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Development: Its Secular Past and Its Uncertain Future

Tom Sine

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The World Evangelical Fellowship is embarking on a historic journey by initiating this first consultation on a Theology of Development. In preparation for beginning this important journey together it is critical that we: 1) Analyze the essentially secular origin and values of western development; and 2) anticipate the challenges of an uncertain future that are likely to confront development specialists in the eighties and beyond.

DEVELOPMENT: ORIGIN AND VALUES

Before we attempt to articulate a Christian Theology of Development we must understand the essentially secular “Theology” of contemporary development, its origins and implicit values. Only then can we begin to give expression to a statement that reflects a uniquely divergent Biblical perspective. In order to surface these implicit values the following questions will be asked of western development. What are the implicit images of: The Better Future? God and His Universe? The Nature of Persons? The Pathway to the Achievement of that Better Future?

What is the Implicit View of the Better Future in Western Development?

Western development is a child of the European and American Enlightenment. It is based on the implicit belief that human society is inevitably progressing toward the attainment of a temporal materialistic kingdom. In fact, the certain belief that unending economic and social progress is a natural condition of free persons has become the secular religion of the west.

Somehow the millennial expectation of the inbreaking of a new transcendent kingdom was temporalized and secularized into the expectation of a future of unlimited economic and technological growth. In Francis Bacon’s book *The New Atlantis* we are shown the first vision in western history of a technological paradise achieved solely through the instrumentality of man. [p. 249](#)

Implicit in this progressive view of the future was the firm conviction that economic progress would automatically result in social and moral progress. Here then is a view of the better future that is primarily economic focusing largely on human activities of production and consumption. Not surprisingly the “good life” became synonymous with self-seeking and one’s ability to produce and consume goods and services.

The expansive nature of the Western dream of progress motivated westerners to go beyond their own national boundaries in search of both resources and markets as the Industrial Revolution began. The realization of the American dream was made possible by the appropriation of enormous areas of land and the resources they obtained from Native Americans. The great leap forward of industrial and economic growth in the west would not have been possible without the abundant relatively inexpensive resources acquired through colonization of countries in the southern hemisphere.

One of the realities that we as Christians must realize is that “missionary activity has gone hand in hand with colonization for almost two millenia. No matter how we interpret the underlying relations between the two orders, it is self-evident that political expansion

and the church's expansion in the world have covered the same ground, geographically and chronologically."¹

Since the church's expansion went hand in hand with western economic and political expansion the question with which we must struggle is: To what extent have the values of secular western development permeated Christian development?

As a point of information Marxist ideology was born out of the same Western ferment and also sees society moving towards a temporal future that is singularly economic and political. The intention of the Marxists is to ensure that all peoples participate in this future and they believe in its inevitability.

As we enter the eighties virtually no one any longer believes in the inevitability of economic, technological and social progress other than Marxists. The events of the seventies have sounded the death knell for the Enlightened belief that humankind could achieve a utopia here on earth. In spite of this new sobering awareness the essential image of the better future implicit in contemporary development has not significantly changed since the beginnings of western expansion. At the very core of contemporary development is a p. 250 notion that the better future is synonymous with economic growth. The "better life" of persons is really defined principally in economic terms. Nations which have experienced major economic and technological growth are described as "developed"; those which haven't are characterized as "underdeveloped". In spite of the growing awareness of the negative human and environmental consequences of unrestrained growth, the "developed" world has become a showcase of the "ideal" future for the "underdeveloped" world. The apparent superiority of the "developed" image of the ideal future has directly influenced the definition and goals of contemporary development. Thirty years ago the primary goal of western development in the Third World was "maximization of GNP per capita". Today the goal has been broadened to increasingly focus on "basic needs" to raise the economic level of the world's poorest people.²

John Sommers argues that "it has become increasingly clear that economic well-being is not sufficient goal and the measuring of development on the materialistic basis of per capita gross national product is inadequate and often misleading."³ He goes on to advocate that development should be defined in spiritual and cultural terms as well as economic. There are some non-Western models that are based on a broader understanding of the scope of development.

