The Stanley Foundation

NO. 14 Fall 1993

courier

PROVOKING THOUGHT AND DIALOGUE ABOUT THE WORLD

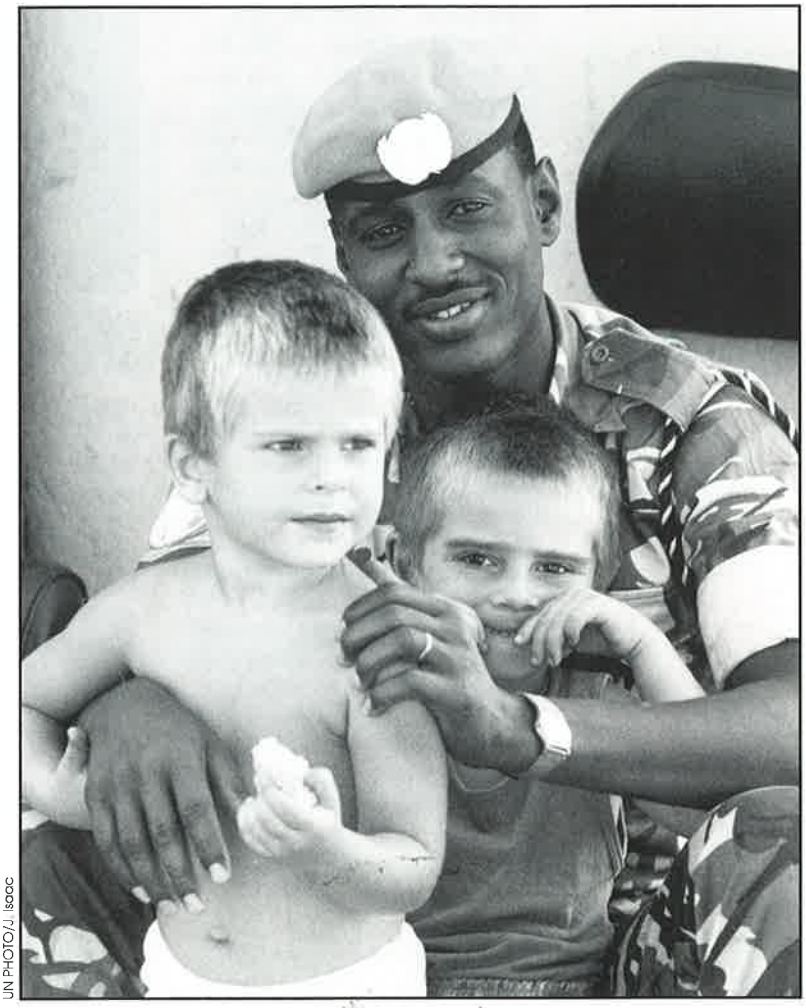
The UN Option

"Do Something" Part 2

inside

Protector. *A UN peacekeeper from Kenya aids two Croatian children.*

In our last issue we reported on US decisions to intervene to halt human suffering. But more often, the world is looking to the UN for answers.



UN PHOTO/J. Isaac

On March 21, 1990, Sam Nujoma was sworn in as the first president of Namibia. Javier Perez de Cuellar, then the United Nations Secretary-General, administered the oath of office. It was an appropriate gesture given the enormous role that the United Nations had played in ending seventy-five years of colonial rule in Namibia.

The final part of the UN role was the deployment of the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), the largest and most ambitious UN peacekeeping effort up to its time. The effort involved 7,900 men and women from 109 countries. It included activities ranging from monitoring the cease-fire that ended a twenty-three-year-old civil war, to registering more than 700,000 voters, to conducting the elections that swept Nujoma to office. The operation took less than a year and came in under budget.

The Namibia experience excited people at the United Nations. Secretariat officials who took part in UNTAG were energized and talked about being ready to take on other Namibia-style operations. The Cold War was finally over; and the United Nations, long a marginal actor on war and peace issues, seemed ready to take on a much larger role.

The hope that it can do so effectively remains alive today. All around the world, people are looking to the United Nations to take a more active role in conflict resolution. But in the last two years, troubled operations in the former Yugoslavia and in Somalia have raised questions about how much more it can do.

UN INTERVENTION
-continued on page 2

UN PHOTO/P.S. Sudhakaran

Successful End?
UNTAC forces from Tunisia arrive in Cambodia to ensure peaceful elections last May. Many observers wonder when they will be able to return home.

