miss this billboard's message: family planning is important.

Men are the "forgotten sexual partner" in family planning efforts, says a study released recently by the Worldwatch Institute, an independent, nonprofit research organization in Washington. "Nearly a half billion men have little or no access to birth control services and few contraceptive options. Yet, by ignoring the interest men have in planning their families, society ends up perpetuating sexual stereotypes and hindering efforts to slow world population growth."

Men and women can, however, share more of the responsibility for family planning, says Bruce Stokes, author of the paper, "Men and Family Planning." New research reveals that men have much more interest in contraception—and a willingness to practice it—than they have been given credit for. A male contraceptive pill may be available before the end of the century, and recent experience suggests that family planning programs aimed especially at men can increase condom use and reliance on vasectomy.

"Men's involvement with birth control is initially constrained by human biology," Stokes observes. "It is women, not men, who get preg-

nant, and women's fertility may be easier to control than men's. But these practical constraints do not explain the limited and often negative role many men play in family planning."

In fact, recent studies of American men indicate that they overwhelmingly favor family planning and think that men and women should share responsibility for using it. A survey of Mexican men found they believed in limiting the number of their children, and the initial results of World Health Organization research in five Third World countries showed that men in a variety of social and cultural settings had a degree of interest in family planning that belies their poor reputation.

"This contradiction between many men's attitudes and their behavior can be explained in part by the fact that few societies expect men to use contraception or hold them fully accountable for the children they father," the author says. "Moreover, many men fear that freeing women from repeated childbearing will diminish the man's traditionally dominant role in the family. Poverty can reinforce these beliefs. In most countries, men with low incomes are less supportive of family planning than are middle- or upper-class men."

Despite some men's poor family planning record, male contraceptive methods are anything but obsolete. Until two decades ago, most couples practicing family planning used male contraceptive methods. Of the more than 250 million people in the world currently using contraception, one-third rely on male methods. The study also reports that most of the people who rely on male contraception live in industrial countries.

"The number of couples using a male method of birth control is likely to increase in the years ahead," says Stokes, "and male sterilizations are becoming more popular in Great Britain, China and India. In addition, the development of a male pill could

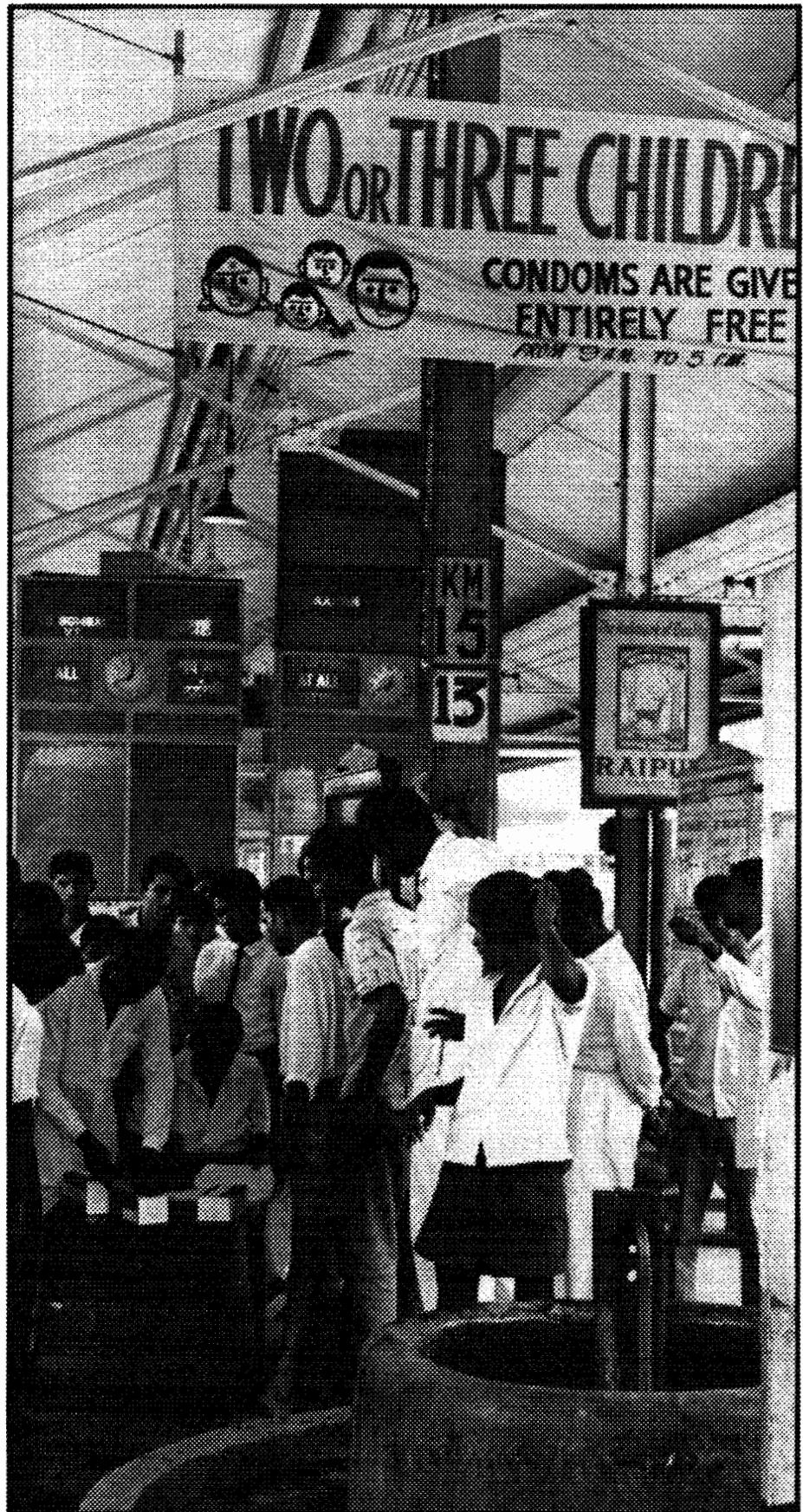
increase men's use of birth control dramatically." Clinical tests on such a pill have only begun, however, and until they are completed prospects for a male pill remain uncertain. Promising early results suggest it may be possible to halt the production of sperm without the health problems associated with the female pill and without changing male sexual characteristics. It is technically feasible that a male pill will be available within two decades.

