"All in the choosing eye": charity, representation and developing world

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"All IN THE CHOOSING EYE":
CHARITY, REPRESENTATION AND
DEVELOPING WORLD.

(Volume 1 of 2)

HENRIETTA JOSEPHINE LIDCHI
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the emergence of the question of representation as a crucial issue of debate amongst British development charities in recent years. Specifically it examines why and how the question of representation has become explicitly connected with the practices of development and charity. It seeks to analyse both theoretically and empirically how these linkages are constituted. It does this first, by creating a theoretical framework for examining the discursive construction of charity, development and representation, and second by deploying this framework to investigate the production of certain forms of imagery within two British development charities.

The organisation of the thesis reflects this two-fold division. Part one (chapters one, two, three and four) is concerned with developing a theoretical framework utilising 'tools' derived primarily from the work of Michel Foucault. It seeks to delineate the binary oppositions - charity and social justice, development and relief, positive and negative, truth and fiction - which underpin most contemporary approaches to the discussion of representational practices amongst British development charities. By taking apart these polarities and showing them to be not facts of life but discursive constructs, the Foucauldian perspective makes it possible to see how the definitions of the key terms in the debate on representation are historically contingent.

In the second part of the thesis (chapters five and six) the theoretical framework developed in part one is used to examine representational practices in two British development charities. Each chapter takes the form of a detailed ethnographic case study of the construction of particular communicational campaigns by these two development charities.
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Some of the material included in chapter five and six of this thesis has already appeared in the Open Business School Course (B794) 'Winning Resources and Support'. Aspects of chapter five are contained in Book 2 'Getting Your Message Across'. Aspects of chapter six are included in Book 6 'Evaluation and Review' as well as 'Resource File 3'.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

(the following have been adopted in this thesis for the purposes of reference).

APM Annual Public Meeting (used in chapter six only).
BDDH Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney.
BRC British Red Cross.
CAF Charities Aid Foundation.
CAFOD Catholic Fund for Overseas Development.
CAW Christian Aid Week.
CC Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.
CCBI Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland.
CNN Cable Network News
DEC Disasters Emergency Committee for leading UK charities.
EC European Community.
IBT Independent Broadcasting Trust.
ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross.
ILO International Labour Organisation.
ITDG Intermediate Technology Development Group.
NCVO National Council for Voluntary Organisations.
NGO non-governmental organisation.
NNGO Northern non-governmental organisation.
O & M Advertising Ogilvy and Mather Advertising.
O & M Direct Ogilvy and Mather Direct.
O & M PR Ogilvy and Mather Public Relations.
PVO private (and) voluntary organisation.
RVA Returned Volunteer Action.
RWG Redistribution with Growth.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<td>The Save the Children Fund.</td>
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<td>SNGO</td>
<td>Southern non-governmental organisation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations.</td>
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<td>VSO</td>
<td>Volunteer Services Overseas.</td>
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Introduction.
Introduction

In recent years, amongst British development charities - those charities whose primary goal is development and whose prime beneficiaries are the poor of the developing world - the question of representation has become an issue of some debate. Many of these organisations have accepted as a new article of faith the idea that the touchstone of a good development agency is its sensitivity to the people and communities with whom it works. This sensitivity, it is argued, is most visibly demonstrated by the images it selects to represent its beneficiaries and its work. The linkage between the practices of charity, development and representation then provides grounds for advocating the production and use of imagery that portrays more 'positively' or 'accurately' the realities of the developing world.

A recent example of this new doctrine can be found in the way that Oxfam, the largest and, arguably, the best known British overseas development charity, chose to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary in 1992. It published a book of photographs entitled *Oxfam 50: Our World in Photographs*. The preface and the introduction spell out Oxfam's intentions which are to challenge the two most predominant and, according to Oxfam, distorted images of the developing world: as 'theatre of tragedy' and a 'tourist paradise' (Oxfam 1992:7). This compilation of fully captioned and contextualised documentary images is supposed, in contrast, to represent the day-to-day lives of the citizens of the developing world. Its aim is to fill the gap in perception of the average British viewer by offering a:

*unique insight into the lives of people with whom Oxfam works all over the world. Oxfam 50: Our World in Photographs* is a celebration of the quiet victories in remote places that often go unrecorded. It is a tribute to the people with whom Oxfam has worked over the last 50 years, as well as a celebration of the nature of Oxfam's work, which seeks to give people hope and dignity, and to provide them with support so that they can make a world of difference to their own lives. (Oxfam 1992:7)

In other words, the photobook sets out to project a more 'realistic' and complete picture of life overseas through the deployment of a more varied range of images. The images selected are collected together under a variety of thematic banners: 'markets', 'children's portraits', a 'day-in-the-life' of particular development projects and so forth. They feature not only a range of 'productive' tasks (dyke building, coffee growing, learning, sea coal
collecting, cooking, water fetching) but also celebrations and leisure activities. So, when Oxfam claims that its images are more 'realistic' and 'accurate', it is referring to their greater plurality and their celebratory tone, in summary their 'positiveness' (1992: 9). This 'positiveness' is conveyed in a number of ways: by the use of colour, the choice of subject matter, the emphasis on named individuals as well as the message of hope that accompanies each image. The overall tone of the publication is heralded by its cover. The 'good news' of development is depicted, in full colour, by way of two splendidly clad Senegalese women (from Mewell village, we are told), gold jewelry and gold teeth showing, one smiling glowingly at the camera, the other wearing a more ambiguous Mona Lisa grin (Fig. 0.1).

Out of the hundred and seventy six photographs included in the photobook only twenty are in black and white. These images are at odds with the colour photographs not only in tone, but in content. They provide marginal illustrations for the text (of the preface, the introduction and the concise history of Oxfam which acts as a conclusion) which itself only frames the bigger colour images.

The strategy behind this deployment of different types of images becomes clear in the concluding historical synopsis (Oxfam 1992:136). This features a black and white photograph of Oxfam's first director, Leslie Kirkley, taken at the time of the Biafran famine in 1968. In the photograph Kirkley is gazing intently at a small, visibly undernourished - and unidentified - black child (who stares away). He is clutching quite gently it seems in his comparatively vast and white hand the infant's tiny black one (Fig. 0.2). The image is redolent with familiar connotations of 'compassion' and 'charity' and its message seems to be that the developing world is still the 'white man's burden'.

From Oxfam's perspective today, this represents a 'negative' charity image. Oxfam's use of such an image signals that such representations are no longer appropriate, and that Oxfam has moved on. This 'negative' image underscores, through contrast, that the main images of the book are there to depict the other, more 'positive' and 'productive' side of the forty year old development story.
This covert criticism is made more explicit in a related publication, the Oxfam anniversary edition of the journal *New Internationalist*. In this edition the very same image is chosen to illustrate an outmoded and retrograde form of development charity imagery characteristic of published material in the past (1992:8) (Fig. 0.2). The *New Internationalist* captions the image 'your tiny hand' and states that:

> everything about this particular image is wrong. It sums up the paternalistic approach to world development: the feeble, childlike Third World enveloped caringly by the big, superior Western man who stoops to meet it out of the goodness of his heart. There are still aid-agency directors who would pose in such positions for the camera. But a charity that promoted this image of itself and of the Third World now would be utterly unworthy of our support. (*New Internationalist* 1992:8)

The 'up-beat' images of *Oxfam 50: Our World in Photographs*, in contradistinction, reflect not only the plurality of lives in the developing world but also their 'colourfulness'. This optimism is implied by the use of colour and the glossiness of the book. The images are personal but not intrusive: the human subjects of the photographs are always contextualised (where they live, their connection to Oxfam) but also identified and named (for the 'day-in-the-life' case histories). Many of the subjects are smiling directly at the camera.

Through its use of images Oxfam clarifies its position on a number of issues. First, the book marshalls its imagery to challenge the predominantly 'negative' perceptions held by the British public, fuelled by portraits in the media and by conventional 'charity' or tourist advertising (*Oxfam* 1992:7,9). Instead of reproducing the traditionally limited range of images which dwell on disaster, disease, need and the exotic *Oxfam 50* seeks to reflect the 'reality' and 'diversity' of the developing world, as well as the hope and optimism of its peoples. The commitment to producing different kinds of representation of the developing world is carried through at the level of the procurement of the images. *Oxfam* states that the photographic assignments were only handed to experienced and empathetic photographers who were exhorted to spend a certain amount of time with the subjects as a sign of respect (1992:7).

Secondly, the book relates the question of representation to that of development. Oxfam is keen to accurately portray the quality, the substance and the commitment of its work.
overseas as well as its particular perception of development work. Throughout the photobook the reader is informed of Oxfam's qualitative approach to development emphasising small beginnings and people's lives. In the Introduction, Oxfam impresses on the reader that in its experience development is most successful when it is undertaken through community participation, and when it is under community control. Oxfam's understanding of development is as a small-scale community process which brings people together in order to develop their initiative and self-confidence and to guide them towards solving their own problems. So, inevitably perhaps, the main photographic images are of community, productivity and optimism. These provide the visible evidence that the recipients of Oxfam's charity are not helpless, hopeless and lazy, but are actively, and positively, struggling to gain some control over their lives both as individuals but also as communities. It is the 'empowerment', the resilience and the dignity, but also the joyousness, of the subjects of development work that Oxfam wishes to record in this illustrated document.

Lastly these two issues of representation and development are related to Oxfam's charitable status. The book covertly criticises a particular mode and understanding of charity: one which is based on bounty and beneficence, not equality and social justice. Within Oxfam 50 Oxfam refers to itself as a voluntary organisation not a charity. Montague (1988) offers a reason why the term 'charity' is not used in the book.

Charity is changing. ... The moves are most apparent in the UK-based aid charities like Oxfam, Christian Aid and War on Want who - eschewing a role as just charitable providers to the third world - have instead highlighted the political reason for third world poverty. ... Fundamental to the new approach is an 'empowering' of clients - or "partners" as many charities now prefer to call them. Today's message is one of resourcing, working "with" and not "for" people and working to the community's agenda rather than a prescriptive solution to the problem. (Montague 1988:22)

Oxfam 50 indicates that Oxfam wishes to dissociate itself from an dated interpretation of the role and practice of charity. It reiterates this within the body of the text: the book is supposed to reflect the 'achievement of Oxfam partners' and illustrate the crucial role that Oxfam supporters have in the process of working for a fairer world (1992:13,143). The readers of Oxfam 50 are not being asked simply to donate, nor just to sympathise, rather they are urged to question the root causes of poverty in the developing world. They are
asked to support Oxfam's desire to prevent poverty, not to be a provider of relief. By doing so they are invited to endorse its decision to adopt a campaigning and advocacy role.

Oxfam's motives for producing *Oxfam 50* seem innocent enough: it wants to present the reader with 'an insight into the lives of ordinary people' (1992:7). From this simple premise, however, Oxfam elaborates a complex set of assertions linking charity, development and representation. Not only are 'positive' and 'plural' images more 'truthful' and 'accurate', it argues, but they are also more 'moral'.

In this thesis I propose to subject the substance and the moral premise of Oxfam's argument to scrutiny; in particular I want to reexamine the linkages between charity, development and representation to discern whether these practices can be said to be 'naturally' connected.

The impetus behind this study was personal experience. In my capacity as a staff member of a British development charity in the late 1980s I was somewhat inevitably drawn into the discussion on charity images. The intensity of debate stimulated my interest because I, like many others, held as an article of faith the assertions contained in Oxfam's book, namely that there was an imperative to broadcast certain positive images and messages about the developing world because they reflected more accurately the truth and the reality therein. But a degree of unease clouded these beliefs. I espoused the need for more plural and positive images knowing that the issue of representation was under-theorised.

First, any discussion on development charity images seemed to reproduce certain polarities between positive and negative imagery, educational and fundraising practice, social justice and charity, and relief and development. These polarities were then linked, forming chains of equivalence which were subsequently mobilised to substantiate an argument in favour of positive imagery. It was suggested that those British development charities which were truly committed to empowering the poor and promoting global social justice would choose to concentrate their resources on educational activities and produce positive images. The
converse was also held to be true. This was less like an analysis which engaged with the issues, more like a tautology.

Secondly, and following from this, it seemed that articulating a need for certain types of imagery often took the form of a manifesto, one which represented the pursuit of all educational activities as 'good' against the evils of fundraising. This argument was usually extended to encompass the strictures of charitable status. It was contended that agencies which sought to uphold the rights of the poor should not seek to become charitable institutions, because charitable status precluded them from acting politically. Yet again it appeared to me that the institutional choices facing British development charities were far more complex than this simple analysis would allow. British development charities are at one and the same time charities, non-governmental organisations and voluntary agencies and as hybrid organisations they are subject to a variety of pressures and prescriptions. Many of these charities now receive official funding, which has given rise to fears of co-option. The manner in which they seek to maintain their independence is through raising funds from the public. Paradoxically then, it is their fundraising skills and charitable status which is said to guarantee their 'independence' and their ability to speak on behalf of the disempowered. Clearly a hypothesis that reduced the enigmas of charitable status to an internal 'tug-of-war' between fundraising and educational staff, where the former were described as amoral functionalists and the latter as enlightened internationalists, was not very illuminating.

Thirdly, the argument for positive imagery constituted the product - the image - rather than the process - representational practice - as a site of investigation. Images were treated as representative and telling documents, as reflections of individual, professional or institutional agendas and criticised as such. As a staff member it was plain to me that one could not easily impute from image to motive, indeed to examine images in isolation without reference to their process of construction seemed highly obfuscatory. It both disregarded the complexity of the ethical and pragmatic arguments for and against different kinds of imagery, and ignored the intelligence and sophistication of various practitioners.
My dissatisfaction with the usual manner in which the argument for positive imagery was
delineated led to me to think through the issues more systematically. In particular, I wanted
to find a way of investigating the question of representation in the British development
charity context which would by-pass the binary oppositions within which contemporary
discussions were framed.
So the pragmatic impetus of working in a British development charity guided my topic
selection but also my research design and theoretical trajectory.

A potentially productive theoretical path through the terrain was provided by the work of
Michel Foucault, in particular his work on discourse. Foucault defines 'discourse' as
strategic knowledge: knowledge which is inseparable from relationships of power, which
is linked to particular practices and prescriptions, and which is productive of certain
'truths'. Discourses are groups of statements belonging to particular 'discursive
formations', these formations inhibit what can be said or thought about a particular topic
(Foucault 1980; Cousin & Hussain 1983; Barrett 1991). Foucault accords a central
position to both 'truth' and 'power' in the production of knowledge.
The implication of such a perspective for the analysis of British development charity
images is quite clear. It suggests that whether it be by verbal or visual means, British
development charities are implicated in the practice of 'truth' production not 'truth'
reflection. An argument that proposes that certain types of images are intrinsically more
'truthful, 'moral' or closer to 'reality', as is the case with the discussion of positive images,
is immediately open to question. If representations of the developing world are not thought
of as isolated documents or reflections of 'reality' but as 'discursive practices', practices
regulated and regimented by the operation of one or more discourses, then the manner in
which they are produced and the discourses inscribed within them must be subject to
examination. So an investigation of positive imagery necessitates an inquiry into
representational practice. Such an exploration, in turn, needs to take into account the
discursive constitution of charitable practice and development work in order to understand
how and why these are linked to representational practice.
A perspective informed by the work of Foucault provides a means of overcoming the restrictive binary oppositions - between positive and negative, fundraising and education, social justice and charity, development and relief - or the chains of equivalence that have characterised more conventional treatments of the issue of charity representation. By taking apart these polarities and linkages and by showing them to be not facts of life, or natural connections, but discursive constructs, the Foucauldian perspective makes it possible to see how present definitions of the key terms in the debate on representation are historically contingent and therefore amenable to interrogation (and reconstitution).

Moreover such a perspective is methodologically advantageous. If representations are considered to be discursive practices rather than simple reflections of reality, then a different type of evidence is required. The researcher can no longer confine herself to an examination of images in isolation. She must refer to the process of construction. In particular she should deploy a methodology that is sensitive to 'native' interpretations of representational practice and which highlights the diversity and complexity of motives of practitioners within development charities. She must situate representational practice by considering the discursive, historical and institutional context in which imagery of the developing world is produced (see Appendix I).

So in this thesis I deploy both a novel theoretical perspective and a different methodology to explore the issue of representation within British development charities. I delineate the conditions of emergence of the question of representation among British development charities through investigating the discursive construction of charity and development.

This analysis then provides a means of understanding contemporary representational practice within British development charities. As I indicated earlier, one of my motives for investigating the terrain of representation was a dissatisfaction with the type of evidence deployed to rationalise the internal workings of British development charities. This thesis represents an attempt to rectify that omission. In order to analyse representational practice I use a case-study approach which examines and charts in detail how images were designed, discussed and produced within the micro-context of a British development charity campaign.
By negotiating these two levels of analysis I explore the manner in which the concepts of charity and development as well as definitions of truth, reality and power are called upon to regulate representational practice within British development charities.

As I indicated above this thesis breaks with convention in two respects: theoretically and methodologically. There are obvious interpretative risks born of adopting such an approach. It may prove to be contentious. In particular, the conclusions concerning power and truth may render commentators within the development and charity field uncomfortable and uncertain as to the motivations behind such a study. I argue that there are good reasons for an unconventional reevaluation of the question of representation.

First I argue that such a project is academically sound, because it provides a new way of viewing contemporary representational practice within British development charities. As Foucault himself suggests there are times 'when knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all' (1987:8).

Secondly, there is somewhat of an imperative to subjecting the activities of British development charities to a critical review. Following the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 these organisations underwent a period of rapid and substantial growth which they have managed to sustain ever since (New Internationalist 1992). Furthermore it is asserted that their expansion demands a parallel scaling up of political activity. They are increasingly being called upon to act in order that they can effect changes in the structures of power and distributions of global resources (Edwards & Hulme 1992). This is represented as a natural state of progression. Indeed British development charities look forward to the prospect of increasing scale and influence in the future.

Clearly such triumphant narratives need to be challenged. By extending discussion of these organisations' activities further than the normal restrictive parameters and beyond the assumptions and histories of enlightenment that have hitherto characterised their internal evaluations, the critique deployed here aims to inject a note of scepticism and caution. It suggests that the aims, objectives and presuppositions of development organisations must
be regularly interrogated. The purpose in so doing is not to impute to the outside researcher a measure of moral superiority - since the quality of their development work is not under investigation - but to deny these development organisations the comfort of believing unreflectively in their own versions of the 'truth'.

**Organisation.**

The thesis is divided into two parts. In part one (chapters one to four) I explore the limitations of conventional approaches to the question of imagery. In chapters one and two I set the Foucauldian analysis in motion by examining, respectively, how the meaning and practice of charity is discursively produced in the British context, and how the meaning and practice of development is constructed in the international arena. In chapter three and four I concentrate on the regime of truth that posits a connection between charity, development and representation, exploring when it came into being and the direct effects it has had on imagery produced. In chapter three I describe the conditions of emergence of the new discursive regime on imagery. In chapter four I explore in greater depth its assumptions and denials. In both chapter three and four I utilise ethnographic evidence. The four chapters of part one are the theoretical chapters. They combine to construct an alternative framework for analysing the representations of the developing world produced by British charities. In chapter one I begin by delineating the Foucauldian framework. I then proceed to implement this in the context of critically evaluating the diverse literatures on charity, by dividing them into three categories - the polemicists, the chroniclers and the lawyers. I suggest that the meaning and practice of charity is highly contested and historically contingent. I show that foundational meanings and historical antecedents are frequently invoked to separate meaning from practice or to distinguish different strategies of charity. Having explored the theoretical construction of charity, I move on to consider the institutional location of British development charities. I argue that British development charities are hybrid institutions positioned at the intersection of three institutional forms. Finally, I reflect upon the manner in which the theoretical, discursive and institutional
constructions of charity impact on the self-identity and self-representation of British development charities in the 1990s.

In the second chapter I apply the insights from chapter one to comment upon the discursive construction of development. I start by mapping out the terrain of development, which leads me reflect on the reasons for the present 'crisis' in development. I consider how this situation of 'crisis' has been linked to the rising popularity of a particular discourse of development initially synonymous with non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Essentially I propose that the changes in the manner in which development is conceptualised, practiced and regulated constitute change not progress. In order to substantiate this argument I probe the ascribed conceptual foundations and key terms of the new discourse on development having already explored its 'historical' trajectory. I conclude that any discourse of development inevitably mobilises issues of power and truth and therefore constitutes strategic knowledge about the poor.

In chapter three I deal with the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5. I consider how this extraordinary and unexpected event transformed the discursive and political context in which British development charities operate. First I describe the events of 1984/5 in some detail, but my main concern is to explore how the events were subsequently interpreted. I examine the struggles over truth and competing claims for authority that arose as a consequence of the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5. I argue that it was the controversy and contestation that surrounded the manner in which the Ethiopian Famine was brought to public attention that ultimately generated a new consensus concerning positive imagery. I therefore locate the new discursive regime that links the practices of charity, development and representation firmly in the 1980s.

In chapter four I investigate the premises and assumptions of the discursive regime in greater depth by using specific examples: the 'positive' images and image guidelines produced by British development charities after the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/85. I enquire into the linkages made between representation (images and messages) and intervention (development and charitable practices) by using insights from theories of representation. I argue that a hypothesis which advances that 'plural' and 'positive' images
are more realistic, moral and progressive is based on a misconception of the practice of
representation. I contend that it is based on essentialist definitions of truth and reality as
well as a denial of the operation of power. My purpose in this chapter is reinsert the
phenomenon of power in the process of representation to show that all representational
practices are involved in truth construction rather than truth reflection.

Part two of the thesis (chapter five and six) marks a shift away from theoretical issues, to
focus on ethnographic evidence. Each chapter takes the form of a case study which
describes how a British development charity - The Save the Children Fund and Christian
Aid - orchestrated, designed and launched specific communicational campaigns. In chapter
five I concentrate on the methods used by Save the Children Fund to bring a crisis in seven
African countries to the attention of the British public. In chapter six I focus on the manner
in which the charity Christian Aid set about reconstructing its annual fundraising drive -
Christian Aid Week. In each case study I chart the decisions, discussions and negotiations
which were integral to the process of production of imagery. In addition I give voice to the
various practitioners to show how their assumptions and criteria were brought into play.
Each case study delineates how particular set of representations were the product of
discursive, institutional and historical contexts. The theoretical framework outlined and
elaborated in part one influences both the focus of description and the more analytical
passages within the case studies. These chapters are, however, presented as descriptive
narratives to maintain their consistency and to reflect the complexity of representational
practice.

In chapter five I focus on an unprecedented emergency appeal orchestrated by The Save the
Children Fund in 1991 - 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' The chapter is divided into two
sections. In the first section I describe the institutional context, in the second section I
concentrate on the deliberations which surrounded the construction of the 'Skip Lunch.
Save a Life.' appeal. I indicate that this case study is particularly of interest because of the
resonances it has with chapter three. I explore the dynamics within Save the Children
particularly between different professional groups in order to examine how fundraisers and
educationalists work together. I also assert that Save the Children is an interesting case
because it is a charity frequently criticised for its production of less-than-positive-imagery, a criticism that it wanted to refute during the 1990s by appearing more proactive. In this chapter I concentrate on the institutional divisions and how different professional groups reconciled pragmatic needs with their ethical beliefs, and how these decisions were regulated by guidelines on representational practice. In particular I show how Save the Children sought to temper the populist representations produced for the appeal by producing alternative more thoughtful documentation on the crisis. I suggest that the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' was an experiment which tested both Save the Children codes on imagery and its commitment to advocacy and campaigning. In this chapter I consider how a populist and simplistic campaign was justified and rendered more 'balanced' in the light of a discursive regime which linked charity, representation and development.