UN INTERVENTION
-continued from page 1

Mixed Record

One thing is certain: the United Nations has been much more active. The Security Council, freed from the constraints of the superpower rivalry, has approved fourteen peacekeeping operations since 1988. Forces have been deployed in Angola, Western Sahara, El Salvador, Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia, and Somalia, among others. The United Nations also authorized the war which pushed Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. In Haiti, sanctions and persistent mediation, both done under UN auspices, led efforts to address that country's most recent political crisis.

Some peacekeeping operations—most notably El Salvador—have gone well. The most ambitious undertaking has been in Cambodia where the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) practically ran the country while preparations were made for elections. Despite Khmer Rouge threats to disrupt them, the elections last May drew better than 90 percent participation. The United Nations hopes to be able to end UNTAC by handing over authority to a new coalition government. Yet observers are divided in assessing the prospects for the long-term success of UNTAC.

But the most notable problem operations have been the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia and UNISOM II in Somalia. Both are humanitarian relief operations taking place where wars continue to rage. In fact this past June in Somalia, UNISOM II became one of the warring parties, engaging in offensive military actions against General Mohammed Farah Aidid, leader of one of the country's factions, after he had earlier ambushed UN forces. Similarly, in Bosnia the threat of force to support UN troops has become an important element in the political dynamic. The most severe critics of these operations say the United Nations has actually made things worse. Those who view the operations more charitably see the world body doing the best it can in nearly impossible situations.

Another serious problem has arisen in Angola where the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNIVEM II) stumbled over the fact that the loser in last year's election, Jonas Savimbi, refused to accept the results and restarted the civil war. Elsewhere, political difficulties have kept the Western Sahara operation from fulfilling its mission. And in Mozambique, the Security Council approved a peacekeeping mission (ONUMOZ), but it took member nations a long time to muster the troops and financial resources to implement it. This has set back execution of the peace plan.

On top of all this, the costs of peacekeeping operations have grown to more than $3 billion dollars annually, and many countries are balking at paying the tab. Meanwhile, peacekeeping officials at UN headquarters in New York—the people most responsible for these operations—are understaffed and overworked.

Underlying Problems

So then what about the future? Can the United Nations be counted upon to intervene in new crises? Washington hopes so. The Clinton administration has made multilateral intervention a goal of its foreign policy and has urged that the United Nations' capabilities to carry out such missions be bolstered.

This past June in Salzburg, Austria, the Stanley Foundation convened a group of 20 experts to consider "The UN Role in Intervention: Where Do We Go From Here?" The group was composed of UN ambassadors, present and

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former UN officials, and academic experts from around the world. The discussions highlighted several key points about UN operations. First, the organization has been breaking new ground with its recent peacekeeping operations. The idea of peacekeeping originated during the Cold War and had limited application. Peacekeepers were token forces deployed to stand between combatants who had agreed to stop fighting. Today, forces in the field do everything from civil administration, to policing, to delivering humanitarian relief, to election organizing, and more. Often they are deployed where the commitment to stop fighting is weak and frequently violated. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali has taken an initiative to categorize different kinds of field operations. But it is clear that there is still much confusion about the role played by blue-helmeted troops in different circumstances.

Second, the whole idea that the United Nations could intervene in internal conflicts is still new. The UN Charter actually prohibits interference in internal affairs, and the whole system was designed to deal with attacks across borders. But in recent years the Security Council has decided on several occasions that a gross violation of human rights or a humanitarian emergency could threaten international peace and security, thus authorizing UN action. Unfortunately, the council has been uneven in its identification of and response to such problems and has opened itself up to criticism. For example, Islamic nations note that the council seems eager to act against Saddam Hussein when he threatens Kurds and Shiites in Iraq but has no stomach for forceful protection of Muslims in Bosnia.

Third, the Security Council is a political body. Its members are inclined to think first of their national interests. If those interests coincide with the interests of a wider international community, there's no problem. But if there is no deep national interest in solving a problem in a remote country, and if the costs might be high, the prospects of council members taking effective action diminish.

Finally, in some quarters the United Nations is gaining a reputation as the defender of an old, unjust world order. This is especially true in developing countries where the benefits of political democracy and market economics have not been realized and where people have sought empowerment through affiliation with sometimes militant ethnic or religious groups.