For example, Gandhi had a very different vision for the future of his people than the one that is implicit in the western model. "The Mahatma was wholly opposed to those who argued that India's future lay in imitating the industrial technological society of the west. India's salvation he argued lay in 'unlearning what she has learned in the past 50 years'. He challenged almost all of the western ideals that had taken root in India. Science should not order human values he argued, technology should not order society, and civilization was not the indefinite multiplication of human wants, but their limitation so that essentials could be shared by all."⁴

Gandhi's image of the better future for India was a nation of 600,000 decentralized villages which were highly self-sufficient units in which traditional culture, religion and

¹ Walberg Buhlmann, *The Coming of the Third Church* (New York: Orbis Books, 1977), p.42.

² Morawetz, David, *Twenty-five Years of Economic Development* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1977), p.7.

³ Sommers, John, *Beyond Charity: U.S. Voluntary Aid for a Changing Third World* (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Development Council, 1977), p.3.

⁴ Collins, Larry and LaPierre, Dominique, *Freedom at Midnight* (New York: Simon Schuster, 1975).

family life were strengthened. While longing to see grinding poverty ended, he opposed development which would create material affluence, because he was [p. 251](#) convinced that affluence would lead to cultural erosion and moral bankruptcy. His vision for the future gave primacy not to economic development, but to the development of the inner spirit and the reinforcement of positive values within traditional culture.

What is the Implicit View of God and His Universe in Western Development?

Western views of development are not only tied to singularly secular notions of the better future, but secular views of God and His universe as well ... that have their origins in the Enlightenment. In sixteenth century England Francis Bacon drew a historic line between the “words of God” and the “works of God”. By that act he gave major momentum towards a new dualistic view of the universe. Essentially all in the natural order that can be experienced through the senses was lumped into the “works of God”. The revelational and spiritual aspects of existence were pigeon-holed under the “words of God”.

Not only was the Creator seen as passive but His creation was also seen as a passive realm, a grab bag of physical resources available for the taking. This dualistic view of God and His universe has resulted in a desacralization of His creation. Westerners learned to think of the world around them as nothing but resources to be exploited to enable them to achieve their materialistic dreams for the future.

Jeremy Rifkin asserted, “Faith in the liberating power of materialism carries with it one critical assumption, the belief the earth possesses unlimited abundance. The formulators of liberalism, the men of the Age of Reason and the Enlightenment, had no doubt that the earth would yield more wealth than could possibly be used ... In the 1600’s the new world, the greatest frontier known, was just opening up for exploitation. By the beginning of the next century, industrialism had begun. Wherever people looked it seemed that the world held more—more wealth, more prosperity, more productivity, more knowledge to be used in the service of humanity. The obvious contrast with the unchanging order of the Middle Ages was proof to all persons of reason that the new age was superior to all that had come before.”⁵ This secularized view of God and His universe was foundational to the economic growth and expansion of an age of western development.

The dualism of Bacon and his followers has borne its fruit in our [p. 252](#) age. In contemporary development as in much of western culture there is no belief that God lives and acts in history. The world and its future are perceived to be solely in the hands of man. Contemporary development theory is premised on a thorough-going secularization of the natural and human orders. In reading contemporary development literature not the slightest consideration is given to the possibility that God is, or that He has any influence on human affairs. In fact, the literature tends to deny even the existence of any realm beyond human sensory experience. It is assumed in development theory that “developed” peoples have the responsibility through rational, development planning, to enable as many of the world’s “underdeveloped” people as possible to join the inner circle of economic growth and prosperity.

The massive exploitation of global resources has brought us to a new reality. The *First Report to the Club of Rome* in 1973 called to everyone’s attention that new reality ... that the earth is not infinite, it is finite. This new reality more than any other contemporary insight has put to rest the western belief in both the inevitability and indeed the possibility of all people fully participating in the western dream.

⁵ Rifkin, Jeremy and Howard, Ted, *The Emerging Order: God in the Age of Scarcity* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1979), p.25.

Far from being simply a passive malleable resource as Bacon had suggested ... we have recently discovered that for every act we take against God's world it seems to have a capability to counter-punch. We can no longer thoughtlessly exploit the natural order. We are being forced to consider the consequence of every act we take. We are being forced to perceive ourselves as stewards not of passive resources but of a vast, active fragile planetary system. Recent development literature is beginning to belatedly reflect this new view. Unfortunately transnational corporations are slower to espouse this new awareness.

What is the Implicit View of Persons in Western Development?