In chapter six I focus down, considering in depth the content and construction of imagery; this chapter resonates with chapter four. I examine how Christian Aid set about creating a new identity for Christian Aid Week in 1991. This chapter is divided into three sections ordered chronologically, with the first two stages outlining the context of production of the 1991 Christian Aid Week campaign, and the third section focussing on the 1991 Christian Aid Week itself. In particular I concentrate on the manner in which Christian Aid attempted to live up to their commitment of producing 'positive' images within the context of having to popularise their image as a development organisation to enable growth in income. A central theme of this chapter is the artifice at the heart of any representational practice. I bring this issue into prominence in two ways: by showing the techniques (market surveys and qualitative research) used to make images accessible and popular, and the way in which representations were fashioned in order to secure their realism, appropriateness and positiveness. An equally central theme is, therefore, relationships of power and how these are inscribed into representational practice.

In the second part of the thesis I use ethnographic description to highlight the strategies, agendas, decisions and debates that structured the production images within British development charities in 1991. In these ethnographic chapters I activate and render 'real' those contradictions and conclusions signalled in the first part of the thesis.
In the conclusion the main arguments of the thesis are summarized and some conclusions are drawn, most notably on the politics of representation.
Part one.
Chapter one

The Charitable Imperative.
Introduction

A new breed of charities grew up following the last war; today they are called non-governmental organisations or NGOs in Europe and PVOs in North America. In many ways it is a pity that the word 'charity' has been displaced, as it is a constant reminder that compassion must always have its place in NGO activities ... The first agencies were called Relief Agencies, and they were mostly church-inspired. ... [A]nd where the actual religious link is missing it was the Christian spirit of duty and compassion that were most often the guiding lights. In this secular age the Christian spirit is not a fashionable reference point but its creation of the voluntary development movement cannot and should not be forgotten. (Harris 1988: 1-5)

Charity has many resonances but few definitions. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the question 'What is charity?' as it relates specifically to the workings of contemporary British development charities. To explore the meaning and practice of charity within this context means questioning why charitable status provokes feelings of ambivalence within these organisations.

In order to excavate these ambivalences and the complexity of their self image it is not sufficient simply to draw on and reproduce their common-sense assumptions concerning the meaning and validity of what they do. We need to gain a critical distance from their assumptions and in order to do this I shall be making use of the conceptual framework and insights of the French theorist and philosopher Michel Foucault.

This first chapter is divided into four sections. In section one, I present and elaborate my use of Foucault's definition of discourse, in order to raise issues of truth, power and knowledge in the arena of a discussion of charity. In section two, drawing on this Foucauldian perspective I divide the literature on charity, into three classes: chroniclers, lawyers and polemicists. I do this in order to draw out the themes that typically arise in any discussion of charity. In section three, I then consider how British development charities are positioned on the intersection between three institutional identities: as voluntary organisations, non-governmental organisations and as charities. I detail how each one of these statuses impacts on the organisational identity. In section four I explore in greater depth how the hybridity of British development charities is played out in the context of their discussions of their voluntary and charitable status. The themes outlined in section two are shown to be influential in negotiating the ambiguity of having a hybrid organisational
identity. Although I allude to the implications of non-governmental status, a full treatment of this is delayed until chapter two, since it is entangled in an examination of discourses of development.

Section 1. Deploying a Foucauldian Framework.

What relevance does the work of Michel Foucault have to an understanding of the meanings and practices of charity? In summary, using a Foucauldian perspective turns the researcher away from an exhausting search for a foundational meaning for the term, or from a fruitless attempt to lay bare the 'historical' trajectory of charity. It enables her to perceive that there is no objective ('correct') history to be unveiled, nor any conclusive proof that at one point 'charity' was primally innocent. It recognises that the most that can be asserted is that charity is a term defined in the present with frequent reference to the past. The Foucauldian perspective outlined here amounts to a 'discursive turn'. This is one which seeks to answer the question: 'What is charity?' not in terms of what it should be or has been, but in terms of what it can be. In other words it interrogates how the 'meaning' and 'practice' of charity are discursively produced.

Enacting a 'discursive turn' necessitates specifying the meaning of the term discourse. For Foucault a discourse is a formulation of knowledge which answers specific 'governing statements' (questions) and requires 'strategic knowledge': savoir. What he means by 'strategic knowledge' is knowledge that is inseparable from relationships of power and which is linked to particular prescriptions (Foucault 1980:145; Cousins and Hussain 1983:91). For Foucault, knowledge cannot be reduced to the realm of 'meaning' or 'language' because all knowledge operates as a social practice: all knowledge is power/knowledge. Thus, discourses do not simply reflect 'reality' or innocently designate objects, rather they constitute them in specific contexts according to particular relations of power.

So if 'charity' is discursively constituted, this implies that it cannot simply operate at the level of 'meaning' or 'ideas', separate from practice, but that it goes hand in hand with
interventionist prescriptions. So as a discursive product, 'charity' cannot have transparent access to that 'reality' or to pure 'need' but rather it works on the basis of a perception - a representation - of that need, and, therefore, of whom it seeks to serve and what the best methods to employ are. To propose a discursive model necessitates the usage of a different set of evidences.

To substitute for the enigmatic treasure of 'things' anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these objects without reference to the ground, the foundation of things, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance. To write a history of a discursive objects that does not plunge them into the common depth of primal soil, but deploys the nexus of regularities that govern their dispersion. (Foucault 1989:47-8)

A discourse is a group of statements which provides a language for talking about a particular topic, one that constructs that topic in a particular way. Moreover discourses as 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Barrett 1991:130), do not operate in isolation, they are articulated in 'formations'.

A discursive formation refers to the systematic operation of several discourses or statements constituting a 'body of knowledge' which constructs a specific object/topic of analysis in a particular way, and limits the other ways in which that object/topic may be constituted. The internal cohesion of a discursive formation, for Foucault, does not depend on putative 'agreement' between statements. There may seem to be fierce internal debates and different statements may appear antagonistic or even irreconcilable. This does not, however, undermine cohesion or the creation of a 'body of knowledge' or a 'body of truth' around a particular object in a systematic and ordered fashion (Hall 1992:291).

So what are the implications of such a model for a discussion of charity? It removes the possibility of a debate based on essentialisms, since it states firmly that neither the 'meaning' nor the 'practice' of 'charity' can be referred to a neutral and foundational realm of 'original' ideas, or 'pure' sentiments. So, instead of projecting the statement - about charity - onto its referent - 'charity' - and deciding whether it is 'true' or 'representative' of that referent, one is forced to ask why that particular statement was made rather than any

1 He defines this internal, ordered dissent as a system of dispersion (see Hall 1992:291; Foucault 1989: 33-9)
other, and why it acquires a 'truth value' (Dean 1992; Barrett 1991; Foucault 1989). For Foucault, 'truth' is 'worldly', it is inseparable from the power which normalises it.

Truth is linked ... with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A 'regime' of truth. (Foucault 1980:133)

By 'regime of truth' Foucault means that circular relationship that truth has to power which necessitates that all 'regimes' of truth are accompanied by 'regimes' of practices. 'Truth' is therefore a type of situational politics (Tagg 1988).

A discursive model of charity launches us into a very different sort of investigation, one no longer preoccupied with epistemological questions relating to 'truths', or teleological questions relating to origins. Instead the work to be done is in the present: examining how the subject of 'charity' is constituted as a practice with strategic implications and attributed meanings.

In conclusion the general value of Foucault's work is that it provides a 'toolkit' (Foucault 1980:145) which allows a more reflexive and rigorous analysis of the meanings and practices to be found within contemporary British development charities.

Having described at some length the framework which I wish to deploy in this first chapter and elaborate in the rest of the thesis, in the next section I exemplify its usefulness in relation to a more general consideration of the issue of charity as demonstrated in a cross-section of the available literature.

Section 2. The Literature on Charity: a Classification.

Using this Foucauldian paradigm we can segment the literature that considers the issue of charity into three categories: the chroniclers, the polemicists and the lawyers:

i The chroniclers.

This category contains all those who isolate particular historical periods in order to document philanthropic gestures and place them within wider historical contexts (Jordan 1964; Slack 1988; Himmelfarb 1991; Harrison 1982; Prochaska 1988; De Swaan 1988; Golding & Middleton 1982). It also includes those who seek to document the particular
motivations and historical trajectories of charitable institutions, in this case individual
development charities (Bory 1987 and Cavendish 1984 for the Red Cross; Freeman 1965
for the Save the Children Fund; Gill 1970, Whitaker 1983 and Black 1993 for Oxfam;

ii The polemicists.

The second category is composed of texts that describe and reflect on contemporary British
charitable practice in 'common-sense' rather than 'scholarly' historical or legal terms. The
authors write about charities in general (Nightingale 1973; Gerard 1983) or about

iii The lawyers.

This third category is composed of all those who comment on the legal meaning of charity,
and therefore the operation of Charity Law of England and Wales. They do this either to
back up an argument which advocates change (Gladstone 1982; Williams 1989) or in
order to chart the historical development of charity law and its idiosyncratic operation
(Jones 1969; Maurice and Parker 1984; George 1989).

Having briefly sketched this elementary tripartite schema, I wish to consider what issues
emerge from it in greater detail. Specifically, I shall investigate the manner in which these
different categories of authors produce understandings of charity.

iv Charity and the pursuit of history.

As a representative example of the 'chroniclers', Jordan (1964) mobilises history
in order to reconstruct an 'innocent' period when the act of 'charity' was purer and more
disinterested. He characterises the medieval period as 'genuine' when the charitable
impulse and gift was 'direct, spontaneous and expressed the sentiment of true charity, the
giver sharing vicariously in the poverty and need of the recipient' (1964:54 - my
emphasis). This was a time when a quasi-organic equilibrium operated: the poor were not
an object of scorn but an accepted responsibility of the community, poverty was ingenuous (see also Golding & Middleton 1982:8). Charity was rudimentary, voluntary and unsystematic, but effective because the feudal and monastic systems provided a security in old age and unconditional hospitality for the wandering poor (see also Nightingale 1973:32).

Later writers, De Swaan (1988) and Williams (1989), have injected a note of scepticism into this rosy picture. They observe, for example, that the poor were feared: wandering Bishops in the early Middle Ages would surround themselves with dogs to ward off the obtrusive poor. They also point to the links between charity and religious intolerance: the earliest recorded charity is Weeks charity whose purpose was the purchase of faggots to burn heretics (De Swaan 1988:15; Williams 1989:6).

In fact Jordan's deployment of an 'age of innocence' provides a counterpoint to a subsequent moment of enlightenment which followed the codification of charitable law in the Statute of Charitable Uses of 1601.

The specific details of this historical moment need not concern us here. What is of interest is how Jordan explicitly uses historical evidence to construct an argument which celebrates post-Reformation legal reforms. He identifies 1601 as a pivotal historical moment. The Statute symbolises a move towards a more rational response towards increased need by the enlightened and radically secular Tudor Monarchs. According to Jordan from this moment charity ceased to be embedded in religion, it was removed from the clutches of a corrupt and inefficient Catholic Church. He nevertheless claims that subsequent charitable acts had moral continuity with desirable Christian principles (Jordan 1964:146-50). For Jordan, the new moral discourse on the poor represents a 'laicisation', the triumph of reason over 'Catholic' corruption and chaos in alms-provision. It is de facto a progression, leading to more enlightened practices promoted by a newly emergent merchant class² (Jordan 1964:15-20; see also Slack 1988).

² Another interpretation of the process of 'laicisation' can be found in the work of Hans Blumenberg, specifically in his book The Legitimacy of the Modern Age (1983). Blumenberg's understanding of history is not as the continuity and progression of original Christian ideals albeit in a transformed, secularised, state. The continuity for him lies at a different level, with the problems and questions not the solutions. He posits that 'history' is not a continuous process of 'enlightenment' but rather that this is a rational order laid upon 'history' by its chroniclers. What is being charted is not a progressive secularisation but a
v The search for charitable foundations.

By contrast, for many 'lawyers' and 'polemicists' the analysis of charity must begin with a search for meaning. Gladstone (1982) and Feingold (1987), typically, anchor the phenomenon of charity in Christian and Jewish theology (enshrined in the Old and New Testaments) via their significant Greek and Latin linguistic roots.

Implicit in the Old Testament promulgation to care for the weak is the assumption that, human nature being what it is, virtue alone would not feed the poor ... Christianity incorporated and systematised the Jewish concepts of philanthropy; duty and obligation as well as reward and punishment became cornerstones of the New Testament ... However, it would be wrong to conclude that Jewish charity was created through compulsion, while Christian charity was a gift of love ... The difference between the two testaments ... is more one of weight and balance than of content. In this context, it is instructive to note the parallel between the Hebrew term tzedaka, which amalgamated the concepts of charity and righteousness, and the Greek and Latin terms agape and caritas both of which denote the coalescence of love and charity. (Feingold 1987:157)

It seems, then, that the concept of charity was born and developed out of the Jewish prophets' relentless campaigning against social, economic and political injustices ... But the main channel through which the concept of charity came to exercise its lasting influence on the western world was the Christian religion. (Gladstone 1982:20)

The Judeo-Christian tradition serves to differentiate the phenomenon of Western philanthropy from other forms of gift giving, and also accords it an essential trans-historical meaning (Feingold 1987:155).

For Gladstone (1982:20-33) and Nightingale (1973:101-2) this foundationalist Judeo-Christian 'ethic' is the site of tension: between the 'Jewish' notion of charity tzedqua which means love and justice, and its 'Christian' counterpart or derivation (depending who one reads) whose linguistic roots caritas and agape imply love and charity. For Gladstone (1982), this search for origins comes in tandem with a marked preference for the essential Jewish definition, because the difference in original concepts has developed a difference in principles and practice. The common - Christian - meaning of charity is a derivation, but also a perversion of the Jewish 'apocalyptic teaching' which strove for political and social justice. The Jewish 'original' meaning emphasised protest, love and justice aspiring to a state of Koinomia - a form of primitive communism - based on the Greek word koinos - 'sharing' (Gladstone 1982:18-24).

'reoccupation'; an attempt to answer the same questions that are at the heart of theological texts, but according to a different world view present at another historical moment.
Similarly, according to Nightingale (1973) the Christian concept of charity emphasises social and moral obligation - charity for the love of man and Christ - whereas the Jewish concept highlights the entitlement of the poor - their rightful claim to a part of the wealth that surrounds them. The Christian conception of charity casts beneficence as an obligation which has the advantageous result of conferring virtue on the benefactor. The Jewish worldview, on the other hand, stresses that 'charity' is part of a moral order in which to give is to express solidarity with the poor and is the just repayment for the blessing of wealth. Following from this Nightingale judges that Jewish philanthropy is more generous and tolerant than its Christian derivation (1973:104-5). In elaborating their respective views of 'charity' both Nightingale (1973:Chapter 4) and Gladstone (1982:Chapter 2) deploy a contrast based on a value judgement which counterposes 'false' selflessness and 'true' altruism.

Gerard (1983) places charity in its institutional context and identifies three motivations for voluntary activity: reciprocity, beneficence and solidarity. These are not mutually exclusive, indeed reciprocity is described by him as fundamental to all voluntary activity, but the weight accorded to the norms of beneficence and solidarity determines the general approach of the voluntary organisation. According to Gerard voluntary organisations can adopt one of two broad models in their work: (i) the 'old style' based on order and therefore on the values of hierarchy, equity, compassion and freedom and (ii) the 'new style' which works for change and endorses the values of democracy, participation, equality, tolerance and rights. Though he places development charities in the latter category, he remarks that these are 'ideal' types, and do not perfectly encapsulate the characteristics of individual agencies (Gerard 1983:24-7). Nevertheless Gerard (1983) confirms that philanthropic activity can be separated into two modes. He separates the more traditional mode which relies on beneficence and promotes social order from the radical one which is motivated by solidarity and seeks social change (see also Kouchner 1986; Gladstone 1982).
According to Gerard, however, these modes are morally equivalent. He locates the motivation for all manifestations of charity in 'co-operation' or 'altruism' which, he claims, is a human given, a species wide predisposition. He cites 'the agreement of scholars, from a wide range of disciplines' to back up his naturalistic argument concerning the ubiquity of 'moral codes' which pronounce it a 'duty to requite good with good' (Gerard 1983:27). So a synonymy is drawn between the universality of 'altruism' - part of animal behaviour - and that of 'charity' - a form of culturally constructed gift giving. This undermines the need for analysis. Indeed Gerard's nod in the direction of the cultural - he cites the different cultural 'traditions' that have stressed the need for 'charity' - is purely cursory. On this basis he can position voluntary activity in the UK (and in the West) within a cultural 'tradition', namely the Judeo-Christian ethic. 'Universality', and the equivalence between 'altruism' and 'charity', enables Gerard to perpetuate a tautology: charity is universal because it is A Good Thing, the proof that it is A Good Thing lying in the fact that it is universal (Gerard 1983:27).

Gladstone's (1982) argument is a little more complex because he seeks to justify the righteousness of a certain type of charity: one based on a notion of 'social justice'.

Charity was not intended to supplant the continuing demands for social justice; it was not to be a substitute for justice but its foundation. Early Christianity made charity the central pivot of its ethical teaching ... and although ecclesiastical institutionalisation has often tended to mute concern for social justice, charity has never entirely lost its radical implications. (Gladstone 1982:98 - my emphasis)

Gladstone seeks to establish a distance between the 'spirit' of charity and its imperfect institutional and legal manifestations. He separates the 'meaning' of charity sharply from the 'practice'. He contends that since charity in its true and pure form integrates a concept of justice, it follows that the proper role of charities (the institutions) is to fight against injustice, to root out evil, and to strive towards forging ethical social systems. In other words charity has to operate according to a solidarity/social change model of 'charity'. This implies that the spirit of charity has been corrupted, it has become ensnared with relations of power (Gladstone 1982:Chapter 7).
Charity - neighbour love - is not simply a matter of feeling and emotion; it is a principle that engages the intellect and requires a deliberate effort of will. And because charity has equal concern for every fellow human being it requires equity - a justice that transcends the strict letter of the law and upholds what is reasonable and fair rather than what is merely legal. Alms-giving has its place but charity cannot rest content simply to drop pennies in collecting tins, ignoring social injustice and oppression. (Gladstone 1982:171)

At root Gladstone's argument contends that charity as practised today is wrongly 'political'. It is political in the sense that it neutralises the threat of the poor and controls them by sending them tokenistic hand-outs: hand-outs that keep hunger and poverty at bay but do little to eradicate them. This is 'false charity' which enslaves the poor. In other words it produces both dependency and helplessness, and exonerates the donor from responsibility in the creation of that poverty. According to Gladstone this form of charity hampers any possibility of serious political reform and effectively allows the perpetuation of practices which give rise to poverty.

It is significant that both Gladstone (1982) and Nightingale (1973) use a form of historical reasoning in their respective arguments. These describe the contemporary moment - in this case the meaning and practice of charity - solely in terms of its antecedents. In so doing they adhere to what Foucault names a general history (1989:9). They flatten, decontextualise and depoliticise historical events by tracing them back to a single point of birth when the concept of charity was originally formulated. For these authors the meaning of contemporary charity is derived by projecting it against a 'background of permanence', the permanence of theological ideas dating back two millenia. Contemporary practices and meanings are simply 'more of the same'. They are explained as elaborations, distortions or unfoldings of a particular but essential meaning formulated at some distant point in history - the moment of 'foundation' (Foucault 1989:5-9, 21). This occurs because Gladstone and others take the Judeo-Christian theological texts, the religious monuments - moments/events of the past - and read them, literally, as documents from the past - as objective records of a previously existing and objective reality. This allows them to use these texts as a source of comparison for contemporary practice, because, the tautology dictates, such practice is descended from them.
Such an interpretation suggests that the reader should suspend disbelief trusting that there was some point - a mythical time - when spirit and practice were completely harmonious. A phenomenon made worse because seldom is the practice of charity clearly differentiated from its inscribed meaning, whether in common-sense, historical or legal terms. So frequently there is no real sense of what specific aspect of charity is being discussed. Gladstone's is a moralistic argument which centres around the possibility of resurrecting a pure and innocent charitable practice, charity devoid of relationships of power. As such he reiterates the desirability of charity, but only when it is located in the 'true' definition of charity, that located in foundational theological texts.

**vi Mauss and The Gift: inserting a concept of power.**

Gladstone's analysis of charity relies on a simplistic division of meaning and practice. As such it is severely flawed. A more intriguing account of charity as a cultural permutation of a universal phenomenon is presented in the essay by the sociologist Marcel Mauss entitled *The Gift* (1925). *The Gift* is a systematic and comparative study of the phenomenon of gift exchange or 'prestation', which Mauss argued was universal. Marcel Mauss addressed universalism as a means to further work: to discover the range of meanings attributed to prestation in a variety of cultures in order to relativise the practice of 'gift-giving' (Evans-Pritchard 1969:ix). This essay was part of a larger project in cross-cultural sociology/anthropology in which Mauss was engaged whose function was to place social phenomena in their 'social totality'. Mauss's preoccupation with 'total social phenomena' derived from his dissatisfaction with simplistic or functional explanations of social acts. The essay's organising principle is the Maori concept of *hau*. This forms the springboard for the rest of the essay because it immediately attributes a super-natural - non-functional - dimension to the phenomenon of gift-giving. The *hau*, for the Maori, is the motivating force of the gift. It obliges the gift to be given, but also received and repaid, because the

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3 The edition referred to here was published in 1969.
4 Mauss was part of the Année Sociologique School (founded by Emile Durkheim - his uncle). *The Gift* (1925) was a pioneering work and belonged to a form of experimental and original cross-cultural social anthropology practiced on a grand scale (see Evans Pritchard's Introduction to the 1969 Edition).
5 Mauss has been criticised for his positivism and for skewing his ethnographic evidence since his principal examples were Pacific societies which had elaborate exchange cultures (see Sahlins 1972:153-171).
hau must always return to its place of origin (Mauss 1969; Sahlins 1972:149-50). From this Mauss concludes that gift exchange cannot simply be an exercise in 'natural economy', 'utilitarianism' or the simple product of 'mercantilism'. Gift-giving is a complex and culturally constructed event with no simple meaning, function or form. It is a means of enacting a daily moral commitment because it knits together a number of obligations: giving, receiving and repayment. The essence of the gift is that it is only materialised in performance: 'meaning' and 'practice' are inseparable, the act of giving realises meaning because it solidifies or reforms webs of relationships. For Mauss 'giving' is a political assertion. To give is to enter into a peaceable social contract with others (on an individual or community basis) in order to avoid conflict. So the failure to give, the refusal to repay or accept a gift is tantamount to a denial, or a declaration of the demise, of social relations (Sahlins 1972:168-74). For Mauss all gifts bear 'in their material design some political burden of reconciliation' (Sahlins 1972:182).