Steps for Improvement

Without a crystal ball it is impossible to say how effectively the United Nations will be able to intervene in the future. But participants at the Salzburg conference discussed several measures which could help.

- Articulate a strategic doctrine for UN forces in the field. A uniformly understood doctrine should reduce operational problems by eliminating confusion over the troops' mission.
- Improve the availability of troops to the UN by obtaining prior troop commitments from member countries or by equipping the organization with its own, independent volunteer force ("an international foreign legion"). The ability to deploy troops quickly and in significant numbers could prevent conflicts from deteriorating into chaos.
- Improve the policy analysis capability of the UN Secretariat so that the Security Council and General Assembly are given more fully developed policy options. Current attempts to restructure the Secretariat are taking the organization in this direction but much more could be done.
- Shore up the Security Council's credibility. Inconsistent decision making arising from political considerations is at the core of the problem, and participants saw no hope for fixing that through the adoption of firm criteria for intervening. But the council could at least add some transparency to its processes and thereby alleviate suspicions. Additionally, early discussions have begun on expanding council membership to make it more representative.

Finally, a few conference participants argued that all of these steps—and many more—could be taken, all to no avail. They maintain that efforts to implement the UN Charter's collective security scheme are doomed to fail. The key to peace and security lies in redirecting UN efforts to attack the root causes of conflict—economic and social injustice. To accomplish that, the United Nations needs to be reconstituted.

Exclusive pursuit of that course seems unlikely. Alternatively, many expert observers argue that parallel tracks—bolstering the UN's ability to intervene in crises and restructuring to deal with economic and social ills—could be followed simultaneously.

-Jeffrey Martin

All around the world, people are looking to the UN to take a more active role in conflict resolution.

Participants at the Stanley Foundation's 27th United Nations of the Next Decade Conference in Salzburg, Austria, included UN ambassadors from eight countries, present and former UN officials, the former top official in the UN's Namibia operation, and a mix of academic experts and journalists. The discussions are off the record, and individual participants cannot be quoted. But the foundation widely circulates the ideas discussed at the conference as a way to make the UN more effective. See page 10 to order a conference report or a cassette from the *Common Ground* program entitled "Keeping Peace, Making War." (#9327)

Regrouping or Dividing?

American Foreign Policy

With its thirty million residents and a gross economic product of $700 billion, California is by far the most populous and the richest state in this nation. In fact, California has the tenth largest economy in the world—larger than most national economies, including that of neighboring Mexico. But the recession and defense industry cutbacks have forced California to try to diversify its economy. That has meant greatly expanding its global economic links.

Traditionally, US trade has flowed between the East Coast and Europe. Now countries such as Mexico and those in the Pacific Rim are sought-after markets. Those countries to the south and west of California are also the source of the state's changing demographics. Los Angeles is now the second-largest Hispanic city in the world after Mexico City, and Chinese is the second most common foreign language in the state.

CHANGES & TRANSFORMATIONS
One in a Series

While vastly larger, California's situation is representative of what many regions in the US are experiencing. America as a whole is expected to become ever more closely tied to Mexico and the Pacific Rim, and California is leading the way. Or is it? No one really knows whether California, long a symbol of hope and opportunity, still represents America's future. Economic and demographic transformations are changing the way America looks at domestic and foreign policy issues and creating a host of new issues that are, as yet, undefined.

Because California is in the midst of profound change, the Stanley Foundation chose to hold its third meeting of the Global Changes and Domestic Transformations project in San Diego. The project is exploring the convergence of domestic and foreign policy concerns and whether the increasingly diverse interests of American society fit into a larger national interest. David Doerge, director of the Global Changes project, says they chose to hold this conference in Southern California "because the region's rapidly multiplying global relationships reflect in a microcosm the broader economic, demographic, and political transformations that are changing America's global relationships and because of the challenges for policymakers that will arise as Southern California—and other regions across the country—begin to develop their own unique global perspective."

The Global Changes and Domestic Transformations conference series was launched in 1992 in Iowa City, Iowa, and another meeting will take place this fall in Chicago. These meetings are purposely set outside the traditional eastern foreign policy centers to engage new thinkers and to reflect the increasing diversity of the community of Americans now interested in America's relationships with the world. The settings also highlight a growing perception that the economic transformations occurring regionally in the US have already greatly diminished Washington's influence.