A few organized programs are reaching out to men. In the early 70s, for example, nearly half the clients or mobile family planning teams in the Danfa region of Ghana were men. In this male-oriented society, men turned out to be much more conscientious contraceptive users than women and better family planning advocates in their community. One evaluation of the program suggests that at least half the fertility reduction in Danfa was related to male acceptance of contraception.

"If men are to play a more responsible role in family planning, they need society's support and encouragement," Stokes says. He notes that only \$155 million was spent worldwide on all male and female reproductive and contraceptive research in 1979.

"New male responsibility for family planning promises payoffs for both society and the individual," Stokes adds. "Studies in India and the Philippines suggest each vasectomy averts between two and three accidental births. Condom use may be the only effective means of halting the spread of venereal disease in the United States. And, by using contraception, men can share with women the burdens associated with almost any form of birth control."

He predicts that the changing patterns of contraceptive use, new male technologies and programs and growing understanding of men's interest "will create not only a new role for men in family planning, but also a new role for men in the family and in society. □



Family planning in India is convincing men to share responsibility for having babies.

Ever since Rudolf Flesch wrote "The Art of Plain Talk" 35 years ago, a few good men and women have been trying—against the onslaught of economists, educators, lawyers, social workers and MBAs—to promote the use of clear, crisp, simple English.

Alas, it sometime seems to be a losing battle. The obfuscators, "affixionados," Latinizers and sentence convoluters never give up in their quest to muck up a perfectly fine language.

One inevitable result of muddy language is suspicion on the part of the reader—suspicion that the writer doesn't know what he or she is talking about. Worse, especially when the murkiness comes from the government, is the suspicion that the writer is trying to hide something sinister. Allaying these suspicions should be reason enough for clarity in the written word.

Now David Jarmul, chief editor for Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA), has an even more pressing rationale in his new VITA publication, "Plain Talk: Clear Communication for International Development": "Writing for development projects should be as easy to understand as possible. After all, it is hard enough to understand a new concept, or how a strange machine works. Why complicate things with difficult language? People in rural areas rarely have much formal education. They don't understand fancy phrases, and neither do some extension workers. The problem is even worse for people who read English as a second language. Hard language blocks their way to new machines and ideas."

Jarmul attacks what he calls "fat writing." Indeed, most writing on international development is just that. Every "ameliorate" or "prioritize" is another blob of cholesterol clogging the arteries of communication.

The paperback book outlines a

IN PRINT

Plain Talk

A review by Edward R. Caplan



PLAIN TALK: Clear Communication for International Development, David Jarmul, Volunteers in Technical Assistance, ISBN 0-86619-131-3, Mt. Rainier, Md., 1981. Paperback. 76 pages. \$4.95.

system it calls "VITA Simple English." I don't know why VITA feels it owns the system, or even originated it. Flesch, Strunk and White, and many, many others both before and after them have fostered the same principles: avoid jargon and difficult words, use active rather than passive verbs, avoid long and complicated sentences, use parallel constructions, and the like.