How might this Maussian model enable us to understand contemporary charitable practice? According to Mauss alms-giving, or charity, is a form of gift, it is simply the 'old gift morality raised to the position of a principle of justice' (1969:16). As such, the significant feature is that in alms-giving, as in prestation, the gift is repaid. Because the gift cannot be reciprocated in kind what is being traded for the material artefact is the ability to debase the receiver. For Mauss the gift, whatever its putative form or intent - be it charity or solidarity - is never pure or innocent. The relationship between benefactor and beneficiary is always a question of 'freedom and obligation', 'generosity and self-interest' (1969:66).

The Gift highlights a number of issues pertinent to the analysis presented here. Mauss contends that meaning and practice in gift-giving cannot be separated; giving only acquires meaning when it assumes the status of cultural event. The gift is embedded within 'culture' which conditions its manifestation and rate of exchange. For this reason neither universality nor human nature per se are sufficient explanatory conditions for the analysis of the phenomenon of gift-giving, nor satisfactory reasons for positively valuing it.
Mauss also grounds the ubiquity of the gift firmly within the realm of power, because for him, all 'Gifts make slaves' (Sahlins 1972:133; Mauss 1969:41). This implies that gifts are inevitably political events. This is not a definition of 'power' which considers it as a monolithic and repressive force but one where 'power' is a more diffuse and productive phenomenon, actively negotiated in the everyday.

There are obvious parallels between Mauss's concept of power in The Gift, and that elaborated by Foucault. For Foucault, power is similarly not a uniformly negative, repressive force possessed by certain agents and enacted on others. On the contrary, it is a pervasive and seductive force made manifest through a series of practices. In looking at charitable practices, the question is not whether power is located in charity or where, but how power operates in specific circumstances and practices (Barrett 1991:135-6).

Not surprisingly it is precisely the theory of power contained in The Gift that has been persistently glossed over, in its many appropriations. Nightingale, for example, uses Mauss to corroborate universalist preambles concerning philanthropic gestures before launching into the legacy of the Judeo-Christian 'ethic': the ascribed root of Western charity (1973:100-1).

In this section I argued that the practice of charity is regimented and regulated by a number of theoretical discourses disseminated by historians, polemicians and lawyers. I showed that these discourses utilised foundations, origins and histories to construct the meaning and practice of charity. I argued that they used such means to divide philanthropic activity into two conflictual modes: one promoting charity and the other, social justice. So in this section I used to the concept of discourse, and Mauss's essay The Gift to highlight that these oppositions were derived from essentialisms and restrictive definitions of power. The relevance of these conclusions becomes clearer in the next sections.

**Section 3. The Hybridity of British Development Charities.**

Having examined in detail the theoretical reasonings employed to explore the phenomenon of charitable activity, we must turn our attention towards the specific institutional forms and
discourses that frame the activity of British development charities in the present. I argue in
the following section that British development charities are positioned at the cross-roads of
three forms of institutional identity. British development charities are simultaneously
voluntary organisation, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and charities. These
different aspects affect their mode of operation as institutions. I now consider how.

i Voluntary status.

British development charities belong to the voluntary sector: an incredibly diverse sector
including voluntary organisations such as schools, churches, sports clubs etc. Voluntary
organisations are defined by virtue of three factors. They are, most commonly, established
by a 'private citizens for stated philanthropic purpose' (Burnell 1992:1). They seek to
serve or benefit various social groupings in one way or another. In the case of British
development charities the chosen beneficiaries reside in the societies of what is classed as
the Third World, the developing world or The South. So their beneficiaries are primarily
the poor overseas.

Voluntary organisations are also, by definition, non-profit making organisations. In other
words any profit produced through their activities (for instance, in the selling of goods)
must be used for furthering the purposes for which they were originally formed, and
should not go into the pockets of private individuals. Voluntary organisations and their
staff are also regulated at the highest level by a supervisory board of non-staff members.
In the case of a charity these are called the Trustees and they are individually and severally
liable for any debt the organisation might incur (George 1989:25-6; Burnell 1992:1).

Voluntary organisations can trace some of their characteristics back to the nineteenth
century. Nineteenth century voluntary agencies were distinct, as philanthropic
organisations, from their predecessors, particularly the eighteenth century endowed trusts,
in two respects. They adopted a more actively interventionist role, mediating between the
benefactors and the beneficiaries, and they had a more public nature since they were
dependent on the support of patrons and subscribers. For Prochaska, this dependence on
public approval and the lack of legal restraint on their 'collecting' activities engendered a situation where fundraising became 'an obsession requiring ever more ingenious methods' (1988:35-6). Some contemporary commentators would agree that fundraising is a continuing preoccupation among British development charities, overtaking all others (Lissner 1977, 1981; Adamson 1991, 1993).

The ability to intervene is equally important to these charities. Typically, British development charities offer a range of services from providing material assistance in disaster situations (The British Red Cross), to sponsoring children in overseas communities (ActionAid, Save the Children Fund (SCF)), to supplying long term volunteers that are sent overseas to impart technical, medical or other skills (Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)). This brief listing identifies only a few of their activities. Interventionism is most usually classified by degrees of 'operationality'. 'Non-operational' organisations are those which restrict themselves to supplying funds to pre-selected 'partner' organisations overseas (Christian Aid, CAFOD). 'Semi-operational' organisations have overseas staff who locate suitable partners and who prepare grant applications themselves (Oxfam, Help the Aged). Finally, 'operational' agencies place their own project personnel overseas (SCF) (Burnell 1992).

Clearly the recognition and respect that development charities enjoy is largely attributable to their powers of intervention and their first hand knowledge of the areas in which they work. Those organisations that are non-operational have staff who regularly visit overseas projects as a means of project regulation, although the information they bring back is exceedingly useful for publicity purposes. For Gill, it is this 'hands-on' knowledge, as well as preparedness and ability to intervene in disaster situations, which allowed development NGOs to move, in the 1980s, 'from the philanthropic periphery to occupy centre stage in the struggle to combat world poverty' (1988:169) (see Chapter 2).

ii Non-governmental status,
British development charities are also non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This signifies that they are distinct from official bodies, including inter-governmental organisations, in their 'development' work. In the wider British arena NGOs and voluntary agencies are not synonymous, but in relation to overseas development issues the majority of NGOs are also voluntary organisations and charities (Burnell 1992:1-2). By virtue of their voluntary and non-governmental status, British development charities are projected as being relatively independent of the British Government. In other words, they are not reliant on the British Government (or any other government) for funding nor are they directly linked to Government foreign or domestic policy except in the manner in which such policy may structure the voluntary sector and charities in general. British development charities see this non-governmental and 'independent' aspect as one of their greatest assets. Such status supposedly endows them with the authority to speak about overseas issues, if necessary against the British Government. According to them, this augments public confidence in their work because they are not seen as part of the British Government's foreign policy. Increasingly, the price of this independence is a matter of some debate as charities in general, but development charities in particular, venture ever more into advocacy work at the same time as government funding and endorsement of their work is growing. This tension derives, partly, from the restrictions of charity status.

iii Charitable status.

Charitable status indicates that those British development organisations are registered with the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales (CC) and that this acceptance of registration is conclusive according to the Charity Law of England and Wales (George 1989). The possession of charitable status impacts on the workings of contemporary development NGOs in several respects.

First and foremost of all, charitable status bestows substantial financial privileges on the institutions concerned (conferred after registration by the Inland Revenue). The majority of charitable income (from street collection, special appeals, general fundraising, and
advertising) is exempt from tax, including capital gains tax, provided that the profit is applied to a charitable purpose. Charities also benefit from zero rating of Value Added Tax (VAT) on certain items including supplies, exports, or second-hand donated goods sold in charity shops (George 1989; Burnell 1992:4).

In the 1980s the British Government added to these benefits by introducing new schemes which created 'increased opportunities to give' for the British donor (Major 1991). These permitted charities to benefit from donor tax relief, notably in reclaiming tax paid on covenanted receipts from individuals and companies, on pay-roll giving for individuals ('Give-As-You-Earn' initiated in 1986) and one-off gifts ('Gift Aid' introduced in 1990) (Burnell 1992:4-5). So the financial incentives for becoming a charity are considerable and have increased over the past decade.

Charitable status is also said to be a cachet of respectability encouraging private and corporate sympathy and therefore donations (Lissner 1977; Burnell 1992; Whitaker 1983). This is partly attributable to the widespread expectation that these organisations are regulated by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales (CC). In fact, registration only guarantees two things: that the purpose as originally set out corresponded to charitable purposes in law and that the CC accorded the organisation a registration number (George 1989:25).

Charitable status also confers what British development charities consider to be disadvantages. Charity Law in England and Wales circumscribes what charitable institutions are allowed to say; it carries with it prescriptions about what are termed 'political activities'. This is a twentieth century development: although charity law has been in operation since the seventeenth century, the issue of 'political activity' was only legally recognised in 1917. Charity law holds that charitable organisations cannot be political ones, though it fails to describe what 'being political' means. The clearest directives exhort charities not to support political parties and advise them to avoid being politically partisan in their documentation. They should not

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The first guidelines on 'political activity' were issued in 1969, though these were clarified most recently in a separate summary, Political Activities by Charities, in 1986 (Charity Commissioners for England and Wales 1986; see also Burnell 1992:7-8; Gladstone 1982:97-9). This has created an odd situation: nineteenth century charitable institutions with overtly political aims, such as the Society for the Abolition of Slavery, would now no longer be eligible for charitable registration (Gladstone 1982:99).
bring pressure to bear on the government to adopt, to alter, or to maintain a particular line of action though charities may present reasoned argument and information to the Government. (Williams 1989:141)

The ambiguity that development NGOs feel in relation to their charitable status rests in the fact that it ostensibly precludes them, as charities, from pursuing overtly political objects or from making political statements. As NGOs, however, 'advocacy' has become an expected part of their work.

In this section I outlined the hybridity of British development charities, in particular how their different institutional identities impact on their self-identity. I also described how institutional discourses impact on these organisations. In the following section I extend the scope of the investigation of this hybridity, by delineating how British development charities operate within a discursive, institutional and historical context.

Section 4. On 'Just Being Charitable': Charitable Status and its Ambiguities.

This section will demonstrate that charity and charitable status are sites of contested meaning, and that British development charities actively participate in endowing charities with particular connotations. As such this section will draw parallels with section two and remobilise some of its themes. It connects the ambivalence of charitable status to the permanent need to negotiate the boundaries of charitable activity, but also the need for British development charities to maintain their popularity and status. This section concentrates on the discursive production of charitable and voluntary activity, leaving the quandaries associated with non-governmental status to chapter two.

i Charity and the dilemma of meaning.

For Williams, a polemicist, charity, as it is practiced in Britain, is a profoundly ambiguous activity. The complexity rests in part on the absence of consensus in relation to its multiple meaning.

But what is a charity? To the public, it is primarily an organisation which relieves the poor, comforts the sick or helps the impotent; in law, this and much more. (Nightingale 1973:34)
Confusingly the Charity Law of England and Wales provides status restrictions but advances no precise definition for charity.

The earliest and most influential legal definition of charity is the preamble to the 1601 Statute of Charitable Uses [43 Eliz 1, c.4]. According to lawyers, this preamble enumerated - neither exhaustively nor exclusively - charitable purposes in order to clarify and simplify the procedure for controlling charitable abuses (Jordan 1964:112-3; Maurice and Parker 1984:1-3). The Elizabethan preamble only became the fons et origo - the quintessence - of all charitable uses in the early nineteenth century (Jones 1969:25, 122; Gladstone 1982:47-8).

The legal 'definition' of charity as it now stands was formulated in 1891. Lord Macnaghten in the [Income Tax Special Purpose Commissioners vs. Pemsel (1891)] case specified the legal categorisation of charitable purposes. He drew from an earlier pronouncement classifying 'charitable uses' under four other 'heads':

i. the relief of poverty;
ii. the advancement of education;
iii. the advancement of religion;
iv. 'other purposes beneficial to the community not falling under any of the preceding heads'. (Maurice & Parker 1984: 6)

This is a codification rather than a definition. For the polemicists Williams (1989), Gladstone (1982) and Nightingale (1973) what is significant about this codification is the last 'head'. For these writers what distinguishes this nineteenth century judgement from the 1601 preamble is the uncoupling of charity from relief of the poor. From this point charitable uses were no longer barred from benefiting the rich (see Jones 1969; Maurice & Parker 1984). According to Gladstone (1982) and Williams (1989) contemporary Charity law, therefore, is corrupt: instead of obeying the intent of the 1601 preamble - which was drawn up for the specific purpose of relieving the poor - it is moving ever further from it.

Williams' (1989) argument, for instance, is conducted on a number of levels.

Williams attacks charity law because it legitimises that which Williams judges to be essentially 'uncharitable'. For instance, the criteria of public benefit7 and the optional use

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7 The 'test' of public benefit is now essential to registration. It encompasses two aspects: (i) whether public benefit is conferred and (ii) whether the beneficiaries comprise enough of a section of the population to constitute the 'public' (Gerard 1983:59-62; Gladstone 1982:47). Consequently though some
of precedent have allowed charity law (as it now stands) to elevate the rights of animals over those of man. Charity law proclaims the former to be 'of benefit to mankind generally' whereas the prevention of cruelty to man carries with it a demand for political reform, and therefore cannot conclusively be said to be of 'public benefit' in law (Nightingale 1973:41-61; Williams 1989:30; Gladstone 1982: 55-8, 105-6). Moreover charity law proclaims that any religious use (including the Unification Church) is ipso facto charitable, in contrast to causes such as the promotion of good race-relations which are not (Nightingale 1973: 52,54). Charity law also validates the act of charity because it guarantees the perpetuity of charitable trusts even if their objects are uncertain, redundant or have lapsed.

Williams clearly considers this mode of operation arcane, and urges speedy reform. He judges the law to be symptomatic of the general conservatism of charitable activity. For him, the legal principle of charity works on the basis of 'bounty, not bargain'. Charity subjugates the beneficiaries who are forced to 'depend on the caprice of the donor, not on contractual arrangements over which they might have some power' (Williams 1989:3).

Charities perpetuate the established order; they provide relief and services to those in need, but do not challenge the causes, or the 'roots', of that need. So Williams intertwines an argument revolving around legal practice with one drawing on historical and institutional evidence. Williams persistently mines the historical record for proof that charity does not derive from compassion and humility but from feelings of superiority and guilt. Charity casts the poor, not poverty, as the problem and subjects them to regulation and control. So charities and charity law emerge from Williams's account as mechanisms which support and perpetuate the pillars of the British establishment (most notably the class structure through the charitable status of Public Schools). Charity therefore inevitably benefits the 'haves', either materially or by 'salving their consciences', at the expense of the 'have nots'.

ii Charity and the burden of history.

Public schools and universities have automatic status (by virtue of historical associations) other newer educational trusts may not fall in the remit of 'public benefit' though they may benefit less privileged sections of the population (see Williams 1989). However it does prevent charities from benefiting the rich exclusively (Gladstone 1982:58).
British development charities are clearly influenced by this debate, and reflect Williams' ambiguity. They seek to dissociate themselves from their historical forebears and what they consider 'old style' philanthropic ideals. To chart the change between their charitable predecessors and themselves they re-invent past philanthropic techniques. Victorian philanthropy in particular is targeted. It is represented as being composed uniquely of repressive and divisive techniques enacted by a guilt-ridden and high-minded middle class onto an objectified and poverty stricken population. The application of scientific and social scientific methods to charitable practice during this era is taken to symbolise all that is suspect and heinous about charitable acts and motives. Historians of the period inject a note of scepticism. This burden of history, they claim, derives from a very stereotyped reimagining of the ideals and activity that lay behind Victorian philanthropy and a narrow selection of its mechanisms (Prochaska 1988:85; Himmelfarb 1991).

Indeed British development charities are deemed to carry a double burden by virtue of their charitable status. Common-sense historical readings of overseas charity, it is believed, link contemporary development NGOs with one of the major philanthropic enterprises of the nineteenth century: the missionary movement. So this represents current development work as the descendant of a philanthropic enterprise redolent with associations of control and conversion, racism, Imperialism and naked injustice. Most British development charities are quick to deny the historical connection between themselves and the ideals and practices of this significant evangelical movement. There are manifold attempts to provide counter-histories.

For instance, Elliot (1987a) understands the emergence of contemporary religious development NGOs, such as Christian Aid and CAFOD, in a very different context. He locates them within the pacifist and ecumenical movements of the inter-war and post-war years (see Hastings 1991). Lissner (1977) equally contends that there is no direct link between the missionary movement and development NGOs. He asserts that although there is a similarity at the level of activity - both provided health services and education - there is a clear distinction at the level of motive. For the missionary movement, these benefits were not ends in themselves, but were derived from and subsidiary to, evangelisation.
So a specific historical trajectory is reconstructed by Lissner (1977) as well as others (Whitaker 1983; Nightingale 1973; Burnell 1992; Black 1992; Lacey 1970). This charts the trajectory of British development charities as a form of enlightenment whereby expansion of the institution is said to derive from awareness of 'greater need'. They are represented as visionary and innovative organisations prepared for, and responsive to, unforeseen needs as well as progressive in terms of provision. So the roots of development charity are dissociated from unfashionable evangelistic impulses. The oldest and best known British development NGOs (Oxfam, Christian Aid, Save the Children) are said to have started off as short-term relief organisations responding to the needs of victims of war in Europe or enabling post-war European reconstruction. The international focus emerged during the 1950s and 1960s (with organisations such as War on Want, Help the Aged, VSO, UNICEF UK) in connection with events such as the World Refugee Year (1959-60), the Freedom From Hunger Campaign (1960-1965) and the First United Nations Decade of Development (1960s). The 1950s and 1960s are portrayed as signalling the dawn of development 'proper': long-term and life-enhancing rather than short term relief. The only British development charity that is described as directly connected with the nineteenth century is the British Red Cross founded in 1870 as part of the International Red Cross movement (Bory 1987).

One author however does recognise a link between contemporary NGOs and the missionary movement. Harris claims that in the early years (1950s) missionary organisations were frequently used as intermediaries since they were the only vehicles situated 'in country' through which the charities could carry out relief and/or development work (1988:6).

The point here is not to provide exhaustive counter-evidence, but instead to ask a question: How is one to understand these historical reconstructions?

The French social theorist De Certeau provides an answer in his essay *History: Science and Fiction* (1986). In this De Certeau investigates the possible uses of history and history's status as evidence. He concludes that history can never amount to a science - an objective
description of previous events. History is, instead, a performance, a narrative/selective
reconstruction not an objective/exhaustive one. As a narrative reconstruction - a story - it
refashions the past for certain ends. According to De Certeau (1986) this does not rob
history of its importance or meaning. On the contrary, it is precisely because histories try
to dissipate their process of production that they are especially significant. So under the
guise of objectivity histories organise the present and impose meaning: the sweep of events
and the continuity between the living and the dead inevitably emerge as rational processes.
Consequently past events are constantly referred to and are constructed as if they logically
precede and explain the events of today. History, therefore, 'makes the present
inhabitable': it is always a discourse on the present, rather than a recounting of the past (De

Clearly the past is used to construct a body of truth around charity. It is constantly invoked
to provide evidence to back up an argument concerning the proper role of charity in the
present. Williams asserts that history proves charity to be an ambiguous project, one
which is not politically engaged, and which reasserts the position of the ruling class. Elliot
(1987a) and Lissner (1977) construct a specific trajectory for British development charities
distancing them from associations of both Victorian philanthropy and the missionary
movement. This is clearly a move to establish the antecedents of British development
charities away from associations of 'old style' charity towards 'new style' social justice.
What emerges from both these attempts is a desire to fix the meaning of charity. History
justifies a discursive truth which favours a 'social justice' orientation - judged to be
progressive and based on social change - over a 'charity' one - described as politically
conservative because it seeks to maintain 'social order'. So ambiguity is displaced onto the
tension between two fixed and final modes into which the complexity of the status,
meaning and practice of charity is unproblematically inserted (Lissner 1977; Williams 1989;

Development charities, in particular, adhere to this binary framework since, currently, their
preferred model of charity is one which is based on change rather than order. (Gerard
They contrast their perception of the role of charity - a social justice orientation focusing on social transformation in the South - with that of older and more established organisations, such as the medical and cancer charities, that promote a conception of charity as 'apolitical' service providers (Black 1992; Gerard 1983). When development NGOs talk of themselves as charities, they characterise their style of work as 'preventative', not 'curative'. Their purpose is to identify with the poor and promote their human rights because they contend that 'genuine' development cannot be achieved where these are being systematically violated (Black 1992:247, 263; Oxfam 1992).

So when British development charities advocate Gerard's (1983) 'new style' of charitable activity, it ceases to be merely one of two alternative methods for conducting philanthropic affairs, and becomes a better way of proceeding. It is transformed into a morally superior, more effective and democratic response to 'need'.

iii Charity and the case for reform.

Asserting the superiority and greater contemporary relevance of 'social justice' has strategic value. Specifically, it provides a basis from which British development charities and radical polemicists such as Gladstone (1982) and Williams (1989) can argue for a change in charity law. The case is clear if charity law has been formulated and enacted by those whose motives were suspect (most typically Victorian philanthropists) then the law itself must be inadequate. So charity law is typified as essentially repressive and conservative, seeking to preserve the status quo. A truth is constituted whereby charity law in its present form undermines the work of radical charities such as those concerned with development. So the discourse of reform attacks two aspects of charity law: the present codification and its restriction on charitable activities.

The legal discourse of charity advances no definitions of charity. The Macnaghten codification and the use of legal precedent determine its meaning at any given time. Clearly then, there is no essential legal 'truth' on the subject of charity. The Charity Law of England and Wales because of its malleability incorporates contemporary 'meanings' and
inserts them into the legal codification, to allow charity status. Charity law functions to promote charitable activity *per se*. That which it values and seeks to protect is not the object of charity - since eligibility is decided through approximation to a codification at any given time, not objective 'need' - but the act of charity itself. Williams (1989) and Gladstone (1982) contend that this is reason enough for reform.

For British development charities the case is not quite so clear. Most recently during the moves to reform charity law, they remained notably silent on the issue of definition and consequently complied with the British Government view (all voluntary organisations were asked to give their opinion). Its perspective was clearly stated in the 1989 British Government White Paper *Charities: A Framework for the Future*.

> [T]here would appear to be few advantages in attempting a wholesale redefinition of charitable status and many real dangers in doing so. (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 1989)

This rationale was surprisingly widespread: many parties united around the beneficial properties of this 'flexibility'.

For the British Government 'flexibility' facilitated growth; a loose definition would promote growth in the charitable sector of the same order of magnitude that was present in the 1980s. For Robin Guthrie, the Chief Charity Commissioner, the value and virtue of the English system lay in its lack of definition. Its classification of different charitable uses allowed the law to be responsive to the given historical period, to change with society by perceiving and providing for emerging needs. A definition would necessitate repeated reform in the long term (Guthrie 1988:17-8). The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) (representing the interests of British voluntary sector) agreed: a set definition would mean producing an exhaustive and instantly dated description of every conceivable charitable use. British development charities, despite their vocal endorsement of a political style of charity, and their frequent complaints about charity law, officially

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8 17.5% of the registered charities in England and Wales came into being in the 1980s and Government subsidy of the sector in 1991 ran to £2.5 billion (Major 1991). This outstanding growth, however, also produced a degree of scepticism among the general public revolving around the manner in which the larger charities managed their impressive incomes (Voluntary Movement Group 1988). The 1980s charity legislation sought to address these fears by proposing that yearly submission of financial accounts should be required of all charities (irrespective of size). It also suggested enlarging the regulatory powers of the Charity Commissioners and the responsibilities of the Charity Trustees (Cerasale 1989; Kidd 1989; Charities Aid Foundation 1992).
welcomed' the White Paper, acclaiming its emphasis on greater regulation of the charitable sector.