Closely related to the image of God and His universe implicit in western development is the image of humanity. When Francis Bacon divided the natural and the sacred realm he unwittingly divided body from soul. Even as the universe was reduced to nothing but the sum of its physical properties ... many in the west learned to view persons as nothing but the sum of their biological components ... in a universe freed from divine presence and purpose, human beings were increasingly seen as alone. Their lives were seen as having no sense of divine intention or innate worth.

In an essentially economic world-view their worth was seen as largely derivative. To the extent that the individual contributed to the p. 253 collective economic growth, to that extent the individual was viewed as having worth. Therefore one of the primary characteristics of persons in western culture is to identify themselves and indeed derive significance and meaning for life from their ability to produce and consume.

Self-interest and self-seeking became the basis of this new society of economic progress and growth. It was widely assumed during the Enlightenment that if individuals pursued their own private self-interest it would work for the common good. John Locke was the archapostle of this new doctrine. He condemned the American Indians for living on land filled with abundant resources and not exploiting them in order to live lives of personal affluence.

"With Locke, the fate of modern man and woman is sealed. From the time of the Enlightenment on, the individual is reduced to the hedonistic activity of production and consumption to find meaning and purpose. People's needs and aspirations, their dreams and desires, all become confined to the pursuit of material self-interest."⁶

Man's sense of meaning, identity and worth are derived from his ability to successfully participate and compete in an essentially economic world. Increasingly Americans have learned to derive their very identity from what they produce and what they consume. Those in western culture not able to fully participate in the economic rat race are seen as a threat to the entire system. Persons are reduced to their economic value to the larger technocratic order. Pope John Paul has declared that capitalism reduces persons to consumptive things and communism reduces them to economic things.

The seventies have accurately been characterized as the "me first" decade in America. The self-seeking encouraged by Locke and Jefferson has in contemporary western culture become an absolute mania. The good life for the individual is strongly oriented towards acquisitive, consumptive and status-seeking behaviour ... even among Christians.

Modern development conceiving this world as primarily an economic realm tends to talk about human personality, human activity and human goals in largely economic terms ... such as human resources, beneficiaries, etc. Therefore, modern development activity tends to foster a reductionistic view of human personality and activity. p. 254

What is the Implicit View of the Pathway to this Better Future in Western Development?

⁶ Rifkin, p.33.

Even though the proponents of western progress believed in the inevitability of the attainment of a materialistic paradise on earth, they also believed it would only be achieved through the initiative of rational man. The instrumentality of man, not the initiative of God was essential to create this new age.

Bacon proclaimed that he had discovered a new promethean power that would enable humankind to fashion a new technological utopia. That power was the rational human ability to empirically examine the natural world. Empirically derived knowledge was new power that would enable humankind to subdue a passive nature and create a new materialistic utopia.

Locke, believing that all human activity is based on materialistic self-interest, encouraged self-seeking as yet another pathway to achieve this enlightened paradise. Thomas Jefferson incorporated in the "Religion of America" the Lockean life goal of the individualistic pursuit of happiness ... as a cardinal doctrine.

Adam Smith, building on the philosophy of Locke, created a new economics of growth that became an essential pathway to the temporal kingdom of progress. He removed any sense of morality from economics. Essentially he postulated that individuals should have complete freedom to pursue self-interest in the quest for economic gain. He maintained that if they were given that freedom that the invisible hand of natural law would ensure that the common good would be achieved through private selfishness. This is the premise of capitalism.

"Smith championed the cause of a growing class of manufacturers who saw their interests stifled by government monopolies and the closed ranks of the mercantilists. Just as Locke had promoted the social interests of bourgeois merchants and traders, Smith appealed to 'natural laws' based on Newtonian-Baconian science to legitimize the economic interests of the new industrial entrepreneurs."⁷

Since contemporary advocates of development no longer view progress as inevitable and since there is no God even to lend endorsement, even greater responsibility has been shifted to human initiative to set the world right. Until recently it was believed that global development could be best achieved through the intervention of high technology and advanced science. With the publication of p. 255 Schumacher's classic *Small is Beautiful* in 1973, people began to shift their attention to smaller and more appropriate technological responses to development needs in the Third World. Science and technology are still seen as a primary pathway to the better future. All that has changed is the realization of the importance of appropriate application whether we are talking about community health, sanitation or agriculture.

The laissez-faire economics introduced by Adam Smith are still alive and well and provide the foundation for most contemporary development planning. This model based on a belief that private selfishness will secure the common good has, however, fallen on hard times in many sectors. During the past 70 years a host of socialist régimes have sought to demonstrate another pathway of planned economics ... that elevate the common good above private gain. Marxist ideology opposes western economics and development planning as obscuring the real problem of the overthrow and replacement of unjust structures.