I wonder, too, why Jarmul includes a long chapter on the Gunning Fog Index. This is a complicated formula that determines the amount of for-

mal education you need to understand a piece of writing. Valuable as the index is in some instances, it has several problems when applied to international development. It's geared to U.S. education levels, which don't mean much in developing countries. The computation is complex. The rules for counting hard words are a little confusing.

To the author's credit, he warns that readability formulas—even the Fog index—have their flaws: "They cannot measure grammar, clarity, organization, accuracy, interest, or the beauty of a phrase." In essence, Jarmul says readability formulas can tell you how bad your writing is, but not how good.

On the whole, "Plain Talk" contains a lot of valuable stuff, especially for anyone who has never been introduced to clear, simple writing. It carries on the tradition of such books by including a glossary of jargon—the words and phrases to avoid in favor of plainer equivalents. Thank you, David Jarmul, for listing "commence," "critical mass," "parameter," "replicate" and "terminate."

It's a pity, though, that there's no mention of the abominable affix—those syllables, usually Greek or Latin, tacked onto the beginning and end of words for the seeming purpose of making them incomprehensible. Non, for example. Non is really nothing, but in much bureaucratese has become a substitute for *un*, *in* or *not*. In real-world English, the opposite of formal is *informal*. In developmentese, it's *nonformal*. In AID, I've heard *nonconcur* used for disagree—and recently, when I selected a candidate for a job, the personnel office said I was *nonselecting* the other candidates.

David Jarmul, I welcome you to the good fight. □

Edward R. Caplan is chief of AID's press and publications division.

WHAT THE MEDIA SAY...

Insurrectionist movements in Central America are not inspired—merely exploited—by Cuba or the Soviet Union. Their real cause is the gap between the poor masses and the wealthy few who control those countries. Any U.S. policy that is not structured to deal with this reality as a first priority raises the danger of spreading violence and anti-American feelings.

—**Baltimore Sun**

One of those “few key countries” that deserves U.S. foreign aid is the Caribbean nation of Jamaica. It was symbolic that Prime Minister Seaga was the first foreign head of government to visit the Reagan White House. It's encouraging to see President Reagan . . . hosting one who promises to be a friend to our country, rather than a radical who takes our money while attacking our interests.

—**News-Free Press
Chattanooga, TN**

After years of taking Latin America for granted, the United States is finding that much of the region no longer shares its view of the world or yearns for a return to the days of American domination. The loud cheers with which the region's military regimes welcomed Mr. Reagan's victory last November echoed deep hostility toward the Carter Administration. Yet, in the main, they were toasting an end to United States intervention rather than submitting themselves to Mr. Reagan's leadership.

—**Alan Riding
New York Times**

For many years a series of presidents and Congresses increasingly approved the spending of billions and billions of U.S. dollars by international banks and organizations in ways that have been of little or no value to American interests. On many occasions these vast foreign aid handouts actually are used against U.S. interests.

It makes no sense for our government to be borrowing money at interest rates of 15% and more so that it can be given away or lent by an international bank at a small fraction of this amount to a country that couldn't care less where the money came from.

—**Globe-Democrat
St. Louis**

When Israelis worry about their future, which is most of the time, they usually think about their many enemies. . . . But the greatest threat to Israel's security may not be outside the country . . . it may come from inside Israel, from the staggering profligacy of a nation that is letting its economy fall to pieces . . . the Israeli economic bubble keeps expanding, fed by government printing presses and a citizenry that is heedless of its peril. When the bubble bursts, as it must, the shock will be as great as any terrorist attack or Arab jihad (holy war).

—**James Jackson
Chicago Tribune**

It is in America's self-interest to reduce the dependency of poor nations on our food. This would help stabilize income and jobs in U.S. agriculture which, ultimately, would strengthen our clout. Our objective should be to help poor nations to become more self-sufficient in food, and emphasize the long-term reliability of U.S. food exports on a commercial basis.

—**Richard Drobnick
Washington Star**

In the courting of an important Third World nation, we generally have the same array of inducements that is available to the Soviet Union. We can sell arms, and the Soviets can sell arms. We can use military might, and the Soviets can use military might. We can make threats, and the Soviets can make threats. But we have one very important weapon at our disposal that the Soviets can not even begin to approach—our economy.

Our foreign aid programs supply food for Third World nations unable to provide for themselves. It gives us an important lever to influence governments on decisions affecting U.S. interests. Through programs like the Peace Corps, we can export American knowledge and expertise to nations in need.

In other words, through foreign aid we show the world that while we can be formidable enemy, we can also be a very helpful friend.

That's what makes us different.

—**Review-Journal
Las Vegas**

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