The roots of this compliance with the supposedly conservative majority lay not only in maintaining financial privilege but elsewhere as well. British development charities believed that fixing a definition of charity would have knock-on effects. In particular it would necessitate greater precision about the kinds of activity which could be considered 'political', and therefore 'uncharitable' according to law.

At present the guidelines on political activity do not give strict indications on what is and is not acceptable, bar the fact that charities are not allowed to speak out about issues that do not relate to their work. Most development charities will admit that acceptability depends in large part on tone and timing (Whitaker 1983:170). The Charity Commissioners (CC) have a conveniently obtuse position on 'political activities'.

If in pursuit of their objects, or in seeking to benefit those intended by their trust to receive benefit, [charities] come across political obstacles, the only means of addressing those obstacles is political activity. Any such political activity must be subordinate to the pursuit of their objects and the benefit of their beneficiaries and ancillary to their charitable activity. ... How far should any charity then go in seeking to change the circumstances in which it is operating? Not in my view very far. (Guthrie:1989)

'Political' activity is acceptable as long as it does not make up the main body of the charity's work, or use up too great a proportion of its donated money. The CC and the British Government also endorse the view that if charities are to be a powerful, pioneering and innovatory social force in society, then they must be able to voice what they witness, albeit in assertive rather than aggressive tones (Gladstone 1982:106; Major 1991; Burnell 1992). The distinction between advocacy/persuasion ('acceptable') and pressure ('not acceptable') is a fine line, one that development charities know they must learn to tread.

Nevertheless British development charities maintain that the guidelines on political activity are unduly restrictive. They claim they these inhibits 'them from becoming an alternative voice in foreign policy on issues beyond those reasonably closely related to aid and humanitarian activity' (Black 1992:284). They perceive advocacy and campaigning as being integral to their role as NGOs working in 'development': they posit that it is
impossible for them to be both 'neutral' and an effective force in development (Whitaker 1983; Kouchner 1986; Black 1992; Chapter 2).

Clearly then, although development NGOs seek to qualify for the privileges of charity status they remain ambivalent about the operational restrictions and the perspective that accompanies charity law (Gerard 1983:38). British development charities perceive their charitable status as causing a direct internal conflict between what they feel it is their duty to do as development NGOs, and what they are forced to accept by virtue of their status as legally registered charities.

This tension cannot be resolved, as long as these organisations accept charity status.

Gladstone (1982) has a simple solution. He proposes a greater plurality in the voluntary sector with the creation of different mechanisms for different objects. This would allow some agencies to campaign politically without restriction, though this would potentially be accompanied by the eradication of financial privilege. British development charities do not appear to want to lose charity status, despite the convincing arguments of 'polemicists', such as Lissner, who argue that they should volunteer to lose their charity status if this allows them to hold controversial opinions (1977:255). For Gerard this clearly exemplifies that 'as far as political activism is concerned, the issue is of less significance to most charities than generally assumed' (1983:69). In 1990/1 British development charities' reticence to comment on charity law was influenced by the on-going investigations by the Charity Commissioners of Oxfam and War on Want for, respectively, political and financial misconduct. There was a great deal of uncertainty as to what the Charity

9 Investigations set in motion by the CC are said not to reflect 'transgressions' as such (the materials under attack cannot be said to be extraordinary in tone or content). They are viewed as markers of significant moments; reflective of a strategic change in the attitude of the CC or of the general political mood. This interpretation was clearly made in relation to the two most significant 'calls to order' of the late 1980s relating to War on Want (WOW) (1988-90) and Oxfam (1990-1) (Black 1992; Bumell 1992). Although WOW was subject to examination for serious financial misconduct, this inquiry was hot on the heels of an earlier investigation (1987) which had banned some of WOW's press advertisements on the grounds that they were too political. The 1990 CC report on War on Want was meticulous and weighty, in striking contrast to the 1991 Oxfam report which was insubstantial both in content and conclusions (see Chapter 6). Oxfam had been 'called to order' for the 'political' content of its material (its 'Africa' and 'Palestine' campaigns), but the report proved unenlightening as to the precise reasons why these materials were judged to be contentious. Several of the other development charities attempted to clarify the CC position's afterwards, but found both the CC and Oxfam unhelpful. The development charities interpreted Oxfam's 'call to order' as a show of strength aimed at both them and the British Government. The Charity Commissioners were proving that they were able and willing to regulate charities, and therefore had a useful role to perform in the wake of charity reform.
Commissioners conclusions might be, and British development charities felt that, in the main, it was best to stay out of the limelight. This would seem to suggest that maintaining charitable status is extremely valuable to these organisations.

**iv The resonances of charity.**

The effects of charitable status do not solely operate at the level of law. For development NGOs some of the resonances of charity are positively valued and assiduously promoted. According to Gerard the legal definition of charity is not based around a notion of advocacy, but beneficence, so 'traditionally' these associations prevail (Gerard 1983:37, 97-100). The prescribed locus of charitable work is apolitical relief, but the fact that British development charities opt for a more preventative role which depends on solidarity and advocacy does not undermine the fact that for the majority of the population other resonances prevail. These are clearly beneficial associations for charitable institutions.

Whitaker, referring to the work of Oxfam, locates the pioneering drive firmly in its humanitarian perspective. Oxfam's distinction lies in its cry of 'people above politics' and its 'hands on' approach (Whitaker 1983:48-50). This 'people to people' approach is equally portrayed as central to the new credo of 'development'. Non-governmental status implies that British development charities' projects are free from political bias and distortion. So charitable status and non-governmental status combine to construct British development charities as benevolent and radically humanitarian institutions. British development charities can therefore easily argue that only they because of their combination of charitable and non-governmental attributes of compassion, humanitarianism and 'hands-on' experience can effectively and directly reach the poor and thereby initiate 'genuine' development (Gill 1988:169). Black, (1992) the most recent chronicler of Oxfam's history, concludes her historical expose of what is judged to be the most pioneering and radical of the British development charities, with a paradox. She de-politicises Oxfam's

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The consequence of all this activity was the activation of self-censorship; Oxfam refashioned its Africa campaign and Christian Aid withdrew from an independent pressure group. So charity law does not directly police the charities; there are no actual prescriptions and the penalties for misconduct are usually not severe. It regulates, instead, through making charities cautious and self-censoring, since scandal is widely believed to be publicly damaging.
motives. She asserts that throughout Oxfam's history 'the principle of humanitarian neutrality - human need above the political divide - is a constantly recurring theme' and its most potent motivation (Black 1992:291).

v Situating charitable activity in the present.

Clearly charitable status confers benefit in the present political climate. The 1980s saw a flourishing of charitable activity (see footnote 8) and this was situated, in the late 1980s, within the political discourse of 'citizenship'. The voluntary sector was cast as a means for moral renewal, 'active citizens' could work towards the ideal of public good and civic virtue by giving time (as a volunteer) and/or money (increasing donations) to the voluntary sector. For Taylor, writing on behalf of the NCVO, the concept of 'citizenship' signalled that Britain was moving away from the 'me' generation of the mid 1980s towards the more 'caring society' of the nineties (1990:22). 'Active citizenship' could establish a moral renewal tempering the selfishness of Thatcher's 'popular capitalism'. But 'citizenship' was not the property of one political colour, it was the new terrain of political discourse across parties (Hollis 1991; Heater 1991; Williams 1989).

So since the late 1980s volunteering and giving have been reimagined as an integral part of British social life. John Major made this abundantly clear in his speech at the Charities Aid Foundation Annual Conference in 1991.

The voluntary sector is a misnomer, it can't be a sector because it permeates everything. It is part of the very fabric of the whole nation...the cement that actually binds our society together... In the 1990s I want to see the voluntary bodies ever more firmly as a powerful, independent force in our society... Charity has no bounds of class, or wealth, or race, every one can be a donor, every one can give time, every one benefits directly or indirectly from their activities... The right of people to associate in common interest or in the interest of others is a fundamental freedom and a fundamental good.

Charity and citizenship accordingly function not as symbols of a divided nation where everyone has their social place, but as a manifestation of a 'classless' one. Volunteering is an essential, morally uplifting and empowering pursuit. Voluntary workers are the 'great unsung heroes' and the voluntary organisations they serve 'weave the fabric of a free society' (Major 1991). So voluntary organisations have become identified by some as the unifying and democratising force in British society bringing benefits to all by responding to
their needs, producing a more ‘caring’ Britain (National Council for Voluntary Organisations 1990:42-3; Major 1991).

The voluntary sector is created in this discourse not as a supplementary to - the ‘sticking plaster’ of - the Welfare State but as a necessary and complimentary addition: a ‘third force’. This ‘third force’ mediates between the public and the private sectors, but also between them and the population as a whole. It is a vocal and independent force with links to the grass roots. As Heeter aptly notes this produces a voluntary sector as having Heineken like qualities - able to reach the parts other agencies cannot (1991:141).

This valedictory discourse carries with it the promise of increased funding for the voluntary sector. This provokes ambiguity among British development charities. First, there is a widespread feeling that increased government funding (from whatever government) erodes their independence. It is said to have ‘integrity effects’ (Lissner 1977:95). British development charities are apprehensive about being perceived by overseas officials and beneficiaries as an extension of British foreign policy. They also fear that government funding will restrict where, how and with whom they practise ‘development’. So these charities interpret increasing official funding, unless it is controlled, as meaning co-option to conservative agendas. Ultimately, they claim, it will prevent them from ‘speaking for the poor’ and acting ‘politically’ - because speaking for the oppressed is always political - or ‘neutrally’ - as an independent social force (Burnell 1992).

Official British Government documentation seems to contradict this view. In the 1990 Home Office report Efficiency Scrutiny of Government Funding of the Voluntary Sector: Profiting from Partnership., the radical voice of the voluntary sector was explicitly praised (National Council for Voluntary Organisations 1989, 1990:21). Voluntary organisations are celebrated as innovators and pioneers: only they, because of their ‘flexibility', 'personal approach' and 'accessibility', could truly reach out to the individual and ascertain their needs (Charities Aid Foundation 1992:8-9). So the British Government ostensibly relies on these organisations to provide information that makes it more responsive and responsible to its people. The voluntary sector functions as the 'safety zone' between the
citizens and the impersonal, unresponsive and overbureaucratic machinery of the state (Major 1991). For individuals, involvement in the voluntary sector improves their 'quality of life'. It is morally uplifting, but, more crucially, empowering because it reduces their dependency on the state (National Council for Voluntary Organisations 1989:3).

As social pioneers, it is asserted, charities have the right and a duty to advocate for those sections of the population invisible or inaccessible to Government, and to make Government listen. According to John Major in 1991, the British Government was enthusiastic about the prospect of increased partnership: any tension is due to temporary growing pains. He asserted 'There are of course sometimes difficulties in that relationship ... as there are with any relationships outside fairytales'.

But for development charities there is a connection between Government endorsement of the 'Third Sector' and underfunding of the public sector. This they do not readily endorse. British development charities want their work and their authority in the area of development to be valued, but for the right reasons. They do not want overseas development to be left entirely in their hands, or those of other private voluntary organisations. There is a suspicion that Government's recognition and endorsement of NGO work is attributable less to its substantive merit than to its relative cheapness. The British development charities put forward quantitative evidence to support their case. Although the contribution of private grants to overseas relief and development doubled in Britain between the years of 1979-1989, during approximately the same period Britain's official development assistance decreased (more 'fluctuated down') from the level 0.51% of GNP in 1979 to the level 0.31% of GNP in 1989 (Burnell 1992:24-5, 218-9). Although British development charities are unclear as to how to negotiate endorsement and compromise, for some die-hard 'polemists', notably Lissner (1977: 92), any government patronage indicates complicity and must be avoided.

Clearly, however, there is no substantial contradiction between the role prescribed for voluntary sector organisations within the British Government's discourse and that ascribed to non-governmental organisations within the new NGO discourse, specifically concerning
the relationship of these organisations to the state (Edwards & Hulme 1992:20). British Government discourse extols the very virtues which these charities themselves hold dear: innovation, 'grassroots' participation and more accessible bureaucracies. So the discourses on citizenship and charities cannot be viewed as antithetical to, or repressive of the new NGO discourse on the human subject, empowerment, and development (see Chapter 2). There are also substantial advantages to being officially endorsed: it engenders public approval and raises public profile (Burnell 1992:220-232). There is, additionally, a compelling argument for acquiring a position of authority at the centre of development policy implementation, rather than attempting to change the official policy of governmental and inter-governmental organisations from a relatively weak and marginal position.

The divisions between co-option and co-operation, 'charity' practices and 'social justice' practices, are discursively produced and uncomfortably blurred. The parameters that delineate the way in which the meaning and practice of charity is discussed create an artificial distinction between 'charity' and 'social justice'. This derives from a desire to fix the meaning and practice of both modes, a venture which is fundamentally flawed. Effectively during the 1980s all forms of charity were promoted since 'charity' per se, in whatever form, was endorsed by Government as A Good Thing (Burnell 1992). The notion that charities should be social pioneers and vocal organisations has become somewhat of a cliche and one which is not oppositional, but central, to British Government discourse. So the opposition produced between 'charity' and 'social justice' emerges as essentialist and based on a good deal of conjecture concerning what the latent possibilities of 'social justice' orientated organisations could be. As Burnell notes, the supposed distinction between the two modes rests 'on beliefs about what the world would be like in the absence of charity, or about what would happen in the future if the charities turned into a very different kind of organization, for instance, a political movement' (1992:12).

In this section I showed the extent to which British development charities experience charitable status as an ambiguous achievement. I demonstrated that charitable status brings
into play a number of resonances and ascriptions: on the one hand it is said to signify compassion and purity of motive, on the other a desire to regulate and suppress the poor. I also indicated that legal status proves to have obligations and advantages which need to be negotiated. So in this last section I described how the status and meaning of charity is constituted as a body of truth by British development charities in the present day.

Conclusion

In this chapter I attempted to map out the 'body of truth' that has emerged in the last ten years concerning charitable activity. I sought to situate the phenomenon of charity in its theoretical, discursive and institutional context. In order to do this I divided the chapter into four sections.

In the first section, I outlined the overall perspective deployed in this chapter. I argued that using the work of Michel Foucault diverted the researcher's attention away from looking for foundational intents or historical narratives to how charity was discursively produced in the present. In the second section I sought to deploy this framework to analyse the available literature on charity by dividing it up into three categories. I suggested that these literatures often defined charity in relation to pure motives, or more innocent historical periods. I then compared these literatures with Marcel Mauss's essay The Gift. I found that this, in contradistinction, inscribed power within charity asserting that no form of gift giving could be primally innocent. In the third section I sought to demonstrate the hybridity of British development charities. I considered what the effects of being at the crossroads of three institutional forms might be. In the last section I explored the way in charity is viewed, defined and discussed by various parties in Britain today. In this chapter, therefore, I scrutinised the assumptions and position of British development charities, in particular how they issue definitions of themselves in opposition to other agencies.

Chapter two extends this investigation but in the specific context of 'development'. In this next chapter I examine in greater depth the strictures of non-governmental status, in particular its synonymity with a specific and now ascendant discourse of development.
Chapter two

Developing Empowerment/Empowering Development.
Introduction

In chapter one I interrogated the concept of charity and indicated that the term could not be said to have a fixed, transcendent or essential meaning. I argued that the meaning charity acquires at any given historical moment is discursively produced.

In this chapter I propose to subject development to a similar discursive examination. In particular I hope to delineate the aims and assumptions underpinning a presently popular discourse of development, named here the 'new orthodoxy' or the new NGO discourse, because of its intimate association with non-governmental organisations.

The chapter is divided into seven sections. I begin by mapping some of the terrain covered by the term development, showing how the perspective elaborated in chapter one might provide a more fruitful mode of analysis. In sections two, three and four I situate the contemporary prominence of the new orthodoxy historically. Section two shows that the contemporary prominence of this discourse of development is commonly attributed to crisis in thinking within development. In sections three and four I outline how historical trajectories are utilised by NGOs, promoting the new NGO discourse to rationalise its current popularity. I deduce from this that the new NGO discourse adheres to an evolutionary framework. In sections five and six I further explore the specific terms and assumptions of the new orthodoxy of development, by subjecting its ascribed roots - the works of E.F Schumacher and Paulo Freire - to a detailed analysis. In section seven I investigate how the new orthodoxy understands and uses the concept of power. In doing this I seek to question the new orthodoxy's radical potential. I conclude the chapter by arguing that a change in discourse inevitably has effects on development practice. I assert that the way in which development is conceived and enacted today has changed by virtue of the rise to prominence of this new orthodoxy.

Section 1. The Terrain of Development.

My first task is to ask: what does the term development normally refer to?

Lele describes development as a process of directed change stating that, as such, it encompasses both (a) the objectives of this process, and (b) the means of achieving these
objectives' (1991:609). This description only takes things so far, because development incorporates a particular relationship of power. The very activity of 'development' presupposes an 'us' and 'them': it produces a division between those who do ('us') and those who are done to ('them'). This power relationship is mapped onto and is synonymous with a particular geography. Discourses of development seek to engender transformations - social, political, economic - in particular regions of the world: those countries which have, in the past, been classified according to a tripartite division as the 'Third World' (in contrast to the West - the First World, or the East - the Second World) or in a binary opposition as the poor, developing 'South' against the rich, developed 'North'.

Although the above summary sets out the basic parameters of 'development' it fails to convey the multiplicity of activities which are encompassed by the term and hence the various meanings that 'development' articulates. By imputing a uniform character to development, it obscures the active struggle over meaning which seeks continuously to redefine how development should be understood and practised. In other words, although there are numerous attempts to 'fix' the meaning of development, it remains essentially contestable.

A brief example will serve to illustrate this point. In his book Development Theory and The Three Worlds Bjorn Hettne disaggregates development into three constitutive elements: 'development theory', 'development thinking' and 'development ideology' (1992:3). According to Hettne, 'theory' is the province of the academy. It represents the scientific, and objective pursuit of knowledge undertaken by social, political and economic analysts, but one which informs development 'practice'. 'Development thinking' refers to a more inclusive, 'practical', definition of knowledge which can be be found particularly in the work of academics, politicians, planners, and administrators. Finally, 'ideology', characterises a form of activity engaged in by particular groups (politicians, planners) purely for the purposes of legitimation. Clearly this tripartite scheme separates those who carry out 'development' in the proper spirit in order to aid their beneficiaries - the theorists and thinkers - from those for whom it is a tool of domination - the ideologues.
Hetne's classificatory schema seeks to offer an objective and impartial analysis of the field of development. However, it is obvious that he is simultaneously involved in constructing a moral hierarchy in which some motivations and practices are depicted as nobler and more innocent than others. In other words, rather than revealing the 'truth' about development, he mobilises a particular truth concerning development. At the very moment of its articulation his schema becomes a political manifesto.

In contrast to the essentialism of Hetne, I propose to analyse development utilising the theoretical tools introduced in chapter one. As in the case of charity I wish to suggest that development is most productively understood as a discursively constituted body of knowledge, rather than as a field that is subdivided according to different motivations. Adopting this perspective achieves two things.

First, such an approach reiterates the centrality of the Foucauldian concept of discourse. As I indicated in chapter one this refers to a form of strategic knowledge denoting particular ways of representing and intervening in social relations. Different 'discourses of development' serve to represent the Third World/developing countries in particular ways. They make statements about their very 'essence' in order to produce prescriptions about how developing countries could and should develop and how this 'development' can be fostered.

This definition of discourse serves to elucidate Foster-Carter's observation that every time there is a new permutation of 'development theory' it not only produces new factors to be taken into account in development practice, but also provides a new vocabulary for representing 'development' (1986:3). This occurs because discourses of development incorporate and change speech/language/theory, but only in relationship to a distinct development practice.

A discourse of development which chooses to divide up the world into North/South (an internationalist typology) rather than First, Second and Third world (a Cold War typology) will construct the object of that intervention, in the dual sense of 'end' and 'recipient', in a particular way and advocate strategies in accordance with this representation.
Consequently each new vocabulary delineates a new way of thinking about and practising 'development'.

These points lead us to the second advantage of a discursive analysis. Such a perspective presumes the operation of power - not in the sense of a negative, oppressive force, but rather as one which is both seductive and productive. Discourses of development can never be totally 'innocent', irrespective of their claims. They are not disembodied or neutral forms of knowledge. They have strategic applications and are motivated by particular aims and desires: they want to 'see' certain things happen.

A discursive analysis of development does not create a dichotomy between representation and reality; it does not seek to judge whether some particular prescriptions and/or representations concord with what is 'really happening' or whether they have the power to change situations for the 'better'. It attempts, instead, to show how certain discourses produce 'truths' by normalising particular prescriptions. So at specific moments, discourses of development, because they function as *regimes of truth*, dictate both what is seen and what is known. In the process, they create incontrovertible 'truths' upon which people act.

An example of this would be the inclusion of 'gender' in development discourse. It is noticeable that before the 1970s discourses of development paid little attention to gender: women-in-development were, literally, invisible and therefore 'unknowable' (Elliot 1987a:74). Now, women as a category are specifically targeted in development programmes. Some NGOs, like Oxfam, have *Gender and Development* units (created in 1985), and today it seems incredible that there was a time when women were neither 'visible', nor 'thought of', in development planning (Black 1992:240-1).

In this section I argued that treating development as a discursive practice - one regulated and regimented by the operation of several discourses - removed the need for a typology like Hetne's. I asserted that a discursive approach did not make the mistake of positively valuing the motivation of certain parties over others, or of counterposing 'truth' against 'falsehood' (implied in Hetne's concept of 'ideology'). It aims, instead, to determine the
arena in which these truths operate, to look at development from the perspective of 'the changing shape of the thinkable' (Gordon 1991:8). What this implies is that while charting the meaning and practice inscribed within language of 'development', I am not trapped into thinking that contemporary definitions are better or closer to reality. A discursive analysis does not seek to establish a purity of motive or uncover an innocent 'essence' of development, it questions why certain discourses have acquired ascendancy over others at a particular point in time.

Section 2. The Condition of Development Crisis or Revolution?

As indicated above, this chapter aims to examine the conditions of emergence of a particular and increasingly hegemonic discourse of development: a discourse which has been specifically associated with and promoted by development NGOs. I shall term this the new NGO discourse, or, following Gill, the 'new orthodoxy' (1988:169).

This new orthodoxy is not a unified theory as such, but more a widespread 'agreement on what is good practice' in development terms. It does not incorporate rigid models but rather key terms (Thomas 1992:145). According to Hettne (1992) this signifies a coming of age: development theory is no longer preoccupied with manufacturing universal blueprints, it is more sensitive to specific problems in local contexts.

In examining the specific features of this discourse and the reasons for its ascendancy I will draw on a wide ranging literature. However the sources cited in this chapter are largely derived from one particular field - development studies - and operate with a similar rationality: one that argues that a shift towards more populist and people-centred development is necessarily a 'good thing'.