The Cold War Stranglehold

For forty years international relations were dominated by Cold War politics. Fear of communism and America's postwar prosperity put most citizens squarely behind its very active, if somewhat secretive, international leadership. With communism out of the way today, economics have taken center stage even in US foreign affairs. But unlike the Cold War years, there is no longer a national consensus on how the US conducts itself in the world. That's why regions like Southern California are developing their own relationships with other parts of the world.

And it's not clear whether there is still a cohesive national agenda. Michael Clough, senior adviser to the Global Changes series says that "today there is no real agreement on an overriding [national] interest. You might say that Clinton's campaign slogan of 'jobs, jobs, jobs' substitutes for it, but it's quite different because, in fact, all the different regions and groups in the United States can promote jobs for their particular sectors in ways that may not necessarily be consistent with any larger national interest. What Seattle does to promote jobs in Seattle may in fact conflict with what Michigan does to promote jobs in Michigan."

What concerns people like Doerge and Clough is that in the absence of a bipartisan consensus on America's global relations, the US could become fractured by competing regional, ethnic, economic, and political interests. To avoid that, they are promoting this examination of America's relations, how policy gets made, who's involved, and whether Americans can or need to identify a set of national interests. They recognize that this is a transition period for the entire world—a period without precedent. At the San Diego meeting, conference chair Charlayne Hunter-Gault of the *MacNeil/ Lehrer NewsHour* advised the participants to think of themselves as "part of a process to aggressively ask questions."

The conference discussion did, in fact, yield many questions with these two dominating the session: How will the new demographic, economic, and social realities of America, and particularly California, change the policymaking process? Can regions such as Southern California formulate their own unique and coherent vision of the world? However, answers to the participants' questions or conclusions about the Southern California experience were more difficult to come by. Even though regions like Southern California may be increasingly handling some of their foreign relations independent of Washington, there is no readily apparent global perspective there or even a unified set of interests. People are deeply divided on policy issues by class and sectoral divisions. Even within these divisions people do not speak with one voice. Loyalties are splintered. The Californians at the Stanley Foundation conference noted the need for more institutions to help explore these ideas and move beyond the divisiveness.

The NAFTA Debate

No issue more clearly illustrates the changes in the way US foreign policy is made or the merging of foreign and domestic issues than the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). There are two predominant schools of thought on the NAFTA debate: either it will be the economic salvation of US businesses and workers in this era of decline; or, US jobs will be sucked down the Rio Grande to Mexicans willing to work for a fraction of US wages. No matter which side of the debate one takes, change is evident in the fact that more people than ever are weighing in on an international issue that once may have been left up to the foreign policy elite. Environmental organizations, labor representatives, human rights advocates, ethnic groups—all have had a clear impact on the proposal to create a free trade zone composed of Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

NAFTA also highlights the increasingly divergent regional and class differences in this country. For example, polls in the Southwestern United States reveal that a majority of people there favor NAFTA's plan to eliminate tariffs and other trade barriers between the three countries. Business people, in particular, foresee increased sales to neighboring Mexico from exports. But support for NAFTA is not universal even in the Southwest. Many workers in California and the industrial centers in the Midwest fear the wholesale loss of factory jobs if more US corporations relocate in Mexico.

In looking at California as a microcosm for the rest of the country, the conference participants were able to focus on the force and velocity with which both global and domestic relationships are changing. Formulating policies to meet the challenges of a country in flux is a difficult task, and quick answers are not readily available. But the Global Changes and Domestic Transformations project is attempting to frame the important issues emerging as this country regroups from the fall of the Cold War world order. In doing so, the project intends to promote a more inclusive debate. The project directors see this period of uncertainty as an opportunity to create a more open and flexible policymaking system—a system that recognizes the strengths in the increasingly multifaceted nature of America's global interests and relationships.

-Mary Gray Davidson

...in the absence of a bipartisan consensus on America's global relations, the US could become fractured by competing regional, ethnic, economic, and political interests.

See page 10 to order the full report from this conference or to order a Common Ground *program cassette (#9331).*

Conversion and the Stanley Foundation

Dan Clark is a program officer at the Stanley Foundation. He works with community programs and has a special interest in conversion. This is his summary of some foundation conversion efforts.

The St. Louis seminar (see adjacent story) included Russian participants representing the conversion and technology committees of the Moscow city council. Their three-week visit was organized by the St. Louis Economic Conversion Project with support from the Stanley Foundation. It grew out of a 1992 UN conference on aerospace conversion held in Moscow and attended by members of the St. Louis group.