More recently the disastrous environmental and human consequences of global corporate expansion has seriously challenged the premise of Adam Smith's economic model causing many to call for a new economic order. Even so most western development activity tends to accept this model of economic growth as given and it is seen as a primary pathway, in its diverse expressions, to a better economic future.

⁷ Rifkin, p.34.

As long as the better collective and personal future is defined almost exclusively in economic and physical terms, contemporary development has no pathways to that future other than the appropriate application of science and technology, growth economics and utilitarian education.

DEVELOPMENT: AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

To effectively articulate a biblical theology of development we must not only understand its secular origins, we must also anticipate its uncertain future. Every indicator seems to suggest that the final two decades of the 20th century are going to be filled with dramatic change that will have its greatest impact on the planetary poor. The eighties will be the decade of the poor.

By 1955 virtually all Third World countries secured their political independence from the colonial systems of the past. Between 1955 and 1975 this planet experienced the greatest period of economic growth in the history of civilization. During this unprecedented p. 256 period of economic growth the gap between rich and poor within nations widened at a dramatic rate. This growing inequity motivated the "Group of 77" (now comprised of more than 100 Third World countries) to make a presentation in the United Nations in 1974 calling for a New International Economic Order. While the nations of the north have, somewhat reluctantly, consented to discuss their proposals for a more just international economic order, they have not been willing to adopt any significant reforms in the present system. Therefore, it can be reasonably expected in light of this resistance that as the northern hemisphere continues to pursue a course of maximum economic growth, much of that growth will come at the expense of the southern hemisphere. And the gap between rich and poor will continue to expand through the eighties.⁸

This relentless commitment by the west to unrestrained economic growth and the projected growth of global population to six billion persons by the year 2000 puts our planet under mounting stress. The U.S. Office of Technology Assessment predicts that the projected levels of combined economic and population growth will seriously threaten the carrying capability of our finite planet through: massive pollution of air and water, deforestation, creation of deserts, elimination of natural areas of wildlife habitats, depletion of fish stocks, progressive simplification and homogenization of nature. They concluded that these pressures on the environmental system will contribute to at least double digit inflation world-wide for the foreseeable future. Of course those who will be most dramatically impacted by high inflation will be the poor.⁹

To further compound this situation many transnational corporations are consciously involved with altering customs and tastes of persons within Third World culture. Their intention is to redefine the nature of good life for persons in all cultures in order to expand the global market for Coke, Twinkles, Nabisco crackers and a host of other western consumer products. This transnational economic activity is expedited by the growing control of a broad range of communication networks and technologies by transnational corporations. A "communication industrial complex" is being formed which controls everything from satellite communication systems to a growing number of television and

⁸ McLaughlin, Marlin, *The United States and World Development: Agenda 1979* (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1979), p.25.

⁹ Technology and Population, United States Office, of Technology Assessment, 21 August, 1978, p.2.

media networks within Third [p. 257](#) World nations.¹⁰ The consequences of this conscious effort to change culture for the sake of market expansion and the use of media to expedite this process is likely to foster widespread cultural destabilization and westernization throughout the southern hemisphere in the future.

Beyond cultural imposition “global corporations exploit their superior bargaining power in weak disorganized societies to carry out a series of activities which can offer exceptionally high profits for the world-wide enterprise, but which often promote economic and social backwardness within countries: the manipulation of transfer prices rob the countries of foreign exchange and reasonable earnings from exports. The technology transferred by multinationals, which is usually designed for the home market in a developed society, is inappropriate to the needs of poor countries. It often displaces jobs and is overpriced. The products manufactured in poor countries are beyond the reach of the majority of people who lack the money to buy them. Such products are consumed by local élites in enclaves of affluence or they are exported. The export-led model of development of which the multinational corporation has been the major engine has meant crippling debt and increasing dependence on rich countries, their private banks and the international lending agencies which they control. Because of their superior control over capital, technology, and marketing, global corporations can dominate local economies and pre-empt the power to plan for the society.”¹¹ Therefore as multinationals increase in their influence and power in the economic life of the southern hemisphere they will also increase their control over the societies in which they do business.