In line with the discursive approach adopted, the chapter is not particularly concerned with discussing the worth of competing definitions of 'development' but seeks to reflect upon the extent and effects of this emerging consensus.

i Development in crisis.
The consensus surrounding the new orthodoxy is connected to a wider unanimity concerning the supposed 'crisis' in 'development'. While there is no agreement concerning the precise nature of this crisis, it is generally assented that development theory and practice have reached a state of impasse (Mouzelis 1988). This apparent deadlock refers to a perceived lack of vision concerning the role and goals of development, but equally to a generalised ambivalence. Both the motives and expertise of development practitioners are in doubt.

At the root of the contemporary impasse lies a distressing feeling that after five decades of development 'solutions' world poverty is still on the increase. Chambers comments somewhat despondently that '[a]s more countries, and perhaps more people than ever before in recent history, are trapped in downward drift, development studies, theories and practice have been caught off guard' (Chambers 1986:1). He further reflects that while the last five decades of development have not been completely lacking in gains it is nonetheless 'alarming how wrong we were, and how sure we were that we were right' (quoted in Hettne 1992:9).

In the North, therefore, the presumed crisis appears mainly to be the product of a loss of faith in the ability adequately to plan for and regulate change in developing countries or to represent the interests of their poor (Chambers 1988a; Foster-Carter 1986). According to Chambers (1986) this persistent discourse of 'crisis' amounts to nostalgia, a desire to a return of a mythic time when things were simpler. In contrast to this view Chambers (1988a/b, 1989, 1990) himself, and others (Nederveen Pieterse 1991; Hettne 1992; Parajuli 1991) see the demise of certainty in development as a liberating moment. Development discourse is finally freed from the shackles of dominant eurocentric rationalities. So for these authors the effects of this crisis has been the dawning of new, appropriate, more effective and plural models of development arising out of the developing countries themselves.

ii Crisis - what crisis?

If 'development' itself has become a problem ... a corrective to development can only come from other worldviews, other visions. (Rajni Kothari quoted in Nederveen Pieterse 1991:23)
The terms 'other worldviews' and 'other visions' describe Southern models of development, or 'counterpoint' approaches. These are represented as being the new radical forces of development since they appear to arise locally out of the needs and priorities of the poor themselves (Hettne 1992; Parajuli 1991; Fuentes & Gunder Frank 1989).

According to Parajuli (1991), for example, these 'counterpoint' approaches derive their force and relevance from local, 'situated' concerns and knowledge. Instead of aspiring to an immodest universality their aim is appropriateness: development planning takes into account the parameters of ethnicity, ecology, sustainability and gender, pertinent to a specific time and place. These new situated approaches are rooted in 'polycentric pluralism', rather than ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism, as such they are constructed as progressive and democratic (Hettne 1992:241, 233-4, 250; Nederveen Pieterse 1991; 1992).

Significantly the priorities of these 'counterpoint' approaches share many features in common with the new NGO discourse on development, placing 'equity', 'participation' and 'empowerment' as well as 'sustainability' on the agenda as both the means and the goals of development (Parajuli 1991:181). The new NGO discourse similarly contends that 'development' is no longer a prescription defined and devised by others, but a process which is undertaken for the poor, with the poor, and preferably initiated by the poor for their own self-realisation.

So the posited 'crisis' in development appears to have elicited two main responses from development practitioners. First, it has served to highlight the relevance and value of the priorities of those previously on the margins of development 'thought' but at the centre of 'practice', namely, the poor. Secondly, it has encouraged the deployment of less oppressive, more 'in touch' vehicles for development: the non-governmental organisations (either international or indigenous). The new orthodoxy, for instance, asserts that development should be done by the poor for the poor, with supportive 'facilitation' by NGOs.
However these responses have not met with universal approbation. Slater (1992), for example, enquires whether these alternative discourses really open up new possibilities: are they simply taking 'the old negative myths of marginality' and reversing them so that they becomes endowed 'with a subversive and positive sense'? He questions whether these alternative discourses and the NGOs that implement them really have it within their capacities to 'buck the system'; indeed, he asks, should this be their principal aim? (1992:303).

There are a number of ways of answering the question Slater poses. It is possible to consider the conditions of emergence of the new orthodoxy and the organisations that promote it. Alternatively one can enquire as to how the new NGO discourse is constituted in relation to previous development discourses. Finally it is relevant to examine the foundational assumptions underpinning the new orthodoxy. In the remaining part of this section I contextualise NGO ascendance. The following sections consider both the constitution and the terms of the new NGO discourse.

iii NGO ascendance in context.

The rise in number, scale of operation and importance of NGOs within the development field during the 1980s is ascribed to a number of factors, foremost among these being the political importance vested in the 'Third Sector' in both industrialised and developing countries (Chapter 1). Thomas, for example, remarks that '[u]p to the 1970s one might have been forgiven for thinking that public action could only mean state action' (1992:117). From the 1980s onwards this was clearly no longer the case. NGOs now operate in a public policy environment which considers the privatising and 'off-loading of what were previously governmental responsibilities on to private groups' as the measure of responsive and effective government (Billis & MacKeith 1992:122).

According to many commentators, the newly augmented role of NGOs within the development field amounts to a timely recognition of the distinctive quality and style of the development assistance that these organisations can provide (Poulton & Harris 1988; World Development 1987).
Those who make up non-governmental organisations are the people: the people who give
the money, the people who support the agency, the people who work for it and the
project-holders who work with it, and all those who make up the project; in other words,
the beneficiaries, the poorest of the poor. These are the constituents of an NGO, and this
make the voluntary agencies different from other agencies who work in the development
field. (Harris 1988:5)

The new NGO discourse considers the 'people-centred' approach and the 'smallness'
characteristic of development NGOs as being critical to their success and distinctiveness
(Harris 1988:8). An equivalence is constructed between the large organisations, unwieldy
bureaucracy and unresponsiveness to the needs of the poor. In the 1990s, it seems, 'small
is beautiful'.

It is, therefore, possible to suggest that it is a combination of neo-liberal policies and the
supposed success of NGOs at targeting the poor that has served to constitute NGOs as
significant players and pioneers within the development field. The new orthodoxy depicts
NGOs as the only organisations that are able to target the poor effectively and reach 'all the
way down' to effect 'genuine' development (Lewis 1988:6). Within this discourse
governmental and inter-governmental bodies - such as the World Bank and the United
Nations - are constituted at worst as dysfunctional bureaucracies and at best as pale
imitators, happy to espouse the rhetoric but unable to deliver the goods.

This confidence in the excellence of service provision and the dedication of the NGOs is
said to have emerged decisively on the world stage during 1984/6 at the time of the African
crisis. If a single moment could be pin-pointed in the 1980s which turned the tide of
development assistance in the favour of NGOs and crystalised their position as a significant
force in the development field, it was the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 (Burnell 1992:26;
Poulton & Harris 1988:5; Chapter 3). The crisis in Ethiopia in 1984/5 was the example of
'development in reverse' that NGOs had been warning about. It secured the loss of faith in
the capacity of official aid institutions and their programmes to relieve or alleviate poverty

Mass death by starvation in Africa was the most emphatic proof possible that the
development era had been a washout, that most official aid served to impoverish
communities rather than to enrich them and that such reassuring notions as the 'trickle-
down' theory of development were a cruel deception. ... Only the private agencies emerged
with any credit from the catastrophe.
The major official aid donors, it was argued, had compromised themselves by ignoring the plight of the African people, looking only to the national balance sheet. In contrast, the NGOs had remained true to their principles and steadfast in their priorities. In a situation of dire need they had promised and delivered salvation, they re-presented and carried through a more human/e alternative.

The events in Africa between 1984/6 appeared to prove conclusively that an NGO contribution was more effective, professional and caring than anything governments and the larger aid organisations could hope to achieve. Thus, NGOs emerged as the new hopeful instruments of development representing a new model of what development could mean and how it should be conducted¹ (Sewell 1988:ix; Gordon Drabek 1987a:vii, Poulton & Harris 1988:4; Brodhead 1987:46; Lane 1988:64).

In this section I located the ascendancy of the new discourse of development in the context of a supposed crisis in development theory. I showed that for some commentators the effect of this crisis has been a renewal; the latter contend that the demise of old orthodoxies has left space for the emergence of a new orthodoxy, one which is more sensitive to the needs and priorities of the poor. I ended by throwing some doubt on this utopian interpretation of events. I argued that the ascendancy of NGOs and the hegemony of their discourse could equally be attributed to their appropriateness to a neo-liberal governmental agenda. These themes will become clearer in the following sections.


Having considered the rise in number, scale of operation and importance of NGOs in development field in the 1980s I now wish to concentrate in greater detail of the conditions of emergence of the newly ascendant discourse of development. The first step in this

¹ To add weight to such observations it may be useful to cite a few figures. In its report in 1987 The Charities Aid Foundation (which gathers statistics on giving in Britain) concluded that between 1977-1986 the underlying trend of giving to international aid was steadily rising, despite a dip in 1982. The most striking aspect was the jump from just over 11% of the total voluntary income in 1984 to 22% in 1985 (Rajan 1987:88). This increase can be also seen in relation to specific voluntary agencies. Oxfam’s income in the period spanning the years 1981/2 to 1990/1 leapt from £16.26 million to £69,223 million (Burnell 1992:292; Oxfam 1991). By 1988 of the total $ 51 billion aid received by developing countries, $3.6 billion was provided by voluntary agencies, of which Britain contributed $239 million (Burnell 1992:24).
direction involves a brief historical exposition of development discourse as it has emerged in the last fifty years. This exposition will be neither exhaustive nor inclusive since such a comprehensive genealogy is beyond the scope of this project.

I do not seek to imitate those accounts which describe the changes in development theory over the last forty years as being motivated by the marriage of 'theory' and 'reality', or more to the point, a lack of fit between the two. Neither do I want to impute a notion of progress or evolution in delineating this historical terrain. This 'history' of development discourse will not, therefore, be history of ideas in the accepted sense (see the discussion of 'history' in Chapter 1).

This exposition, nevertheless, takes the form of a chronology or 'general history' - a logical sequence of events with a moment of foundation and there is a valid reason for this. It mirrors a widespread consensus concerning the historical trajectory of development, in particular it reflects the key moments deployed within the new NGO discourse to describe and substantiate its own position and knowledge.

i The 1950s: the discourse of modernisation.

The roots of Third World development are always traced back to the end of the Second World War, to the mood of optimism and the moves to reshape the international system in order to facilitate world wide prosperity and peace (Singer 1989:4). Initial theories of development which emerged during the 1950s were economics based, producing an equivalence between development and economic growth (Blomstrom & Hettne 1984:8). Drawing on the experience of post war European reconstruction (in particular the Marshall Plan and the creation of the state of Israel) they advocated a brand of Keynesian economics which placed great faith in active macroeconomic management by governments and sought to extend intervention and regulation to the international sphere through the creation of

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2 I refer here to Blomstrom & Hettne (1984:3) and Chambers (1986:23) who use the absence of fit between 'reality' and 'theory' as the driving force for change in development theory. Hettne uses Kuhn's notion of paradigm change - where paradigm crises lead to better formulation of ideas more fitting to objective reality - to explain trends in development theory.
instruments such as the United Nations and the World Bank (originally the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development)\(^3\).

In the 1950s and 60s 'development economics' - the discrete branch of economics concerned with the specific 'problems' of the newly emergent nations - is said to have become the predominant discourse of development. According to Elliot (1987a), the position it articulated was 'beguilingly simple', the improvement of living conditions necessitated higher income generation. This could only be effected through 'the engine of growth' (Elliot 1987a:31). Development economics reputedly advanced two key problematics and two related solutions: 'rural under-employment', with the appropriate remedy of using underemployed manpower, and 'late industrialisation', calling for an activist state to secure the process of 'catching up' (Sen 1983:746). Change ('development') was dependent on national and international intervention and this justified the three pillars of the ascendant Modernisation discourse: growth, planning and (external) aid (Hettne 1992:47, 49).

Within Modernisation discourse developing countries were portrayed as essentially homogeneous. What united them was their backwardness: the need to 'catch up', to proceed along a well defined unilinear path - neatly subdivided into stages by Walt Rostow - which had previously been travelled in an exemplary manner by the industrialised nations of the West. Modernisation discourse argued that developing countries could be helped to 'catch up' through the mechanisms of external subsidies and technology, but also through being encouraged to actively engage in internal reforms and restructuring (Elliot 1987a). Developing countries, in this scheme were:

> expected to perform like wind-up toys and lumber through the various stages of development single mindedy. (Sen 1983:748)

In other words developing nations could only develop if they acted as purely instrumental entities following the exact path laid down by the economic indicators. These described poverty as a line to be crossed, prosperity as a Gross National Product to be reached and very little existed beyond the two. According to commentators such as Sen (1983) and

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\(^3\) For a fuller account of the unfolding of events see Elliot (1987a), Singer (1989), Hewitt (1992) and Hettne (1992).
Elliot (1987a) 'development economics' was a sophisticated, if contemptuous discourse which relied on scapegoating: developing countries had only themselves to blame for their own lack of development.

Seen from the perspective of the new orthodoxy, Modernisation functions as the unseemly foundation of development. With its evolutionary logic, it cast developing countries in an inferior role. Modernisation discourse is seen to have produced a quasi-imperial vision in which all nations had the dormant potential to grow as the West had done (Nederveen Pieterse 1991:7-8; Blomstrom & Hettne 1984:12,21).

ii The 1960s: dissenting voices.

What is generally considered to have emerged in response to Modernisation during the 1950s and 1960s was a potent structuralist critique. This asserted that Western modernity, rather than being potentially universal was, in fact, a very 'special case' requiring certain conditions unlikely to recur (Blomstrom & Hettne 1984:2,43; Hettne 1992: 55). The novelty of the structuralist critique is seen to have lain in its assertion that developing countries did not acquire their 'inferior' position by virtue of an absence of economic rationality but due to structural inequalities in the world system. As Foster-Carter, for example, has remarked, this new approach argued that the developing countries were not positioned at an inferior evolutionary stage, they were involved in a different 'ball game' altogether (1986:3).

It is commonly affirmed that the most radical and celebrated of the structuralist critiques in the 1960s - but one which has remained influential, as I shall indicate - was the Dependency School. Originating in Latin America (in the United Nation's Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)) Dependency attacked Modernisation on a number of grounds. Most significantly, it argued that latter was eurocentric and ethnocentric.

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4 Two notable 'structuralist' critiques were those of Dudley Seers and Gunnar Myrdal (in the 60s). These looked at international relations and how these structured the possibilities of development, these discourses constructed developed economies as 'special cases' (Seers), or posited that their structural positions caused a 'cumulative causal process' whereby disequilibrium between developing nations and developed nations was constantly reinforced (Myrdal) (Hettne 1992:52-56; De Kadt 1985).
As articulated in the early work of Andre Gunder Frank, Dependency asserted that the lack of 'development' exhibited by developing countries was not purely the product of internal factors - such as the lack of investment, capital or economic know-how - but a matter of external relations. For Gunder Frank, the world capitalist system produced a monopoly structure at all levels, a system of linkages with those at the 'core' (internationally or nationally) appropriating the surplus from, and imposing their will and ideologies on, those of the 'periphery' (Blomstrom & Hettne 1984:66-7; Hettne 1992:97; Foster-Carter 1986:16-19). In this scheme 'development' and 'underdevelopment' were symbiotically linked. Developing countries were historically created as underdeveloped by the development of others - the industrialised or developed countries (Blomstrom & Hettne 1984:76; Foster-Carter 1986:3). Underdevelopment signified the peripheral state of oppression, it was the flip side of the development coin. Accordingly industrialised countries could never have experienced underdevelopment.

It is generally agreed that the structuralist critique has had two important consequences for development discourse. First it is said to have fostered a disillusionment with 'growth' as the single most important objective of development. Second, it is seen to have undermined the neutrality of development prescriptions since, by definition, they operated in a structured world and were predominantly the products of the 'core' not the 'periphery' (Sen 1983:748; Singer 1989:25). Dependency's contention that development - most particularly Modernisation - theory was inherently positioned, where development was first and foremost 'core' knowledge has been adopted as a crucial constitutive element of the new orthodoxy (though the polarities have changed slightly). Robert Chambers, for example, one of the most enthusiastic gurus of the new NGO discourse, persistently utilises the metaphors of 'core' and 'periphery' in his work.

Towards the end of the 1960s a more mature economic discourse of development is said to have emerged, a discourse predominantly spread by agencies such as the United Nations (UN) but also in the popular work of thinkers like Schumacher (to whom I shall return). The focus of development shifted towards human capital investment and required a number
of more qualitative indicators - such as literacy rates, disease eradication, infant mortality rate and so forth. These were now deployed to evaluate the degree to which developing countries were indeed 'developing' (Singer 1989:11-21). According to many commentators (Hettne 1992; Singer 1989; Sen 1983) this more mature economic discourse was more enlightened. It implied a widening of development vision in which a hitherto economics based discourse expanded its own frame of reference, thus incorporating other factors and hence beginning to appraise development in more humane ways.

iii The 1970s: redistribution, employment and basic needs or simply 'targeting the poor'.

In the 1970s, development discourse is said to have shifted away from an exclusive concern with 'distribution from growth' to a focus upon Redistribution With Growth (RWG). This arose in tandem with a concern for employment creation which was prescribed as a remedy for the problem of production ('growth') and fairer income distribution (Singer 1989:25-6; Sen 1983:748). Redistribution With Growth (RWG) proposed that redistribution and growth could be achieved simultaneously - though there was some discussion as to whether redistribution should be achieved first - and that this combination could be effective in eradicating absolute poverty (Hewitt 1992:228-30).

Another important turn within development discourse was associated with initiatives inaugurated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). This latter discourse focussed on 'underemployment' and 'basic human needs'. It advocated a move away from large scale industrialisation as a development solution, to smaller scale, local and predominantly agricultural solutions (Green 1989:3; Kitching 1982).

So the predominant discourses of the 1970s are positioned as having redefined development, shifting the terrain away from questions of quantity alone to include an increasing number of qualitative issues. 'Basic needs' and RWG are portrayed as the first discourses that perceived development to be 'process' not a prescription, in the sense that development had to become sensitive to differences in technology, geography, social and cultural norms (Streeten 1981, 1984).
Consequently, poverty emerged as multifactorial, denoting a lack of material goods but also a lack of access (to public services) and a lack of self-determination (participation, self-reliance). Hence poverty was no longer easily measurable since one could neither evaluate conglomerations of access nor define, neutrally and universally, a minimum basic human need (Glewwe & Van Der Gaag 1990:804-5).

The discourses of basic needs and RWG are said to have included a desire to work with the state but more particularly to target the poor; in other words to design development programmes which specifically sought to bring benefits to subaltern groups (in terms of employment and services). The projects they spawned were designed to reach 'all the way down' (Lewis 1988:6). Thus, intervention was prescribed at the level of the barefoot practitioner who catalysed the community into action (Streetsen 1981:41, 58).

The discourses of the 1970s are said to have tentatively recast the recipient of development as subjects, not objects. Development was no longer defined as interventionist financial and social planning implemented by centralised institutions, but as a process which was engendered through dialogue and participation. In other words, development was reimagined as a process in which the capacities and attributes of local populations were assets on which to build. Not simply the poor, but 'the poorest of the poor' were structurally inserted into development planning. The latent potential for self-governance and self-determination amongst the most marginal, previously 'invisible', sections of the populations of the developing world was affirmed (De Kadt 1985:553; Dichter 1988:183).

In this manner the discourses of the 1970s are said to have foreshadowed many of the assumptions contained in the new NGO discourse. For example, the emphasis on targeting the poor integral to these 1970s discourses is regularly portrayed as being crucially significant in the rise to prominence of NGOs in the development field. According to Black the natural ability of NGOs to stay close to the poorest of the poor made them, from this point onwards, the ideal vehicles for the kinds of development that were now judged to be most appropriate (1992:179, 208).
iv The 1980s: the decade of retrenchment.

If the 1970s is regularly cast as the decade of progress, the 1980s is commonly perceived as the 'lost decade' when mainstream development discourse was once more founded on 'economics'. The neo-liberal turn amongst Western governments and institutions involved a shift from the priorities of the 1970s (RWG, basic needs and employment) to an exclusive concern with debt settlement, stabilisation and liberalisation accompanied by an erosion of public provision. This shift is symbolised in the World Bank's revised agenda in the early 1980s: it moved away from exclusive project lending, previously considered to be the soundest investment, towards balance of payments support in the form of 'structural adjustment' loans (Singer 1989:34; Allen 1987).

This neo-liberal development discourse is said to have redefined the relationship between national government, the poor and the international agencies. Whereas the dominant discourses of the 1970s were premised upon the idea that the 'needy could be assisted via state structures', the neo-liberal development discourse as advanced by the major official agencies in the 1980s (the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the majority of Western Governments) was one which rejected state intervention (Allen 1987:439).

Seen from the position of the new orthodoxy, neo-liberal discourse shared many of the underlying principles of Modernisation, in particular, the belief that development was exclusively a matter of economic management. For proponents of neo-liberalism, development was best engendered through the processes of market liberalization, trade liberalization and by reducing the role of the state in the economy through privatisation and cuts in government spending. The lives of the poor were to be placed in the hands of the self-regulating properties of international markets. For Green (1989:6) this meant,

[…]not poverty but the poor were a disgrace, and the victims not their victimisation, were the appropriate targets for public policy.

Similarly for Singer, the neo-liberal belief of 'structural adjustment as a fact of life', and therefore as beyond debate, appeared to function more as 'a brand of religious fundamentalism than a school of thought' (1989:41). In other words, seen from the position of the new orthodoxy, neo-liberal development is represented as showing no
commitment to the plight of the poor and consequently as engendering a decade of 'NRNG': Neither Redistribution Nor Growth (Singer 1989:41-5).

Hence the 1980s are constructed as a period in which the proper function of development - long-term life enhancement - was thwarted by the demands of national crisis management in developing countries. Human capital investment, public service provision and equity were all gradually abandoned to meet the harsh lending conditions for aid imposed by Western institutions policy of the major funding institutions with the inevitable result that for some of the poorest countries - mainly but not exclusively in Sub-Saharan Africa - development was 'reversed'. For the advocates of the new orthodoxy neo-liberalism represents an 'ideologically' regressive and materially oppressive discourse whose rise to prominence caused the more 'humane' discourses of basic needs and redistribution (with or without growth) to be submerged.

Submerged did not mean obliterated, however. The mid-1980s are seen as a turning point after which a variety of more 'humane' discourses namely, employment, 'basic needs', production and 'human investment' regrouped and reemerged in a new guise: the new NGO discourse (Green 1989; Allen 1987,1990).

There are seen to be two founding moments in this new 'softening up' of mainstream development discourse. The first of these derives from the effects of the UNICEF report Adjustment with a Human Face5. Secondly and more importantly, the African crisis of 1984/6 helped secure the profile of NGOs as the most efficient and ethical modes of dispensing overseas aid (Singer 1989:42-3; Lewis 1988). It is said that subsequent to these events there is a tangible transfer towards positively endorsing and encouraging the role of NGOs in development, pressing governments and official institutions to be responsive to the needs of the poor and to 'work with and accommodate the methodologies of the NGOs' (Holloway 1989c:213-5).

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5 This presented evidence to show that child welfare and by extension the long term resilience of the labour force were suffering by virtue of the social measures imposed by adjustment policies (Sewell 1988:x).
Therefore it is claimed that from the mid-1980s onwards the 'populist' discourses of development (the new orthodoxy and the counterpoint approaches) with their clarion calls of participation and empowerment became increasingly mainstream (De Kadt 1985:550).