Long before improved US-Soviet relations made the topic interesting to policymakers, the foundation's 1978 Strategy for Peace conference examined the conversion problem. The closing sentence from the report seems no less relevant today: "Adequate and effective conversion planning remains an important factor in public perception of the desirability of progress in arms reduction and disarmament."

Since then, we have cosponsored nine annual Quad-City Conferences on Peace and Security. Military dependence and conversion prospects have been a recurring theme because the Rock Island (Illinois) Arsenal is one of the largest employers in the foundation's backyard.

In 1990 and 1991, I took part in conversion discussions in Ohio, Moscow, and Leningrad; and in 1992 I chaired a conversion commission which met in Baltimore, Maryland. Commission members, who came from ten countries, were concerned about worldwide arms sales, led by the US and pursued by unconverted Russian manufacturers. They were pessimistic that governments will get out of the weapons business on a significant scale so long as they perceive that military production can be sustained somehow. And "somehow" may include inventing military missions and threats.

Diversify, Adjust, Convert

Downsizing Defense

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"St. Louis...long served on the front lines of keeping America strong. Defense industries not only kept us strong, but defense industries here provided high-wage, high-skill jobs for thousands of families that live...in St. Louis," House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) said in remarks to businesspeople gathered for the seminar, Defense Adjustment: Strategies for St. Louis. The home of the nation's top military contractor, McDonnell-Douglas, St. Louis has already felt the pain of post-Cold War downsizing.

As bases close and military spending declines, America has no choice but to recognize the trauma being felt in many communities and businesses. Long-time employees find their life plans shattered, and thriving regions are transformed into ghost towns. Businesses that once served the military are left without a customer and, too often, without the needed experience and expertise to find new ones. These transition challenges brought about the St. Louis seminar and are fueling new federal spending programs.

"Defense conversion is one of my highest priorities," said President Clinton earlier this year. His proposal calls for $5.2 billion through 1997 for displaced defense worker retraining, severance pay for members of the National Guard and reserves, early retirement for military personnel, and help for communities that lose military bases. There is also $4.7 billion through 1997 for developing "dual-use" technologies for civilian

and military use, as well as $9.65 billion for other new technology development. In total, these plans call for nearly $20 billion spent for various conversion efforts. Nevertheless, Carol Lessure of the Defense Budget Project says, "Of the money the administration claims will be spent through 1997, the $8.2 billion from the defense budget will likely be there. The rest, however, is competing for a shrinking pool of available money and will be much more difficult to find."

Unified Economy

In St. Louis, participants heard from Lee Buchanan, director of the Defense Science Office at the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), the chief government organizer of technology conversion efforts. "We're trying to move toward...a single, unified economy that will provide products into both the commercial sector and the defense sector," he said. Beyond developing these technologies, businesses also need to learn how to operate in this new economy. According to Buchanan, after a similar seminar in another city a man came to him and said, "I'm not in the business of conversion. I make outboard motor engines. I would like to establish a set of high-quality, dependable suppliers; and I can't get any of the former defense suppliers interested. They don't understand how to do business. They don't understand what a deal is. They don't understand what quality in delivery is. They've been working in your system so long that I can't use them, and they can't change."

Buchanan offered help to businesses who want to participate in the technology conversion program. Also offering government help was Paul Dempsey, director of the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment. "We respond to any community... that is significantly impacted by a base closure or a contractor layoff," he said. The office sets up local organizations to come up with plans for rebuilding economic activity. "The program has worked extremely well because it is a community-based program. I think [the people are] really remarkable [that] we encounter in even very small places—the level of talent and energy and interest and support that they provide," Dempsey said.

For the commercial sector, several speakers spoke of new business opportunities that former defense industries can exploit. Dr. John Kardos, a chemical engineer from Washington University, extolled the virtues of "composite material." Originally developed for use in equipment like the Seawolf submarine and the B-2 bomber, Kardos urged participants to think of new applications for these lightweight materials that are often stronger than the metals they are intended to replace. One Rhode Island company that previously made composites for the military is now hoping to sell similar materials to a tennis racquet manufacturer in Taiwan.

The president of the National Center for Manufacturing Sciences, Ed Miller, told the group that the defense adjustment process is also an opportunity for US business and government to rethink the American approach to new technology. "[Our international competitors] are investing substantially more in their new plants and equipment right now than we are, and they are probably a little more aggressive in rolling their companies into new products and new markets. We are doing the same things, but we are a little bit slower. We have had a little more bureaucracy to get through to get rolling, but I think the United States is ramping up very rapidly. We'll catch them in the next year or two."