Not only are the poorer people of this planet likely to lose in the competition for economic resources; they are also likely to be compromised by increasing competition for arable land. As we approach six billion people on our small spaceship the land on which we grow food is dramatically shrinking. In the United States and Western Europe thousands of acres of prime agricultural land is lost every year to parking lots, freeways, suburban sprawl and urban development. In the Third World desertification, deforestation and urban expansion is also devouring large quantities of land that had been used to [p. 258](#) produce food and fuel. The consequence of this situation is that the affluent western consumer is increasingly competing with his neighbour in the southern hemisphere for food grown on his land. This has resulted in land in Guatemala, Haiti and Costa Rica being taken out of domestic food production to provide North Americans with between-meal snacks. Evidence indicates that increased beef exports from Central America to the United States have contributed to the growth of malnutrition and hunger in those regions.¹²

The issue of the just use of arable land is likely to become a major discussion focus in the eighties as the problems of hunger and the dependency of the global poor on imported food both increase. Michael Harrington in his book *The Vast Majority* states that there are 70 million people on this planet in imminent danger of starvation, 400 million who are chronically malnourished and fully one billion who don't get enough to eat. Forecasts suggest that the number of hungry people in the world will more than double by 1995.

¹⁰ Hamelink, Cees. *The Corporate Village: The Rôle of Transnational Corporations in International Communication* (Rome: IDCC Europe Dossier Four, 1977), p. 11.

¹¹ Barnet, Richard J. “Multinationals and Development: Jegen, M. E. and Wilber, C. K. (Ed) *Growth With Equity: Strategies for Meeting Human Needs* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979).

¹² Keene, Beverly, “Export-cropping in Central America,” Background Paper §43, January 1980. Bread for the World, New York.

Add to this reality the fact that the poor nations are becoming increasingly dependent upon imports of food staples ... the countries of South Asia, for example, which imported five to six per cent of their food in 1960 and eight to nine per cent in 1975 will need to import 17–18 per cent of their food by 1995 if historical trends continue.¹³

Given the energy inputs required to produce those staples in the west and escalating cost of that energy, it is altogether possible that countries will not be able to afford to purchase the food they will need to offset their growing domestic deficits in the future. What we are belatedly discovering as population continues to explode is that the earth's resources are not infinite. They are finite. Increasing competition for land, food, energy and minerals will continue to benefit the world's wealthy at the expense of the world's poor.

Perhaps no other area of population growth is going to place greater stress on human and environmental systems in the eighties and nineties than the overwhelming growth of Third World cities. "By the end of the century three quarters of all Latin Americans and one third of all Asians and Africans will ... be living in cities."¹⁴ Mexico City is projected to become the world's largest city growing p. 259 from its present population of 11 million to more than 31 million persons by the year 2000. Sao Paulo, Brazil is forecast to be second in size with 25 million.¹⁵ The extent of peril for persons in these areas of urban explosion can scarcely be exaggerated. These populations are expanding with virtually no comparable expansion in basic life support systems in food, water, sanitation and housing.

One cannot look at the planetary future without considering the political, spiritual and social dimensions of societal change. These are much harder to predict, but still merit discussion. In the political realm the dramatic expansion of global arms expenditures from \$350 billion in 1976 to \$425 billion in 1979 has significantly increased the danger of conflict while using vast planetary resources that could be used for human development. The widespread availability of nuclear and other megadeath weapon systems will also increase the risk of their use.¹⁶ Some futurists believe that the possibility of polarization between the northern and southern hemispheres is even greater than the present chill between east and west.

At any point in history the principalities and powers are in a life and death struggle with the forces of light. Human society generally and the Church specifically is going to be faced with an avalanche of human problems, rising deprivation and threatened persecution. In addition there are going to be significant changes within the Church. For example, Buhmann predicts in his book, *The Coming of the Third Church*, that over half the Christians in the world are going to be living in the southern hemisphere by the year 2000. This new reality was influential in the Pope's recent decision to visit Latin America. It means that the centre of power of the Church is likely to shift from the northern to the southern hemisphere. Western development agencies need to come to grips with this shift and reexamine their relationship with the Church in the southern hemisphere. In view of growing global inequity there will probably be an increasing struggle between those who

¹³ Enzer, S., Drobnick, R. and Alter, S. "World Food Prospects: The Next Twenty Years," *The Futurist*, 1978, p.288.

¹⁴ Tinberger, Jan (Ed), *Rio: Reshaping the International Economic Order* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1976), p.31.