In this section I outlined briefly what are perceived to be the main transformations in development discourse over the last four decades. I described the punctuated trajectory of development discourse as a 'history of ideas'. My purpose was to indicate the predominant interpretation of the contribution of the different discourses to the present day, from the point of view of the new orthodoxy. As I will show in the next sections, the new orthodoxy posits an inheritance which stretches back to the structuralism of the 1960s and the people centered discourses of the 1970s, dissociating itself from those of the 1950s or the 1980s. I will argue that these points of identification are important because they serve to validate both the radical intent and humanitarianism of the new NGO discourse.

Section 4. NGOs and the Challenge of Maturity.

The history of ideas described in section three is mirrored by a parallel history of practices. According to advocates of the new development discourse, since the mid-1980s NGOs have moved from 'philanthropic periphery' to the centre stage. For Gill, for example, NGOs are now in a position to 'shape, even to dictate, the rich world's contribution to tackling poverty in the Third World' (1988:169-171). They have achieved this prominent role because they alone enable the poor to take control of the decision making process that affect their lives (Gordon Drabek 1987b:x). This is termed the challenge of maturity.

In a highly influential article Korten (1987) delineates three distinct approaches to development characteristic of NGOs (which apply more to Northern NGOs, than to Southern ones)6.

6 Antrobus sees this as the essential difference between Northern and Southern NGOs. Whereas Northern NGOs have an undeniable link with colonialism and neo-colonialism, indigenous NGOs are the product of decolonisation; a manifest message of people's confidence in their ability to define and act on their own needs and priorities (1987:96).
Among those NGOs that work in development, it is possible to identify three distinctive orientations in programming strategy: (a) relief and welfare; (b) local self-reliance; and (c) sustainable systems of development. ... At the same time there is an underlying direction of movement that makes it appropriate to label these orientations as first, second, and third generation. (Korten 1987:147)

Korten’s historical and classificatory schema reflects a widespread consensus concerning the historical development and future progress of Northern NGOs (NNGOs). Similar histories are provided by Black (1992) and Whitaker (1983). Elliot (1987b: 57-9) on the other hand, proposes a parallel schema incorporating ‘welfare’, ‘developmental’ and ‘training for transformation’ approaches.

Korten’s historical schema incorporates the changes in development discourse in addition to charting the growth and transformation of development NGOs in Britain. It represents a tale of progress in two respects. Firstly, it offers an objective historical account of the formative stages through which British development NGOs have passed on their way to the present. At the same time, however, this objective history is also a ‘evolution’ in the sense of a journey in which NGOs have obtained increasing enlightenment and come ever closer to perfection. It is possible to see this double focus at work by taking a closer look at the way in which Korten’s story unfolds.

For Korten, ‘first generation’ NGOs typically carried out relief and welfare work. Their aims were short term and philanthropic, limited to a crisis response to a situation of dire need. These organisation were motivated by ‘charitable’ impulses; in other words by the simple desire to help the less fortunate.

The ‘second generation’ agencies exhibit a different identity. According to Korten their new approach emerged during the 1960s and 1970s when NGOs turned away from short-term relief and transformed themselves into long-term development agencies (see also Burnell 1992:48; Black 1992:74). He argues that these NGOs redefined their goals in the light of organisational growth and diversification. They now targeted developing countries, aiming to improve the capacity of communities to provide their own basic needs by incorporating self-reliance and sustainability into programming. From this moment NGOs began to plan development with the implicit hope that their projects would be able to survive beyond the period of NGO involvement.
In their latest manifestation - as third generation organisations - NGOs have begun openly to address questions concerning structures of power and inequality at the local and the global level. According to Korten since the 1980s NGOs have reimagined development principally in terms of 'participation' but also 'empowerment'. So these 'third generation' agencies promote an approach to development that is inscribed with the presuppositions of the new NGO discourse. NGOs no longer view themselves simply as providers of services but cast themselves as facilitators for communities and individuals: supporting the emergence of indigenous organisations, influencing, but not controlling, the programmes they fund. Clearly, this third generation approach - in which NGOs enable the poor to articulate and identify their needs - represents the most 'progressive' stage yet reached by NGOs (Korten 1987; Elliot 1987b:57-9). Korten even seems to suggest that it might be an 'end state' (1987:146-7).

As I indicated earlier Korten articulates a 'just-so' story of emergence and maturity, not only of development discourses, but of the institutions that promote them. His first two generations/stages seem almost to function as necessary rites of passage in which NGOs hone their skills and gain a reputation for relief, welfare and community development work, before meeting the challenge consonant with their 'coming of age'. They must formally learn from previous approaches and evolve into their 'third generational' capacity (see also Holloway 1989c:220; Poulton & Harris 1988:1-9).

There is, however, another important element to Korten's 'history' that needs to be mentioned. This concerns the manner in which his schema operates to establish a clear boundary between the moment of foundation of the Northern NGOs as charitable/relief/welfare orientated bodies and their present constitution as development organisations and facilitators of 'empowerment'. In his story, charity is constituted as a dated and politically conservative activity which no self-respecting development organization should willingly be involved in promoting (Chapter 1). Elliot (1987b) is equally explicit on this point. He contends that the welfare activities of first generation agencies smacked of 'rich man's philanthropy', by which he means 'charity'. He goes on to point out that third
generation organizations, inscribed as they are with the new discourse of development, offer a better, more 'open, transparent style within the donor/recipient relationship', one which is linked to a demand for 'social justice' (Elliot 1987b: 52).

Once again, it is possible to discern a strategic use of 'history' in which temporal and discursive distance is established between NGOs today and the institutional forms and discourses that preceded them. The fact that most NGOs were founded as charities and relief organisations causes a degree of ambiguity. The 'origins' are recognised as existing and as being important to NGOs both in terms of initial constitution and experience, but in terms of 'development practice' they are decisively relegated to a marginal position, if not one of ignominy. Yet all is not lost. Equally strongly asserted is the continuity of feeling between present day NGOs and their charitable forebears. Contemporary NGOs conceive of themselves as purveyors of as much compassion, integrity and commitment as their predecessors, although this philanthropic passion is mobilised for different ends. It is asserted that only they, as inheritors of a certain spirit of justice and compassion, have the sensitivity, neutrality and degree of personal involvement essential to engender 'genuine' development (1992:179, 208).

In this section I built on the work in section three, by exemplifying how contemporary NGOs identify themselves historically. I used Korten's classification as the quintessential verdict on the question of NGO origins and descent. I argued that it provided a structure which guided and commented on present day NGO activity and supplied a means of rationalising the past and its unfashionable associations. I also contended that continuity and difference were deployed to validate the contemporary prominence of NGOs and to substantiate claims concerning the comparative advantage of NGOs.

Having considered the historical and theoretical context in which the new NGO discourse defines itself, I now turn to the terms of the discourse itself.
Section 5. The Ascribed Foundations of the New NGO Discourse.

According to Holloway, the new NGO discourse of development is underpinned by two fundamental assumptions. First, that poverty and powerlessness are structural conditions and, therefore, that 'development' must be targeted in order to be effective. Secondly, that the poor know, or have the capacity to know, the character of their oppression (1989a:5). These two founding assumptions are commonly traced to the work of E.F. Schumacher and Paulo Freire.

As Poulton (1988), for example, has argued the importance of both these figures to the new NGO orthodoxy cannot be underestimated. He indicates that the work of Schumacher brings to this discourse a concern with 'people' and provides the justification for long term participatory development, whereas the work of Freire brings a recognition that the poor have a right to claim and to gain their share of power (Poulton 1988:31). In other words, Schumacher and Freire are credited with providing the new discourse with its two key principles: 'participation' and 'empowerment/conscientisation' (Poulton 1988; Whitaker 1983:198; Black 1992; Thomas 1992:22).

Given the centrality of these two figures to the theoretical foundations of the new orthodoxy, any analysis of the latter must begin with an examination of their work.

i) Schumacher and appropriate development.

E F Schumacher produced his now classic *small is beautiful: a study of economics as if people mattered* (1973) as a moral critique of production/growth orientated development discourses (Kitching 1982). According to Schumacher the forms of production dominant in industrialised countries, and increasingly in developing countries, were dehumanising, wasteful and destructive. In contrast he proposed his alternative - Buddhist economics - to highlight the humanisation of work and the maximisation of opportunities to work. At the heart of this alternative creed was the idea of appropriate technology: technology which reflected the 'actual size of man', and which brought out man's 'innate' creativity (1973:33, 147-8, 160-1).
Schumacher cast employment as the most 'natural thing in the world', a crucial component for both physical and moral well-being. Accordingly, he felt that the greatest deprivation suffered by the poor was their lack of opportunity to be self-reliant and to have livelihood security. Lack of such opportunity stultified them as 'human persons' and undermined their 'character' (Schumacher 1973:155, 203-6). Conversely, work, properly conducted in conditions of human dignity and freedom, blesses those who do it and equally their products. (Schumacher 1973:49)

Schumacher argued that agricultural production provided an ideal solution to the productive needs of the poor majority. It did so because it fulfilled three requirements. First, it kept man in touch with nature. Second, it was more likely to correspond with what Schumacher perceived to be the human scale. Third, it provided the poor with the means to satisfy their material needs.

However Schumacher went further than simply advocating a 'return to the land'. He also championed the creation of particular types of workplace that drew on peasant knowledge but which, in the process, also sought to upgrade it (Schumacher 1973:102-3). For Schumacher development was a question of 'education, organisation, discipline and beyond that ... a national consciousness of self-reliance' (1973:190-1). Development could not be 'produced' by skilful grafting operations carried out by foreign technicians or an indigenous elite that has lost contact with the ordinary people. It can succeed only if it is carried forward as a broad, popular 'movement of reconstruction' with primary emphasis on the full utilization of the drive, enthusiasm, intelligence and labour power of everyone. (Schumacher 1973: 190-1)

Schumacher's concern was for the full utilisation of local human resources; he suggested that the gift of appropriate knowledge was the best form of assistance. The manner in which this gift was dispensed was crucial to his overall schema. Appropriate knowledge needed to be instituted dialogically by making outside knowledge accessible to the poor while at the same time including their own knowledge. The deployment of any form of new technology, for example, had to stand in an organic relationship with existing technology (Schumacher 1973:179, 183-8). This appropriate/intermediate technology would be cheaper and more sustainable.
According to Schumacher, development was only difficult when imposed, when it was 'done for the people, instead of by the people' (1973:203).

The really helpful things will not be done from the centre; they cannot be done by big organisations; but they can be done by the people themselves. (Schumacher 1973:205)

What Schumacher was advocating was a widespread regional/rural development strategy in which development was engendered not through prescription - knowledge wilfully imposed from the 'core' (through central planning and aid) - but through a process. Knowledge had to be developed dialogically with local communities, at the 'peripheries'. These novel policies required a new group of facilitators and Schumacher pin-pointed NGOs as the most desirable action groups to promote this form of appropriate development (1973:188).

In effect, Schumacher reimagined 'development' as first and foremost a question of ethics: '[w]hat is at stake here is not economics but culture; not the standard of living but the equality of life' (Schumacher 1973: 243). He argued that development needed to adopt a 'user-based approach' which emphasised accountability and participation (Schumacher 1973:157; Carr 1988:99).

ii Freire and the concept of empowerment.

If Schumacher is credited with inserting of 'ethics' and 'participation' into the new orthodoxy development, Paulo Freire is credited with providing it with the concept of 'empowerment'. As delineated in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972) 'empowerment', or *conscientizacao*, was an 'awakening' consequent on a form of radical education which restructured the options of the poor (De Kadt 1985:552; Thomas 1992:135-6; Goulet 1989:1)

Freire advanced a theory of education for the oppressed. According to him conventional education - 'the narrative of subjects on objects' - sought only to 'deposit'/bank' knowledge in the minds of the poor (1972:57-8; Thomas 1992:136). Although it represented itself as a humanitarian project, it was a form of cultural imperialism which stultified the creativity of the oppressed. It acted as a technique of regulation which
'absolutized' their ignorance and encouraged them to 'internalise the image of the oppressors' (Freire 1972:19-20, 23, 60-1, 130).

Freire proposed an alternative - radical education - which relied on dialogue and made 'oppression the object of study for the oppressed' (Freire 1972:32-3). For Freire there was no such thing as the 'gift' of appropriate knowledge. He posited that 'well-intentioned professionals' who sought to help the poor dispensed 'false charity' and were engaged in a practice of colonisation, albeit unconscious (1972:53, 58, 153-5). Freire's radical education exhorted the oppressed to critically perceive their reality: to recognise themselves as hosts of the oppressors' ideology. They had to recognise their oppression as a 'limiting situation' - no longer a dense and impenetrable 'reality' from which they were unable to extricate themselves. According to Freire the oppressed could extend pedagogical practice and transform existing social relations (1972:32-4, 40, 95-8).

In short, Freire perceived his project as a humanising not a humanitarian one. It constituted an attempt to replace the humanity stolen from the poor (Freire 1972:28). According to Shaull (1972:12-3), Freire's founding assumption was

that man's ontological vocation ... is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing moves towards ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively. (my emphasis)

If the human subject, and the constitution of self-knowledge and self-respect among the oppressed were the principal aims of radical education, dialogue was its means. Dialogue among equals represented the crucial vehicle through which empowerment or conscientizacao could proceed. It served to consolidate people's participation in power (Freire 1972:158). Freire defined dialogue as 'continuous action'. It was a process which reconciled the 'thinkers' and the 'doers' and whose key ingredients were: 'faith', 'humility' and 'horizontal relationships' (1972:77-80, 134).

According to Freire, dialogue resulted in a radical renaming of 'reality': a cultural revolution in which the poor reclaimed their dignity and became empowered. Conscientizacao produced 'subjects in expectancy', but subsequent transformative action (in/of society) allowed them to enter the historical process in complete subjecthood: as self-
defining and self-realising individuals who worked according to their own priorities (Freire 1972:20, 75-77, 95-6,158).

Although Freire placed great faith in the oppressed and their innate ability to reason, he nevertheless saw a role for a 'revolutionary leadership'. Revolutionary leaders had to act as sensitive agents provocateurs, entering into dialogue with the oppressed and working in solidarity with them. They had to be prepared to take risks and bear authentic witness to injustices in the name of the poor. Initially they held equal status to the oppressed, but ultimately they would be their apprentices (Freire 1973:28, 53, 121-129, 176).

The purpose of education is to allow people to become subjects rather than objects, to control their own destinies rather than be the victims of the desires or social processes of others. (Elliot 1987a:86)

Freire's message was simple, if political one: mankind's vocation was its humanisation. The purpose of 'education' was to allow eradication of the oppressed/oppressor distinction in order to allow mankind to live 'life in all its fullness' (1972:28, 170). Radical education could only be accomplished with the 'oppressed' not for them (Freire 1972; Shaull 1972:12-3).

iii Connecting Freire's and Schumacher's discourses.

As the summaries presented above suggest, the work of Schumacher and Freire shares certain key assumptions.

For example, they define development in terms of its use for the most marginal in the population - the oppressed or the rural poor. They also place great faith in the latent capacities of the poor, contending that more can be learned from them, than by them. For both Freire and Schumacher 'development' is a process - a dialogue - not a prescription: it can only be practiced with the poor not for them. They share similar development goals of equality of distribution, ownership, control and direct use of productive assets. But development is defined above and beyond material goals, it encompasses a spiritual transformation in the form of 'self-realisation'. In the view of both Schumacher and Freire, development is reconceptualised as a practice which aims to satisfy both the body and soul of the poor.
However the work of Schumacher and Freire also differs significantly in a number of important respects. In the area of education for example, Freire argues that neither self-knowledge nor self-reliance can be bestowed like a gift even by the best-intentioned. For Schumacher, on the other hand, the exact opposite appears to be the case. Another point of dissent concerns the ultimate ends of development. For Freire total liberation or 'revolution' - a radical freedom from all instruments of oppression, most especially, the state - is the main objective. According to him oppression is a political condition, in part attributable to class, from which the oppressed must break free. Both an arousal of consciousness - recognising their rights and poverty - and direct 'political' action are necessary means to ensure this. For Schumacher, on the other hand, poverty is the outcome of a lack of organisation and discipline as well as education. The popular movement that he supports is not political but spiritual and ethical - a recasting of relations according to different priorities, namely in accordance with the essential creativity of 'man'. His solution is not so radical. He favours NGOs as the new agencies of development, but does not exclude national governments or the state from having an active role as Freire does (Thomas 1992; Kitching 1982).

In this section I considered the work of two 'thinkers' - E.F. Schumacher and Paulo Freire - in some detail in order to assess their relevance to the new orthodoxy. In section six I suggest that their impact is clearly apparent in the language and the norms of the new orthodoxy: 'participation' and 'empowerment' act as nodal points and frequent reference is made to dialogue and appropriate knowledge. I show that what the new NGO discourse manages to achieve is an unproblematic unification of the work of these two thinkers by ironing out of the major differences between them. I argue that it in so doing it establishes the foundations of its own populist aspirations.

Section 6. Delineating The New Orthodoxy.
In saying that the new NGO development discourse habours 'populist' aspirations I am suggesting that it attempts to ground itself in the experience of the poorest of the poor. In other words, that it is positively disposed towards agrarian and self-reliant development which draws on indigenous knowledge. For Richards this populism is 'good science' (1985:15, 162). According to Chambers (1986, 1987) it is a philosophy of reversals where the poor, not the professionals, grab the limelight. The new orthodoxy is populist because it advocates development from the 'bottom up', providing space for the poor to articulate their demands and participate in decision making processes that affect their lives (Whitaker 1983:196; Poulton 1988:31). Popular development involves an active use of local knowledge through dialogue with the poor and participation of the poor in every stage of the development process - planning, implementation, evaluation. The new orthodoxy, as envisaged by Richards (1985) and Chambers (1986, 1987, 1988a/b, 1990), singles out indigenous (technical) knowledge or 'people's science' as the most important, but under-utilised, resource in development. Such 'development', it is argued, articulates the needs and priorities of the poor rather than those of urban planners and consequently empowers the poor rather than experts with 'vested interests'. Such a perspective involves reimagining the manner in which development is planned and implemented.

i The poor and the professionals.

According to Chambers development planning can be divided into two approaches:

'Normal Professionalism' (N.P) and 'New Professionalism' (nu.p). The former is 'core' biased. It ignores local expertise and conceives of development as consisting of the deployment of expert knowledge to solve particular 'problems' in the shape of development projects blueprints (Chambers 1986). This type of knowledge has no connection with the

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7 I recognise that my usage of the term 'populism' could be contested. Kitching (1982) for instance has provided a teleology for populism and populist attempts at social transformation. My purpose here is simply to highlight that in describing themselves as populist, advocates of the new NGO development discourse draw contrasts between themselves and other, previous and present development discourses on a number of levels.

8 Professionalism because it connotes 'superior knowledge' is seen to have negative implications. In the new orthodoxy, it testifies to a wilful disarticulation with the base (the poor) (Brodhead 1987:2; Chambers 1986).
poor nor any desire for one because it derives from relationships of 'power'. This 'knowledge' divides the 'knowers' and the 'known', the 'counters' and the 'counted' into two separate, mutually exclusive, entities (Chambers 1990:75; Parajuli 1991:173). In contrast, New Professionalism (nu.p) derives its raison d'être and ideas from the priorities of the 'peripheries', from 'field level realities', and from 'putting the poor first' (Chambers 1988a:17). Nu.p neither favours a 'well meaning' nor over-professionalised approach to development, but rather foregrounds accessibility and relevance.

The new NGO orthodoxy explicitly embodies nu.p, favouring the local expertise of the poor above that of the development professional (Richards 1985:9-10; Holloway 1989b:149; Chambers 1986, 1988a/b 1989: 6; Lewis 1988:16). The relationship is defined no longer in terms of 'funder' and 'recipient' but is reconceptualised in terms of 'partnership' and 'solidarity' based on mutual respect and trust (Brodhead 1987:3; Lane 1988:64). For Chambers, the predominance of the nu.p is part of the on-going philosophy of 'reversals' which structurally inserts the poor into the development process to challenge the metropolitan elite/professional's monopoly on development discourse (Chambers 1989: see also Hettne 1992; Fuentes & Gunder Frank 1989).

As a consequence of the new orthodoxy, the role of NGOs and their staff is reconceptualised. They are exhorted to engage in a new and constantly evolving dialogue rooted in the priorities, the needs and the knowledge of the targeted population in order to produce sustainable livelihoods in which the rights of the poor and their material welfare are secured (Holloway 1989a: 4-5; Korten 1987:154-5; Chambers 1986:17-21, 1988b:8-12, 1989:18).

ii Development - project or process?

Within the new NGO discourse the conception of 'development-as-project' is effectively eradicated (Elliot: 1987a:35). The term 'project' signifies a finite process with specified aims and objectives, accompanied by a limited funding period and advance, non-consultative, planning. Consequently it is seen to represent 'implementation' at its most intrusive: dependent on power, on designing for the poor rather than with them (Wigharaya 1989:34; Antrobus 1987:100; Poulton 1988: 25; Uphooff 1988:48). This form of
prescriptive development clashes with the techniques and practices advocated by the new orthodoxy in particular its prescriptions of participation and empowerment. This is clearly indicated by Elliot's statement that empowerment is ill-fitting to the rationale of the 'project 'since it can neither be 'delivered' nor 'bought'. It is, for him, undeniably a 'process' (1987b: 59).

What the new orthodoxy prescribes is a participatory process where the poor are involved in the development process at every step of the way, in action, research, evaluation and monitoring (Poulton 1988:30). As a consequence, the old dualisms characteristic of previous discourses are said to dissolve. There can no longer be a 'subject'/ 'object' distinction, for example, since both parties - planners and recipients - are involved in a genuine partnership based on 'mutual trust', 'respect', 'equality' and 'accountability' (Gordon Drabek 1987b:x). Such an ostensibly 'radical' prescription explicitly addresses one of the trenchant criticisms of modernist development; that as a discourse it was imposed by the few on the many. By redefining development as 'of the people by the people' (Nyoni 1987:51), the new orthodoxy explicitly attempts to undermine this criticism. Through allocating to the poor the capacity to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, the new orthodoxy hopes thereby to enhance the spread of democratic self-governance.

iii 'To have more and to be more': redefining development.

Within the new orthodoxy poverty is discursively produced as a question of entitlements and capabilities, where entitlements are defined as 'the set of ... commodity bundles that a person can command in a society using the totality of rights and opportunities that he or she faces' and capabilities refer to what a person can/can't do, and can/can't be (Sen 1983: 754; Chambers 1988a:4). What the poor are said to desire is, in descending order of need: survival, security and self-respect. Good development must, therefore, address all of these needs (Chambers 1988a).

One of the clearest evocations of the new orthodoxy of development is present in Oxfam's aspirations for its own activities.
It is hoped projects supported by Oxfam will be designed both for:
*the poorest to have more (particularly in terms of food and health care) and to gain control of a fair share of the world's resources, and
*for the poor to be more, in terms of self-confidence, ability to manage their own future, and improving their status in society at large. (Boyden & Pratt 1985:13)

While the means of development are empowerment and participation, the ultimate goal is the realisation of human personality (Goulet 1983: 620; De Kadt 1985: 551, 556). The relief of poverty is no longer simply defined in terms of 'grub first, then ethics' but rather as a question of expanding the capacities of the poor and reducing their vulnerability in both material and political terms through allowing them control of their lives and livelihoods (Sen 1989).