Global Drawdown

As Ed Miller's comments demonstrate, there is an international aspect to defense adjustment. "The US is not alone in this process," said speaker Richard Bitzinger, an analyst with the Defense Budget Project. "We are witnessing a global drawdown in defense spending and therefore a global drawdown in defense production. Our European allies are experiencing many of the same problems we are right now. Their defense spending and military structures are both going down. There are defense industries in these countries which have overproduction, over-capacitization, and over-employment; and they are facing tough decisions on how to respond to this. The United States has a little bit more of a challenge because in Europe those companies that provided defense materiel...were already heavily diversified into nondefense production. That is very different than in the United States where we encouraged, after World War II, the development of many defense-dependent companies. So our companies have a longer way to go than a lot of European companies do."

For the companies represented at the St. Louis event, the reality—and the urgency—of defense adjustment is very clear. As Congressman Gephardt told them, "We have to be creative enough, strong enough, and courageous enough to figure out how to take the huge [industrial] capacity we have and convert it to something that will better people's lives. We can do that. And St. Louis can be the leader."

—Keith Porter

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Presidential Inspection. *Westinghouse Electronics, a military supplier, has attempted to diversify into products such as this electric-powered van.*

Several speakers at the Defense Adjustment: Strategies for St. Louis seminar were interviewed for the foundation's radio program Common Ground. *To order a copy of program #9323, please see the resource guide on page 10.*

Pain and Courage

In June, Keith Porter, producer of the foundation's radio program Common Ground, *attended the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna to gather material for a two-part broadcast. Cassette copies of the programs are available (#9329 and #9330). See the resource guide on page 10. The following are his observations on the conference.*

"A hall of horrors...and a hall of heroes" is how Felice Gaer described the nongovernmental organization's (NGO) area at the World Conference on Human Rights. For the first time in 25 years, high-level government delegations from around the globe gathered for a formal discussion of human rights. At the same time, 3,300 people from 1,500 NGOs showed up to make sure the official delegates wouldn't forget about the actual human rights victims languishing around the world.

A Display of Human Suffering

At the United Nations complex in Vienna, NGOs filled the hallways and small rooms of the conference center basement. Kashmiris and Kurds, Bosnians and Palestinians, survivors of torture, and former political prisoners mixed with other victims and activists in a Babel-like display of the range of human suffering.

Every wall and many floors carried photos of people killed, maimed, or otherwise deprived of their inalienable rights. Taken as a whole, the enormity of the ongoing worldwide abuse was almost too much to bear. "It is numbing," said Gaer, an official US delegate to the conference and director of the Jacob Blaustein Institute for Human Rights, "but then you talk to one victim and the whole thing becomes very real and very urgent, and you're back in it."

"For many government officials, this is the only time they will see anything like this," said Brian Dooley, a spokesman for the world's largest human rights NGO, Amnesty International. "Unfortunately few of them are making the journey downstairs.... They could learn a lot in twenty minutes."

Upstairs, in the main conference hall, formal speeches by government delegates were delivered to sparse audiences. Here, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali opened the meeting saying, "It is my conviction that our task is nothing less than setting up a civics workshop on a global scale. Only by heightening the international community's awareness of human rights in this way and involving everyone in this effort can we prevent future violations that our conscience, and the law, will condemn. Here, as elsewhere, preventive diplomacy is needed. I look to the conference to offer suggestions, innovations, and proposals to give increasing substance to this human rights diplomacy!"

NGOs Discouraged

Most participants hoped the conference would reaffirm the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1948 as well as establish a High (or Special) Commissioner for Human Rights with the power to condemn human rights abuses and bring them to the attention of the UN Security Council. There were also proposals to create an international court to prosecute such abuses.

Most NGOs backed these goals to some extent but found they had limited ability to interact with the true decision makers at the conference. A handful of nations—led by China, Iraq, Syria, Cuba, and others—demanded that the NGOs be shut out of the drafting committee that prepared the conference's final declaration. "Because the UN process has to be done by consensus, a few countries can throw a wrench into things," said Under Secretary of State-Designate for Global Affairs Timothy Wirth, head of the US delegation. Dooley said, "We [the NGOs] facilitate the UN's human rights work. It couldn't be done without us. And now they leave us out." Another NGO spokesman, Charles Brown of Freedom House, said, "It is ironic that at a UN conference on human rights we find NGOs being excluded and having their own human rights violated."