¹⁵ "Hemisphere Trends," *Americas*, January 1979, p.17.

¹⁶ Sivard, R. L. "World Military and Social Expenditures," Background Paper §21, February 1978, Bread for the World.

see the Gospel in largely personal terms and those who see it primarily in terms of liberation from unjust economic and political structures.

The growing political conservatism of the west, double digit inflation and the erosion of the discretionary income among contributors in western nations are likely to combine to reduce the amount of money available for development. If Christian organizations don't [p. 260](#) design intentional systems of co-operation we are likely to see a decade of increasing interagency competition for a shrinking financial resource.

How should the people of God generally and Christian development agencies specifically respond to the anticipated challenges of the next two decades? Should we give up on the poor? The future? The mission of the Church? Thousands of American Christians caught up in an eschatology of escape have done just that. In view of their eschatology they genuinely believe that they can't make any difference in their world. They hold absolutely no hope for the future other than their own personal escape. This great escape mentality in reality becomes an incredible cop-out from all that God calls us to be and to do. Believing the human future to be hopeless they often buy into the secular religion of the west using their resources to get a piece of the corpulent consumer pie while the getting is still good. The consequence of this latter-day fatalism and consumptive lifestyle is devastating to the mission of Christ's Church. Incredible quantities of resources that could be used in the mission of the Church in development, evangelism and church planting are squandered in the pursuit of a different dream.

Instead of allowing the anticipated challenges of the next two decades to immobilize us into a non-biblical fatalism ... we need to see them as opportunities to be the People of God in a way we have never been before. Frankly, a "business as usual" approach in our Christian organizations and churches will not begin to impact the human challenges facing us in the future. Only a new radical biblical offensive, beginning in our own lives, churches and organizations, has the possibility of effectively responding to these kinds of challenges. Christian development agencies need to dramatically increase their capability to respond to the anticipated needs of the eighties before they become critical.

Therefore, I propose that we:

1. Develop an ongoing capability to anticipate new areas of human deprivation and crisis before they arrive ... in order that we have time to mobilize resources and design development responses;
2. Draft a biblical theology of development that will enable us to more compassionately and aggressively respond to the anticipated challenges of the future ... striving to achieve God's intended future for all peoples;
3. Redesign our total agency development activities so that they are fully congruent with our biblical theology ... from approaches to [p. 261](#) health care to servanthood management models;
4. Create a process to co-operatively design a broad spectrum of imaginative new biblical responses to the anticipated challenges of the eighties and nineties in areas such as economic development, multinational accountability, cultural development, etc.;
5. Establish new co-operative relationships between Christian agencies to reduce competition, duplication and more effectively use God's resources to expand into new areas of human need; plus developing a global strategy to co-operatively address the escalating deprivation of the eighties.
6. Challenge believers and Christian organizations in the west to promote the just use of global resources through seeking to dramatically simplify personal and institutional lifestyles to free many more resources of time, gifts and money for the work of God's kingdom among the poor;

7. Commit western development agencies and their staff to leading the western Church into patterns of voluntary simplicity through:
 - a. Dramatically reducing overhead by decorating offices simply, exclusively using budget hotels, restaurants and transportation, significantly increasing the use of volunteers at all levels and seeking to reduce all overhead that isn't absolutely essential to mission;
 - b. Seeking separate funding for all agency overhead expenses so that the full amount of contributed dollars can be directly used in Third World development;
 - c. Making a commitment to a lifestyle of voluntary simplicity a condition of employment (leaving it to the individual to find God's direction as to how to pursue simplicity in his own life);
 - d. Providing regular seminars within agencies on biblical discipleship, Third World mission and voluntary simplicity;
8. Use the resources that are freed through voluntary simplicity and co-operation to significantly increase our ability to respond to those anticipated areas of greatest urban and rural needs in the eighties.

In view of the anticipated human needs of the next two decades, Christian development agencies need to take the initiative in challenging the church to mobilize all of its resources and creativity to significantly increase its capacity for global mission. We have absolutely no idea of the change God could bring in a world of escalating need [p. 262](#) if we were to fully commit ourselves and our resources to seeking first His kingdom of justice, righteousness, reconciliation, peace and love ... in anticipation of that day when it fully comes.

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Beyond Relief, Development and Justice

John Alexander

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RELIEF IS VITAL, BUT ...