Within the new NGO discourse on development, freedom 'is not just a way of achieving a good life, it is constitutive of the good life itself' (Sen 1989: 770). This is a definition of development which positions 'human beings' as the 'subjects', not objects or targets, of the development process. Moreover this condition is dependent on changes within the 'soul' of the poor. The poor are said to have inner goals and inherent potential, these must be liberated by the poor themselves with facilitation from NGOs (Crocker 1991:466).

In this section I explored the terms of the new discourse, focusing in particular on how it advocated the planning and implementation of development. I interpreted the new orthodoxy as a 'populist discourse', in other words I asserted that it located the responsibility for development with the funders and the beneficiaries. I argued that the new orthodoxy reimagined development as a process in which dialogue, partnership and participation were essential ingredients. I suggested that this discourse did not represent people of the developing world as victims or dependent on charity, but portrayed them as potentially active subjects who had a right to develop in order to optimise their own potential and to participate in the decisions that affected them (Crocker 1991; Whitaker 1983:198).

Section 7. The New Orthodoxy and The Problem of Power.

As I indicated earlier the new orthodoxy of development has rearticulated several strands present in previous discourses of development. For example, contemporary exponents of
the new NGO discourse stress their links with the RWG approaches of the 1970s and the structuralist discourses of the 1960s. However whereas these previous discourses asked the question 'How can development agencies reach the poor majority?', the new orthodoxy foregrounds the issues of participation and empowerment. It asks 'How can the poor majority reach the makers of public policy?' (Bratton 1990:89).

The new emphasis on empowerment is judged to be absolutely crucial and distinctive. By virtue of this focus the new NGO discourse professes to a greater 'political mindedness'. It utilises the concept of 'empowerment' both to represent its own 'politicisation' as a discourse, but also as a guarantor of its 'purity' - neither the discourse nor its advocates desire to impose development.

Ideologically, NGO purity is now defined as being able to say that one works definitively with the poorest of the poor. (Dichter 1988: 183)

The new orthodoxy portrays itself as a philosophy of 'reversals' in which the poor and their facilitators (NGOs) act as the new countervailing force in the development field (Mackintosh 1992:83; Korten 1987:145-6). Thus the discourse and its designated agents aim to 'extend, deepen and even redefine democracy from traditional state ... to civil democracy in civil society' (Fuentes & Gunder Frank 1989:179).

According to the new orthodoxy NGOs have 'natural' advantages in promoting democratisation because they face 'fewer constraints in undertaking actions' (Korten 1987:146). They are perceived as the safe agents of development because they have little desire for power. In other words, they are said to carry less 'political baggage', and be more accountable to their client base (Green 1989:42; Conroy 1988:293; see Chapter 1).

Their policy of investing in people to achieve lasting beneficial changes for them, combined with their supposedly 'natural' qualities - flexibility, high level of staff commitment, integrity, ability to reach 'all the way down' - is seen to give them a comparative advantage over other agencies - specifically those of the state - in strengthening the poor and promoting participation. They alone can engender genuine development (Goulet 1989; Poulton 1988; Antrobus 1987; Singh 1988; Twose 1987). According to Fowler, for example, the ascendancy of NGOs in the 1980s was due precisely to the near universal recognition that they could contribute to democratisation and pluralism through
their responsiveness and accountability to the poor and their ideals of strengthening them (1991:53).

The contemporary eulogisation of NGOs and the new discourse they promote, can be seen to rest upon two presuppositions. First, that this discourse unlike previous discourses of development, is not a technique for regulating the poor, but one which encourages them to be self-determining. Secondly, that the discourse is revolutionary in itself; that it is radically different from the prevailing neo-liberal orthodoxy of Western governments, and as such presents a radical challenge to that orthodoxy. The key to these two presuppositions lies in the concept of 'empowerment', since this term represents both the revolutionary individuation of 'political will', and the 'deus ex machina' of 'genuine development' (Goldsworthy 1988:513-4, 523).

i Empowerment.

As deployed within the new NGO discourse, 'empowerment' incorporates both a demand for a 'Road to Damascus' conversion of the poor with a more pragmatic desire to mobilise them so that they can identify and achieve their own goals (Green 1989:43).

In effect the term functions as a guarantor of the 'power-free' nature of the new NGO development discourse. It does so through promising that the processes and practices it embodies will free the people from their domination by structures of power. Through deployment of the concept of empowerment the new orthodoxy represents itself as both transparent and pure: a discourse where the issue of power disappears because human subjects are allowed the emerge as self-representing, self-determining and self-reliant persons. In this process old divisions between the 'knowers' and the 'known', 'developer' and 'developed' disappear. But, as Nederveen Pieterse (1992:10-1) aptly remarks this use of 'empowerment'

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\text{does not differentiate between 'power to' (ability) and 'power over' (control), between empowerment as acquiring skills or as seeking control. It can denote anything from individual self-assertion to upward mobility through adaptation and conformism to established rules.}
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Critically, what this discourse of empowerment fails to do is to problematise power. 'Empowerment' is portrayed as an unalloyed good because it can only threaten those with vested interests (and therefore not NGOs). This appears to be a rather simplistic 'politicisation' of discourse, which among other things, dissociates power from knowledge. This is most clearly exposed in Chambers' division between New and Normal professionalism in which only one form of knowledge - the latter - is viewed as being implicated in relations of power. According to Goldsworthy, for example, this proves only one thing: that development discourse has yet to provide a politically astute analysis of itself (1988).

In the following part of this section I subject the notion of empowerment to a Foucauldian analysis in order to indicate what a politically informed examination of the new orthodoxy might look like.

ii Empowerment reconsidered.

A prevailing assumption of the new NGO discourse is that power is an obstacle which prevents subjects from understanding their true nature and assuming their proper place in history (see Rajchman 1991:124). In other words the new orthodoxy is founded upon two incontrovertible truths. First, that human subjects are constituted 'essentially' irrespective of time, place and cultural context. Secondly, that this 'true' human essence can only be established with the destruction of 'power relations'. These two assumptions combine to depoliticise development discourse by positing the notion of a human subject which can only achieve its true essence when it is outside of and, therefore, freed from relationships of power. In this vision power is an entirely negative force, possessed by those with vested interests and deployed unilaterally to mystify and confuse the poor who, consequently, mis-recognise themselves and misunderstand their social situation.

As I indicated in chapter one, extrapolating from these essentialisms is highly problematic. According to Michel Foucault neither 'truth' nor 'freedom' can be said to exist as essentials, they are historically situated and their production is 'thoroughly imbued with
relations of power' (Allen 1991:433-7; Rajchman 1991:109). Moreover power is not something that is available for apprehension or destruction by the individual or the state. It is manifest, not in repression, but in the 'polymorphous politics of control'. It guides possibilities and orders outcomes. It results, therefore, not in confrontation but in government (Allen 1991:430, 432). By government, Foucault is not referring to the state and its agencies: the state is no more than a composite reality which all forms of power refer to rather derive from. Consequently, power is not synonymous with the state, nor with the condition of oppression, for these are simply the most ostensible symbols of power, rather than its quintessential manifestation.

According to Foucault, power is a form of government: to govern is to structure the field of possibilities of others' actions (Allen 1991:427-8, 430). Crucially, this ability to govern depends on the notion of freedom: 'power is exercised only over free subjects and only insofar as they are free' (Allen 1991:432). Consequently neither power nor government annul agency, on the contrary, they presuppose it. Governmentality (the practices of government) has to rely on the fact that subjects are situated in a space where they are presented with choices and options. Power acts upon, and operates through these 'open sets of practical and ethical possibilities' (Gordon 1991:3-5; Allen 1991:432). Power and government depend upon the exercise of freedom. In other words to govern is to use, not to repress, the capabilities of free subjects (Gordon 1991:8, 36).

What this means for the new NGO discourse is quite simple. It must crucially fail to deliver its promise of emancipation since it can never be transparent or pure nor can it deliver its subject into a 'power free' or 'reversed' world. To suggest, as Chambers (1989) does, that the new NGO discourse of development is based on 'less government not more' is a discursive attribution based on a definition of 'government' which views it as synonymous with the state, itself conceived of as an instrument of oppression. Inevitably then, the relationship between the state and NGOs is a matter of some debate.
There are a range of views on the subject of NGO/state relations, but according to Elliot (the former Director of a British NGO) the relationship is always fraught with contradictions (1987b: 64-67). NGOs be they Southern or Northern share reservations about their relationship to the state. Southern NGOs (SNGOs), for example, operate with a discourse of opposition which explicitly challenges vested interests. For them relationships with the state prove problematic because the latter represents the very interests they are attempting to oppose. For Northern NGOs (NNGOs), on the other hand, the problem is slightly different. Their major dilemma is connected to the issue of state funding. The more they rely on official sources of funding the more they feel co-opted and, therefore, politically silenced (Fowler 1991:65, 70). Unsurprisingly, therefore, the 'scaling up' of the activities of both Southern and Northern NGOs in the light of the increasing government funding and rising private donations has generated considerable ambivalence (Edwards & Hulme 1992). This anxiety arises because the 'independent voice' of 'third generation' NGOs is perceived to be dependent upon freedom from official government interference, and increased government funding threatens this (Chapter 1). As mature, 'third generation' agencies, NGOs supposedly have the capacity and the moral responsibility to challenge government's thinking with regard to the poor (see Poulton & Harris 1988:8; Singh 1988; Fowler 1991: 57; Holloway 1989b:146).

According to Chambers, the new NGO discourse amounts to a call for the dismantling of the over-bureaucratised, ineffectual and hence 'disabling State' (1989:19-20). So the new orthodoxy seeks to transform the state into a more 'user-friendly' institution which facilitates and supports the activities of NGOs, most particularly by providing them with a power-free 'space' in which they may pursue their work (Goulet 1983: 176; Holloway 1989c: 222).

What is advocated for the state parallels the prescription for 'third generation' NGOs: greater accountability but also a responsiveness (through less bureaucracy) to pressures from below (Mackintosh 1992: 83-5; Chambers 1989:18-20). Consequently, for both
NGOs and the state there are demands for a transformation of organisation towards a post-bureaucratic, open and flexible system of strategic management (Korten 1987:155-6)

iv NGOs: marginal revolutionaries or false radicals?

Having outlined the main constitutive elements of the new orthodoxy it is now possible to attempt to ask the questions posed by Slater (1992) earlier in the chapter: Do NGOs really have 'revolutionary' potential? and is 'reversal' their primary aim?

Clearly the new orthodoxy assumes that NGOs do have this potential and that such aspirations should be their main objectives. When Chambers, for example proclaims the need for a state that operates more like a cafeteria than a school, where development is decentralised, more plural and ensures the production of self-reliant subjects, he assumes that all these measures 'reverse' the flow of power (1989:18-20).

However the sort of Foucauldian analysis detailed above, would contend that the acquisition of subject-hood is not antithetical to, but a product of, the operation of power. Moreover such an analysis would highlight the parallel preoccupations of both the new NGO discourse and neo-liberal discourse with the production of self-reliant, self-optimising and self-governing subjects. Both the practice of 'empowerment', on the one hand, and the techniques of 'entrepreneurialism' on the other share a common conception of the human subject.

Consequently, rather than being radically opposed doctrines both discourses have in common a number of key assumptions and advocate similar practical initiatives. For example, both allocate a central role to voluntary organisations within development, and describe their objectives in almost identical rhetorical terms - in their use of 'empowerment', 'participation', 'partnership' and so forth (Allen 1987, 1990; Thomas 1992:133). This affinity is demonstrated at a number of levels. Clearly there is a consensus among the promoters of neo-liberal discourses (such as the World Bank or national governments) and the NGOs concerning the desirability for an expanded 'third sector' (Mackintosh 1992). Though the populist advocates may seek to interpret the endorsement of NGOs as an acknowledgement of the distinctive contribution, inherent
'qualities' and 'natural interest' that such agencies have in democratisation and so forth, the ascendancy of NGOs in the 1980s could be equally attributable to the fact that they are cheap and effective governmental forms. They fulfil a role that the state cannot or, rather, will no longer perform (Gordon Drabek 1987b:xiii; Korten 1987). According to Edwards and Hulme (1992:20), for example, rather than displacing neo-liberalism, the new orthodoxy complements it: 'NGOS are viewed as the 'private non-profit' sector, the performance of which advances the 'public-bad, private-good' discourse of neo-liberalism'. Mackintosh makes a similar point arguing that no necessary connection exists between decentralising the state sector and democratising it. Decentralisation, she asserts, is an enabling condition of democratisation but not its guarantor (1992:83-7). This brings us back once again to the question of power: who ultimately determines what conscientizacao consists of, and when it has been attained?

Who for instance is the authority who says one form of consciousness is superior to another? If we are not careful, we are in danger of substituting one form of oppressive consciousness for another. Critics have argued that it is a pretentious concept and that the poor are more aware of their predicament and its immediate cause than they are given credit for. NGOs and middle class fieldworkers, the argument goes, have no monopoly over true 'consciousness'. (Boyden & Pratt 1985:148-9)

Moreover, if 'empowerment' is a process not a project, then the operational activities of development NGOs have a long way to go since, for the most part, they rely on discrete funding cycles. The new discourse of development avows partnership and solidarity, but 'development' is always practically implemented through a funding relationship, and this is undeniably a relationship of power. Elliot succinctly pin-points the conditions of existence of this relationship: while the aims may be profoundly egalitarian, 'the reality is - and is seen to be - that the donor can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor' (1987b:65).

v Implementing the new orthodoxy.

[A]n attractive utopian vision is not an adequate basis for a theory of development, nor does its desirability ... guarantee its possibility. (Kitching 1982:180)
Does the qualification of the revolutionary potential of the discourse of development mean that it can have no practical effects? In other words, that it is merely 'ideology' lacking any connection to a material referent?

In order to answer this question it is necessary to highlight an important consequence of conceptualising the new orthodoxy as 'power/knowledge'. Such a perspective serves to undermine the accusations frequently levelled at NGOs: (i) that they have simply learnt a 'language' or 'ideology' - of assisted self-reliance, empowerment, partnership and sustainability - without taking its ideals to heart and (ii) that they are so overly preoccupied with using the correct terms that they are side-tracked from tackling the 'real' issues of development.

This accusation amounts to a critique of 'engagement'. Moreover, it surfaces most noticeably in the link made between representation and intervention in the new orthodoxy. NGOs are frequently portrayed as 'second generation' agencies, with 'third agency' ideals, and 'first generation' fundraising methods.

It is clearly futile to glorify human dignity unless one builds structures which advance human dignity and remove obstacles to it. (Goulet 1983:620)

In other words, they are accused of having taken on board the 'language' of empowerment but not the 'practice': they say they are doing it but are they really doing it?

However, to contend that the new orthodoxy of development does not present the radical challenge that it credits itself with, does not mean that the practice of development remains unchanged, simply that this change is not, of itself, a progression. That the new NGO orthodoxy seeks a rapprochement with the work of the Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire and the economist Fritz Schumacher and a distance from Modernisation discourse is not an 'enlightened' move but a political one. The new NGO discourse of development makes certain statements concerning 'development', and these have acquired a truth value not because of their inherent rectitude but because they operate discursively and therefore politically: displacing and limiting other statements about, and measures of, development.

There is a linked discussion about how NGOs could be structured organisationally to reflect their values. It is deemed that the organisational structure/culture of an NGO catering for a 'solidarity'/ 'empowerment' role is fundamentally different from that which suits a second/first generational role (Brodhead 1987:3; Holloway 1989c:221).
whose truths they deny. What is being delineated is a different way of ‘seeing’ and ‘knowing’ the poor and therefore another way of representing and intervening in the terrain of development.

Again we return to Foster-Carter’s (1986:3) point: the new orthodoxy deploys a novel strategic language with which to describe development and the poor. NGOs and the poor are ‘partners’, they engage in ‘dialogue’, in ‘consultation’, this is development which is done with rather than for the poor. The new orthodoxy is not simply ‘hollow’ rhetoric or just a matter of language because it has tangible organisational effects. Oxfam’s all embracing communication message in its anniversary year was ‘Working for a fairer world’. A more significant instance can be cited with respect to Christian Aid. Christian Aid is the third largest development charity in Britain, and often considered one of the most progressive, both in operational and educational terms (see Chapter 6). In its Statement of Commitment, called provocatively To Strengthen the Poor, Christian Aid delineates its development goals and aspirations which are both heavily inscribed with the new orthodoxy.

[W]e cannot decide for the poor what it would mean to them to grow and develop ... We must help to establish the pre-conditions which allow them to determine their own development. ... Our strategy will often be pursued through good development projects but we cannot be confined to them. (Taylor 1987b:5)

Such a statement is not merely a rhetorical flourish but has profound institutional effects. In other words, it has become instituted as development and funding guidelines, for example, and as communication strategy. It is circulated to the wider public through fundraising and advertising materials, it frames the way in which the agency talks of itself and about its beneficiaries. So the new orthodoxy is clearly not simply ‘disembodied rhetoric’, it is strategic knowledge which has both interventional and representational effects.

In this final section I sought to critically investigate the implications and effects of the new NGO discourse. I demonstrated that in deploying a notion of empowerment, the new orthodoxy advanced a restrictive definition of power, and a simplistic means for its eradication. I suggested that these key terms were utilised strategically. They served to
show that the new orthodoxy was politically disinterested and they validated claims of independence and neutrality. In this section I denied the possibility of such claims, but nevertheless contended that the omnipresence of this new discourse has had tangible effects. I contended that it has changed the way which development is perceived, practiced and represented within NGOs.

Clearly what this discursive analysis achieved was to remove the need for terms such as 'radicalism' or 'complicity'. It moved the debate beyond simplistic questions of 'good' and 'evil' because power was represented as a constitutive element of all social relations. I argued that without power there could be no such thing as development.

Conclusion

In this chapter I argued for a discursive examination of contemporary development thought. I began by showing how such a perspective might allow the researcher to move beyond attributions of truth and falsehood, power and innocence within development prescriptions. A central argument pervaded the chapter, namely that no discourse could be primally innocent and that attempts to make it so were profoundly suspect.

I then sought to describe the conditions of emergence of the new NGO discourse of development. My exposition was implemented in three stages. First, I showed that the rise to prominence of the new orthodoxy was linked with a 'crisis' in development thought and more specifically the effects of the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5. However I also argued that the popularity of the new NGO discourse was rationalised within an overall historical framework which described the last five decades of development thought as a 'history of ideas'. I suggested that by virtue of this the new orthodoxy was connected with the most 'progressive' elements of past discourses, those of the 1960s and the 1970s.

Secondly, I proceeded to analyse these ascribed roots. I deduced that the new orthodoxy selectively acknowledged debts, ironing out inconsistencies or contradictions. I contended that this use of history had a purpose, it distinguished development NGOs from their charitable forebears, and dissociated the new orthodoxy from neo-liberal prescriptions.

Finally, I analysed the specific prescriptions of the new NGO discourse in order to assess
its radical potential. In the last section, I interrogated the distinctive concept of 'empowerment', arguing that the inclusion of this term served to 'purify' the new orthodoxy - to present it as a power-free discourse. I deduced from this that the new orthodoxy mislocated the phenomenon of power, associating it with only the most overt symbols. Finally, I concluded that even if I did not adhere to the triumphalist historical narrative validating the new orthodoxy, I had to acknowledge that its ascendancy had changed the way in which development was debated, implemented and represented. Following from this, in chapter three I consider how the issue of imagery emerged in the mid-1980s and became intimately associated with the new NGO discourse on development. I indicate that the rationalisations of why this issue came to prominence are similarly inscribed with the narrative of progress, one which operates according to a dialectic of crisis and resolution.
Chapter three

The Band Aid Effect: The Ethiopian Famine as turning point.
Introduction

In the first two chapters of this thesis I sought to investigate the dual concepts of charity and development. In so doing I delineated the structure and context in which British development charities operate. In chapter two I explored the concept of charity to show that although charity has no fixed and final meaning, it had institutional effects. In chapter two I interrogated the discourse of development in order to demonstrate that during the 1980s it was showing signs of stress and this supposedly led to the emergence of a new orthodoxy.

In this third chapter I focus on the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5. I argue that this constitutes a turning point in the trajectory of British development charities, specifically in the arena of image production. Highlighting the impact of the events of 1984/5 and the critiques they generated is necessary in order to understand the conditions of emergence of a doctrine that posits a connection between charity, development and representation. It illuminates why certain communication practices have emerged among British development charities in the 1990s.

The chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section I provide a background against which the events of 1984/5 can be understood. I indicate that prior to the mid-1980s British NGOs were represented as being internally divided between two key professional groups - educationalists and fundraisers. I explore this conflict in detail by discussing their supposedly divergent views on imagery. In section two I detail how the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 erupted by means of external forces onto the agenda of British development charities. In section three I describe the impact of the Famine on British development charities in institutional, representational and campaigning terms. In particular, I indicate the substantial effect the Famine and the Band Aid events had on the discussion of charity images, by detailing the wealth of critiques that it engendered. In section four I explore these critiques further in order to show that their bases lay in essentialisms concerning the nature of charity and development. In section five, I argue that 1984/5 was a moment of transformation which disrupted the representations of NGOs as internally divided.
organisations: producing a new doctrine that has established a framework in which to
debate images, but which has also allowed an opening up of criteria for assessment of their
legitimacy and effectiveness.

Section 1. The Perceived Conflict between Fundraising and Education.

Before the mid-1980s the subject of British development charity images was pioneered by a
vocal minority within the sector and represented as very much an internal dilemma. The
debate was conducted purely in terms of the relative roles of development education and
fundraising within British development charities. Before the mid-1980s these were
portrayed as discrete and conflictual activities creating a certain amount of tension in the
internal management of development NGOs.

A classic account of this tension can be found in Jorgen Lissner's influential, and at the
time radical, book *The Politics of Altruism* (1977) (though he reflects on practice within
Northern NGOs in general). In this text, Lissner argued that development NGOs were
internally split between two conflictual activities: fundraising and education. Fundraisers
and educators were described as having different objectives and value systems, divergent
methods and unequal resources.

In brief, fundraisers were narrowly focussed, concentrating on the institutional survival of
Northern NGOs. Their role was to raise the level of donations and the agency profile.
Their focus was money, and their professional ethics derived from a desire to achieve
financial goals in an efficient manner. The ends always justified the means, the best
fundraising methods were always the cheapest.

By contrast, Lissner asserted that development educationalists had broader aims to do with
their ethical commitment to global awareness and conscientisation. Their focus was on
promoting international understanding, irrespective of financial gain. They were 'means'
oriented and their work was a practical application of their ideals of solidarity with the
poor. As a result their focus was outside the organisation towards the countries and the

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1 'Development education' refers in this context to the education of Northern donors about issues
pertaining to world development; 'education' will be used here as a short-hand term for this activity.
According to Lissner, fundraisers were crude behaviourists who sought to 'flatter' or 'shame' the donor, either by showing how cost effective donations could be, or by dwelling on the despair and devastation in the South. Because development lacked 'sex appeal', fundraisers happily relied on images of 'starving babies' to grab the donor's interest (1977: 189, 1981). Lissner's text reflected the mounting discussion over the ubiquity of this image, an image developed by NGOs in their early years to denote the urgency of 'need' (Black 1992:195; *New Internationalist* 1992). It was the 'starving baby' image that elicited the most intense expression in the two groups' antagonism (Figs. 0.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3).