In the end, the conference merely "recommended" that the UN General Assembly consider establishing a High Commissioner for Human Rights. The conference called for an international court to punish "crimes against humanity," but not lesser, and far more common, violations of human rights. Strong support was given to the rights of women, children, and indigenous people as well as the universal nature of human rights (see declaration excerpts on next page). Alois Mock, the conference president and Austrian foreign minister, said, "The political pressure to respond to human rights will become much stronger as a result of this conference." But the secretary-general of Amnesty International summed up the feelings of many NGOs when he termed the event a "summit of missed opportunities."

—Keith Porter

The following are excerpts from the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, June 25, 1993:

- *The...Conference reaffirms the solemn commitment of all states to fulfill their obligations to promote universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all....*
- *The universal nature of these human rights and freedoms is beyond question.*
- *Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings; their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of governments.*
- *The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with equal emphasis.*
- *Democracy, development, and respect for human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing....*
- *The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights.*
- *The...Conference reaffirms the obligation of states to ensure that persons belonging to minorities may exercise fully and effectively all human rights....*
- *The...Conference recognizes the inherent dignity and the unique contribution of indigenous people to the development and plurality of society and strongly reaffirms the commitment of the international community to their economic, social, and cultural well-being....*
- *The...Conference expresses its dismay at massive violations of human rights, especially in the form of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and systematic rape of women in war situations, creating mass exodus of refugees and displaced persons.... ...Perpetrators of such crimes [should] be punished and such practices immediately stopped.*

Human Rights Luncheons Join US, UN

Making Connections

In one respect, the conflicts emerging from the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights demonstrate the increasing importance of human rights on the international agenda. In the past, while nations wrote wonderful proclamations voicing support for human rights, most merely paid lip service to the concept, then consistently violated those rights. Geopolitical considerations were motivating factors for action, not human rights. Today, however, human rights are becoming such an important factor that some have argued that they are sufficient cause for intervention by the United Nations.

As human rights have gained importance, so has the UN's work in this field. The Centre for Human Rights at the United Nations has sent rapporteurs to investigate violations and promote protection of human rights. In an effort to increase congressional awareness of the United Nations' work in this area, the Stanley Foundation has worked with the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, and the UN's Centre for Human Rights to host several luncheons on a variety of issues related to human rights. The idea is to focus the attention of congressional decision makers on UN activities, expertise, and accomplishments in these fields.

This year's luncheons have had a broad focus. One, featuring Thomas Hammarberg, a member of the UN's Committee on the Rights of the Child, centered on human rights and children. Mr. Hammarberg spoke eloquently about the need for the United States to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child—a document which works to ensure the health, education, and human rights of children. At the second luncheon, Ian Martin, former secretary-general of Amnesty International and currently the director of human rights at the United Nations/Organization of American States mission in Haiti, gave congressional staff a progress report on the first purely human rights mission by the UN. The foundation's third luncheon looked forward to 1995, when the United Nations will hold the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Gertrude Mongella, the secretary-general of the World Conference outlined some of the themes and objectives of the conference to congressional staff members.

—Bruno Pigott,
Program Officer
and Luncheon Organizer

Keith Porter

Remember Us.
Aztec children wear traditional costumes at the Vienna human rights conference. The rights of indigenous people are an increasingly important international concern.

Common Ground
Selected Cassettes

9335—Building On Success
Two UN architects of peace in El Salvador and Namibia talk about how these success stories can be applied to other international crises. (September 1993)

9331—Foreign Policy for a New Generation
A panel of three experts explain how they are trying to create a more inclusive debate about US foreign policy. (August 1993)

9329/30—Human Rights: Promise and Compromise
A two-part look at the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in June. (July 1993)

9327—Keeping Peace, Making War
New forms of UN intervention are discussed by three experts. (July 1993)

9326—The Consumption Treadmill
Alan Durning, author of *How Much is Enough? The Consumer Society and the Future of the Earth,* expands on his book's ideas. (July 1993)

9324—The Dumping Ground
A visit to the site in Luis Alberto Urrea's book, *Across the Wire: Life and Hard Times on the Mexican Border.* (June 1993)

9323—Dismantling the Defense Economy?
Government, military, business, and labor experts tackle the tough issues of defense conversion in a global economy. (June 1993)

9312—Moyers on Healing
What does the quality of health care say about a society? That's just one of many questions posed to *Healing and the Mind* author Bill Moyers. (March 1993)

9309—Cuba: The Daily Struggle
9311—Cuba: Inviting the World
9313—Cuba: Democratic Reform?
9315—Cuba: Human Rights and the World
This four-part series examines the crucial issues facing Cuba in the 90s. (March/April 1993)

9302—Russia's Painful Rebirth
9304—Russia's Rebirth: Expression
9306—Russia's Rebirth: Foreign Relations
9307—Russia's Rebirth: Religion
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The Dumping Ground

Just across the border from San Diego's thriving business center is a scene of devastating poverty. It is Tijuana's garbage dump, where some of Mexico's poorest people live. Author Luis Alberto Urrea worked for years with a mission group from San Diego to bring these people some relief from the disease and crime and relentless poverty. It is a side of Tijuana no tourist will ever see, and Urrea has given voice to the people he befriended there in his book *Across the Wire: Life and Hard Times on the Mexican Border*, published by Anchor Books. This spring the Stanley Foundation's radio program *Common Ground* traveled with Urrea to the Tijuana dump. Around 200 families live in the *colonia* we visited, their houses built from scraps found in the mountains of garbage located just a few hundred yards away. The trash provides items to live on, and the workers collect recyclables, which they sell to the owner of the dump. A hundred-pound sack of glass, for example, may bring a family $1.50. Here are excerpts from the program, which is available on audio cassette #9324 by calling 1-800-767-1929.

Urrea: Everybody here works. It's a true nonunion workplace. They work for what they find. Our natural inclination is to find it shocking and shameful. But they're working skilled labor. ...This work, as awful and smelly and dangerous and germ-ridden as it is, provides food and nourishment, clothes. ...A lot of people are killed. It's very noisy up top with all the tractors and trucks. If you're working, you can't always see those huge Caterpillars coming your way. And they [the drivers] can't see you. A lot of workers are crushed. ...There's a lot of disease. There are no controls over what is dumped here. So there's a lot of very bizarre stuff in there—dead animals, rotten food, weird medical waste, chemicals. These people work at risk.

Where do the people come from?

Urrea: A few may be locals. But many are from central and southern Mexico. A lot of them are from Central America. Many of them are just wanderers. Many of them came north, not to cross the border, as we would assume, but just to do things like this. One of the dump dwellers told me "at least you have garbage here. Back home we don't have garbage." One of the cherished myths here is that the gringos are going to start dumping trash here. I've often been asked, "Do you really think the Americans are going to bring garbage here? Because we'll be rich if you do." They know what we throw away, which to them is unimaginable. ...And that's one of the dreams they have here on the street level about the free trade agreement—that it'll mean the US will dump its trash in Mexico.

Were you aware of this before you started working with the ministry?

Urrea: I was aware kind of like we are aware of the homeless. We step over the people. I don't know what we tell ourselves about them. It doesn't penetrate our minds. ...In all societies, there are forgotten people. What's so shocking here is these people are so forgotten and so desperately down and so close to the United States. This weird life you're looking at is ten minutes away from one of the richest regions of the United States...which is astonishing.

Barbara Davis Urrea

Luis Alberto Urrea

And they know how we live.

Urrea: Yes. They watch it every day. That's why they're coming across the border. ...People are going to keep coming. The whole world watches the United States. And we, frankly, live in Disneyland. ...We have sidewalks...lawns...flush toilets! We have roofs! We have pet food! These guys know it. They live right next to Disneyland, and a lot of them want to come. A lot don't, though, and won't ever try to cross the border. But their children might.

– excerpted by Mary Gray Davidson

Our New Look

In this, our fourth year of publication, the *Courier* has had its first facelift—a rather modest revamping of the basic design. We hope you like the changes.

More important, we hope you like the content. We convened a small focus group of *Courier* recipients, who asked, "Why are you doing this publication?" That prompted the tag line on the cover: "Provoking thought and dialogue about the world." Simply, we want to spark thinking and discussion among informed citizens who have an interest in public policy and a sense of the world. The *Courier* is just one part of the Stanley Foundation's overall effort to promote such discourse.

We love to hear from you. Please write with your thoughts on what we are doing right and how we could improve.

-Jeffrey Martin

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