For Lissner, on the side of the educationalists, the controversy boiled down to the question of 'truth'. Starving baby images were neither true nor accurate pictures of reality overseas, they were a reflection of Northern prejudices. They were 'negative' images: demeaning, undignified and untruthful which proved that the representor - the NGO, the North - had power over the represented - the poor. Northern NGOs by using them betrayed their Southern partners.

Lissner drew an analogy between negative imagery and pornography which has since become widespread (see Adamson 1991, 1993). According to him, these images represented an ideology of domination, they testified to the North's 'desire to know and possess' the Southern subject, in fact to know her/him 'by possessing and possess by knowing' (Nichols 1991:209). So such images were said to demean the *subjects of development* because they represented them as being devoid of dignity: they were *objects* of representation, and the implication was, *objects* of development. So there was a conflict within NGOs between the 'educationalists' who saw this image as a trap from which they had, for reasons of ethics and consistency, to extricate themselves, and the 'fundraisers'
who were quite happy to reproduce these images *ad nauseam*, because they continued to be extremely effective in raising funds (Lissner 1977, 1981).

These divergent views on imagery supposedly reflected the different conceptions among these two professional groups as to the role of NGOs in the development process. Fundraisers produced the South as both 'other' - fundamentally different - and as an object of 'pity'. They reproduced a Modernisation discourse of development and charitable discourse of giving. Their images were grossly patronising and ethnocentric. Poverty was a simple and inescapable fact of the 'global order', the Northern donor's only moral obligation was to offer a donation (Lissner 1977:159-60, 167-171, 173). So they reinforced the concept of a divided world where the problems of the South were due to unforeseen natural forces or the vicious cycle of poverty. Development educationalists, in contrast, favoured a *structural* discourse of poverty causation and, correspondingly, a discourse of social justice. They did not exonerate the donor from her/his responsibility, but asked her/him to interrogate the conditions of possibility of 'our' wealth and 'their poverty.

What fundraising targeted was the sin of *omission*: the failure of the rich to give to the poor. What education sought to address was the sin of *commission*: the manner in which the rich North constantly appropriated wealth from the poor South. Fundraising simply informed the 'rich' that they were morally bound to donate money (to the poor), it did not force them to question the morality of the manner in which they earned it. Development education, on the other hand, functioned as the 'conscience' of both the Northern NGOs (NNGOs) and their publics (Lissner 1977:168; Whitaker 1983:160; Arnold 1988:14).

According to Lissner this internal tension was aggravated by the disproportional allocation of resources. Development education departments had a marginal role, if they existed at all. Their staff members frequently spoke of themselves as the radical and under-resourced section of NGOs. Fundraising on the other hand had greater resources at its disposal in terms of personnel and finance. So it was the messages and images of the fundraisers that
predominated and ultimately reflected the NGO as an institution. Yet, according to Lissner, these images and messages were antithetical to the ideology of Northern NGOs. NNGOs supposedly held more complex views and were beholden to present these in order to counteract the 'untruthful' media and tourist images of the South (Lissner 1977, 1981; Whitaker 1983:177-8). Northern audiences, he claimed, were particularly susceptible to the 'negative' and 'exotic' images of the South produced by these industries because they had no chance to 'double check' their 'veracity', nor did they have a ballast of the normal with which to compare them (Lissner 1981:24; Adamson 1991). When NNGOs reproduced charity images that dwelt on the disaster, despair or promoted a dependent view of the South, they conspired with the media and undermined their own capabilities to increase either global awareness and democracy (Lissner 1981).

So Lissner's account described Northern NGOs as sites of internal conflict. In his fatalistic account the fundraisers were represented as the dominant force because they were seen as essential to institutional survival. He portrayed NNGOs as unwilling to negotiate the tension that prevented them from making a more significant contribution to global development and social justice. Lissner did not predict improvement in the future either through greater internal investment in educational activities or by virtue of an increased commitment to 'campaigning' and advocacy.

Lissner's portentous warning - of at best an impasse, at worst an erosion of principle among Northern NGOs - did not forecast the possibility of a major alteration in the state of affairs. And yet, as I show in the next sections the events of the mid-1980s were to usher in a new era for development agencies in which the tensions in Lissner's account were to prove less deep rooted and stable than he suggested.

Section 2. The Famine as Turning Point: The Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5.

The Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 was significant because it fundamentally altered the position of development NGOs in the development process. This has already been alluded
to in chapter two. What I shall provide here is a short descriptive account of how the extraordinary events that surrounded the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 revolutionised the issue of communication within Northern NGOs. This summary draws substantially on two book length case studies: *News out of Africa* by Harrison and Palmer (1986), and *From Buerk to Band Aid* by Philo and Lamb (1986), but is supplemented by the work of Kaida-Hozumi (1989), Burnell (1992) and Black (1992) and Amin (1989). It should be noted that the following discussion is largely restricted to how the events of 1984/5 unfolded in the British context.

i The story breaks.

The Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 was not without precedent. It shared disturbing similarities with that of 1972-4 in being the product of both complex social factors (war) and natural forces (drought). It was neither as sudden nor as unexpected as it was subsequently portrayed. There had been repeated warnings and detailed reports on the inevitability of famine throughout 1982/3 provided by Ethiopian government officials, the United Nations, development agency workers, missionaries and a few journalists, but these received little attention in the North, either from governments or the media (some NNGOs were also caught napping). For the media the issue was marginal; 'famine' was not 'newsworthy'. By March 1984, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission of Ethiopia (set up in response to the earlier famine of 1973) made public a report saying that refugees were flooding into camps (a sure sign of danger), with the specific purpose of galvanising some interest in the North. Though this prompted a few press pieces, carried mainly by the quality newspapers and on the BBC, and a few pledges of aid, interest was slight.

Things began to gather pace in July with an ITV documentary on the famine and a Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) Emergency Appeal for eleven African Countries. This DEC

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3 The Disaster Emergency Committee is composed of five agencies: Oxfam, Save the Children, The British Red Cross, Christian Aid, and CAFOD. The DEC was set up in 1963 in response to the Skopje disaster in Yugoslavia. Their purpose is to unite and launch appeals together in cases of emergencies; the status of a DEC appeal guarantees broadcasting space on the BBC and the regional independent networks. The televised appeals immediately follow the evening news (*Nine O'clock News* on BBC1 and *News at Ten* on ITN) (see Black 1992; Burnell 1992; Benthall 1993).
appeal was itself extraordinary; British development charities had never before appealed on behalf of so many countries (the agencies could not be convinced to concentrate solely on Ethiopia). The appeal was scheduled to coincide with an ITV documentary on Ethiopia, *Seeds of Despair*, since this would endow the DEC appeal with authenticity, immediacy and impact. In turn, the BBC decided to send Michael Buerk to get some ‘authentic’ BBC footage which could accompany the DEC appeal. He was keen to go to Mozambique (near to South Africa where he was posted) but was convinced otherwise by the Head of Communications at Oxfam, who directed him to Ethiopia. The coming together of the documentary, the appeal and the BBC reports in July 1984 generated a unusually large sum of money, something frequently forgotten because it has been overshadowed by subsequent events. Around £ 10 million poured into the DEC over the next three months (Black 1992: 258-9; Burnell 1992:122, 195-200; Coulter 1990:17; Harrison & Palmer 1986:93, 97-9, 100-9; Kaida-Hozumi 1989:14; Philo & Lamb 1986:7, 24).

The success of the July appeal generated a certain amount of press interest later on in 1984. What the media wanted, specifically, was a sense of closure: some 'good news' or 'triumph over tragedy' stories to round off the earlier famine reports. The BBC, in particular, was keen to report back on how the money had been spent and what it had achieved. Among NGOs and workers in Ethiopia, there was the suspicion that there had been no convenient resolution, but, on the contrary, *that things* were getting significantly worse.

Getting Ethiopian footage was problematic: there was the civil war raging within its borders, and preparations were underway for the Independence day celebrations - the Ethiopian (Marxist) revolution was ten years old that year.

The famine was known to be severest in the North. Nevertheless, the first journalist allowed into Ethiopia after the celebrations - Peter Gill - was advised, by Oxfam for reasons of personal safety, to stay to the South. He was also warned by the Ethiopian politburo to stick to mentioning drought rather than famine. Gill assured the Ethiopian

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4 The revolution of 1973 had *in fact* been galvanized by a previous media report of famine (by Jonathan Dimbleby) - so the Ethiopian Government was keen not to reveal the full scale of the famine for fear of similar upheavals until after the celebrations (See Harrison & Palmer 1986; Coulter 1990).
Government that his sole focus would be famine, and that this could be powerfully contrasted with the over-production of food in Europe - the then notorious food mountains. Gill did, however, film in Korem, the epicentre of the famine; but due to an industrial strike by ITV staff, his documentary - *Bitter Harvest* - was not shown until after the later explosive BBC News report.

The second person to be accorded a visa was Mohamed Amin, Visnews' Africa Bureau Chief who had contacts inside Ethiopia. Michael Buerk asked to be allowed to join his crew. After a delay the team was allowed in but not initially into those areas in which they most wanted to film, namely Korem and Makelle, the epicentres of the famine. Buerk’s previous report had missed Korem. He had flown in and out within a day and had only filmed in the South, which was green relative to the desiccation of the North. Amin and Buerk decided to start in Makelle, the Tigrean capital, in order to get novel footage (they knew Peter Gill had not filmed there) and then proceed to Korem. They were unprepared for the scale of the tragedy they witnessed in both places. They emerged from this journey in a state of shock: a state which was conveyed in the visual and verbal images that were subsequently broadcast on the BBC’s evening news of 23 October 1984. The footage is said to have hushed newsrooms and produced tears and money from hardened and cynical news staff.

The decision to screen the footage was partially conditioned by competition between ITV and the BBC, but also between the BBC *Six O'clock* and *Nine O'Clock* News teams who scheduled it differently. The former broadcast it as a long lead item of six minutes, the latter positioned it fourth, leading with a story on the miner's strike. Its reputation soon spread. The Head of NBC's London Bureau pressurised the American Network to show the Amin pictures, which they did very surprisingly with Buerk's original English commentary (news footage from overseas usually acquires new commentary with the appropriate accent in the US) (Amin 1989:24; Harrison & Palmer 1986:110-9, 122-4, Philo & Lamb 1986:7-9, 11-2, 16).
The Amin/Buerk report was the biggest news item to come 'out of Africa' in the decade (Harrison & Palmer 1986:110). It broke the news of the Ethiopian Famine to the world and electrified and outraged all the audiences it 'touched'. The report was carried by 425 of the world's major broadcasting agencies. In Britain Oxfam's switchboard was jammed for three days. The scale of coverage moved the Famine story onto everybody's agenda. The Sun, for example, which had originally declared a profound disinterest in the story, jumped onto the media bandwagon on 28 October with a two inch headline 'RACE TO SAVE THE BABIES'.

This substantial coverage was quickly followed by an enormous aid operation. In early November, this resulted in an East/West collaboration of a fleet of fifty aircraft and helicopters airlifting supplies to internal distribution points in Ethiopia, a scale of activity which was in itself newsworthy. By now aid workers who had previously striven for any sort of coverage were being overwhelmed by news teams eager for any linked story (Coulter 1990; Burnell 1992:197-9; Kaida-Hozumi 1989:15; Philo & Lamb 1986:11, 26, 28-9; Harrison & Palmer 1986:110, 129-30).

ii The emergence of Band Aid.

Amongst the many viewers who saw the Amin/Buerk footage was the pop star Bob Geldof. In December he invited a number of leading pop stars to join him in recording a single Do they Know It's Christmas under the name 'Band Aid'. The record entreated its audience to 'save the world at Christmas time' (Hebdige 1988:216).

The name Band Aid was double entendre indicating the participant's awareness that the money raised was not sufficient in itself to eradicate the famine (Kaida-Hozumi 1989:17). Band Aid's goal was pragmatic: raising the maximum amount of money to save lives. Geldof positioned himself in contrast to the politicians and the aid agencies. His 'mission' was providing direct humanitarian assistance, and neither bureaucracy, party politics nor institutional caution were going to prevent him from doing so. 'Africa' was starving, it needed food and that was precisely what he would deliver (Hart 1987:15).
Geldof's abrasive approach opened doors. In January 1985 he visited six capital cities in
the Sahel accompanied by the world's press. He met Mother Theresa in an airport lounge,
and had specially arranged flights with compliments of the Ethiopian Government to areas
previously out of bounds for 'security' reasons (Harrison & Palmer 1987:131; Philo &
Lamb 1986:26). His 'punk diplomacy' and lack of institutional links combined to position
him as the 'voice of the people'. He represented the concerned, independent and active
citizen. He felt empowered and entitled (on behalf of the world) to confront politicians and
governments about their commitment to the South (including the British Government) -
much to the consternation of more established and hesitant development professionals
(Burnell 1992:122-3).

The Band Aid saga culminated in the now legendary open air Live Aid Concert in July
1985 - a sixteen hour pop extravangaza simultaneously broadcast from Wembly Arena
and the J.F.K. Stadium in Philadelphia. It was beamed via 13 satellites to 120 nations, and
an estimated 1.6 billion people watched at least some of the event: a third of the world's
population. It was the 'biggest music concert in history' to be motivated by philanthropic
impulses. The performances were interspersed with appeals from an exhausted Bob
Geldof bullying people to part with their money 'now' and punctuated with the now
familiar footage from Ethiopia, including the Amin/Buerk film (Philo & Lamb 1986: 26;

Such was the impact of the concert that money was still rolling in nine months later to the
tune of US $ 60,000 a month (Allen 1986:32). The Band Aid Trust raised £ 35 million in
In due course Live Aid spawned a succession of similar events, most notably SportAid, the
'Race against Time' which took place in 1986 and 1988 in part as a means to pressure the
United Nations. This offered participation, not spectatorship, (as Live Aid had) as the key
ingredient and as such it was ostensibly a 'conscious-raising' event. It exhorted people to
become engaged in a more direct and active manner, ie: to run. In May 1986, 274 cities in

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5 The Band Aid Trust wound up in 1991 (Benthall 1993:84-6,235).
78 countries staged simultaneous athletic events with the participation of 20 million people (though not in the US). It was picked up by the media in 47 countries (Philo & Lamb 1986: 26; Denselow 1990:246-7).

In this section I briefly delineated the sequence of events that were initiated by the bringing to prominence of Ethiopian Famine in 1984/5. As such this narrative is relatively uncontroversial, though the events were undoubtedly extraordinary. In the next section I consider what their immediate effects were.

Section 3. The Effects of the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5.

The events of 1984/5 wrought profound changes on the working of British development charities. The effects were threefold. First, the events caused a sudden, but subsequently sustained, increase in income and prestige of these agencies. For development NGOs in general, the events of 1984/5 are said to have denoted a 'coming of age' (Poulton 1988; Gill 1988; Gordon Drabek 1987a/b). Secondly, they prompted a widespread reflection on the imagery produced by the media and NGOs of the Ethiopian Famine. Thirdly, they led British NGOs to reassess the value and possible methods of campaigning. These effects were interconnected.

i Institutional effects.

For NGOs the most noticeable effect of the events of 1984/5 was the growth they engendered. British NGOs have usually achieved their most impressive levels of organisational growth and change on the back of highly publicised disaster appeals, and the Ethiopian Famine was no exception (Burnell 1992:31).

After 1984/5 all the major British overseas development agencies underwent a period of substantial growth. Oxfam, the largest British NGO, went from an income of £ 23 million in 1983/4 to an income of £ 51.1 million in 1984/5, which despite some minor dips has risen ever since (Black 1992: 264). Moreover Oxfam, Save the Children (£ 9.5 million) and Band Aid Trust (£35.46 million) emerged as the top charity fundraisers for 1984/5
(Burnell :291-3). More recently, in 1992, the journal *New Internationalist* (1992:19) charted the long-term effects of Band Aid by documenting the percentage income increase since 1983/4 among the top five development charities in fundraising terms in the United Kingdom. CAFOD and Save the Children emerged as the front runners with a figure of 292% and 274% respectively, followed by Christian Aid at 204%, Oxfam (UK and Ireland) at 197% and, lastly, Action Aid at 167%.

But this expansion must be seen in the context of a growth in the charitable sector as a whole. The growth in the British charitable sector in the last decade has been enormous: between 1979-89 the revenue of British charities doubled in real terms (Burnell 1992:4; see also Rajan 1987). So this expansion in the income of British development charities also reflects the noticeable swing in the last decade towards using private voluntary organisations to carry out overseas relief and development work (Burnell 1992; *New Internationalist* 1992:19).

For instance, the Overseas Development Administration's Joint Funding Scheme which allocates either block grants or one-off grants to NGOs, augmented its budget from £ 2.25 million in 1983/4 to £22.8 million in 1991/2 (Dolan 1992:238). Figures show the extent to which NGOs have profited from official funding. Water Aid - an operational but fairly small and very narrowly focussed British NGO - increased its income from £ 25,000 to £ 2.7 million in the space of eight years (1981/2-1990). Save the Children Fund, one of the largest British NGOs and one of Overseas Development Administration's block grant agencies, multiplied its income ten fold from a figure of £ 6 million to £ 60 million in as many years (1981-1991).

There are three points concerning this expansion that are worth highlighting.

First, the additional funding of British NGOs did not augur a scaling-down of emergency and relief work as might have been expected in line with the new NGO discourse, but quite the opposite. British NGOs have been asked to step up and prioritise their emergency

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6 The Overseas Development Administration (ODA) provides a Block grant to five agencies, Oxfam, Save the Children, Christian Aid, CAFOD and World Wildlife Federation. The level of block grant is linked to income, rising with it. Other agencies (and the five block grant agencies) can apply for one off grants from the ODA (see Burnell 1992:26-8).
work rather than abandon it with the consequence that some British NGOs - ActionAid, for example - have actually taken emergency and relief work up for the first time. Black, commenting on the specific experience of Oxfam, concludes that one of the effects of the Ethiopia Famine of 1984/5 was that Oxfam no longer 'struggled with the disasters versus development dichotomy'; setting up, instead, an expanded disaster unit in order to approach disaster situations pre-emptively, rather than reactively (1992:264). So the dichotomy of relief/development work has been blurred. This suggests, against Korten (1987), that NGOs are not abandoning their apolitical humanitarian ethos but more actively integrating it and using it strategically to institutional advantage (Dolan 1992: 209).

Secondly, in the British case, the scaling-up of NGO activity was mirrored by a scaling-down of official overseas aid. Burnell states that even with the envisaged increases of official aid in the early 1990s (as compared with the later 1980s) there is no prospect of it returning to the pre-1980s levels (1992: 218).

Thirdly, and following from the second point, in the light of increased Government subsidy British NGOs discuss the dangers of co-option more actively than ever. Many British NGOs have introduced regulation in the form of ceilings for accepting Government funding which range from 10 to 30% of overall income, in an attempt to control the possibility of co-option and maintain a profile of independence, representativeness and authenticity with respect to their Southern partners (Burnell 1992:238; Dolan 1992:205). These attempts at self-regulation have not, in the main, significantly stemmed NGO growth. This augments the pressure on fundraisers. To maintain effective ceilings, in the light of rising Government subsidy, British NGOs have to raise increasingly large amounts from the general public.

Clearly 1984/5 was a crucial moment in the trajectory of NGOs. It brought their work into prominence and assured them greater prestige and a much larger income than they had experienced previously. These benefits were achieved by virtue of a hyper-inflation in images of Africa. The surfeit of certain images, specifically the 'negative' imagery

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7 Burnell contends that these ceilings are rising to facilitate Government subsidy (1992:209).
produced by Band Aid and the media, both outside NGO control, provoked a widespread
debate concerning the manner in funds were raised for projects and emergencies in the
developing world.

ii Representational effects.

a The Media.

For those involved in trying to place Southern issues on the agenda of Northern publics,
those whom I shall call the 'Educationalists'\(^8\) (Philo & Lamb 1986; Harrison & Palmer
Kouchner 1986 and others) the NNGOs had paid too higher a price for their popularity.
Both the manner in which the Ethiopia Famine of 1984/5 had reached public attention and
the images/messages that were responsible for its success as an appeal caused consternation
and concern.

According to the 'Educationalists' the scale and the impact of the 1984/5 news reportage
was fortuitous. The running of the news story had not been dependent on its relative
worth/urgency, but on it being available on a slow day when there was little European
news. Furthermore, the only European news of note - the surplus food rotting away in
EEC warehouses - provided a contrast, underscoring the imbalance in the world
distribution of goods. This dichotomy provided the sole 'political analysis' of the famine
situation in the Sahel. Famine was simply a lack of food. The implied solution was easy:
transfer over the surplus to Africa.

Numbed by the relentless glare of publicity, few realize that this catalogue of human
suffering amidst the 'silent' millions, is not a sudden, unforeseen, tragedy. Rather, it has
unfolded slowly over many years. Only now has it been given prominence in the media;
and only now are we being asked to look, to remember and, above all, to give. (Bennett
1987:47)

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\(^8\) Those that compose this lobby are not all 'development educationalists' but they would affirm
Lissner's view of the value of development education, and would generally endorse greater quantities of
qualitative information and more 'positive' images and messages about the developing world in the North.
For the 'Educationalists' there were doubts about the media's motivations, astonishment at their power and fear about being swayed by their priorities in the future (Philo & Lamb 1986:26-9; Black 1992:237). Clearly Southern disasters only qualified as 'news' once tragedy had already struck, when 'good images' were available preferably with a body count (Amin 1989:22). For the 'Educationalists' this was a profoundly disquieting state of affairs. It implied that NNGOs were dependent on media exposure which produced, typically, populist, simplistic and ethnocentric images of the developing world (Kouchner 1986:168; Nyoni 1989).

Dawn as the sun breaks through the piercing chill of night on the plain outside Korem, it lights up a biblical famine, now, in the 20th century. This place, say workers here, is the closest thing to hell on earth. Thousands of wasted people are coming here for help. Many find only death ... Death is all around ... Korem, an insignificant town, has become a place of grief. (Michael Buerk's commentary quoted in Harrison & Palmer 1986:122)

According to them the Amin/Buerk report with its stunning visual imagery and its powerful commentary had produced a precedent. The images, mediated by a Western reporter, recorded by an African camera-man, etched themselves on the minds and into the imaginations of millions of viewers. The slow panning camerawork and the dusty grey tones emphasized the 'biblical' aspect of the famine, scores of people dressed in long flowing robes were filmed waiting for something, anything, to happen.

For Buerk, these refugees were fundamentally 'attractive' - even photogenic - in their despair because they were 'such fine looking people' (Harrison & Palmer 1986:118-9; 128). According to Mohamed Amin, the report was a testimony to his own integrity as a journalist, his commitment to the truth and the dignity of the Ethiopian people (1989).

Ethiopia was a commitment to the truth: "this is what it looks like when tens of thousands of people are dying for no good reason". This was respect for human life; "these are people, like you or me, who have lost everything an everyone near and dear to them. You are watching them die before your very eyes". This was an angry and passionate plea: "what are you going to do about it?" (Amin 1989: 25)

For Amin, there was no moral dilemma surrounding his filming of the famine nor the content of his footage, it reflected the situation that he had witnessed. The public response vindicated his use of these images: would anything have happened without them?
The 'Educationalists' disagreed. These were 'white' media images and messages which offered a traumatic mediation (through the commentary) of the experience of 'witnessing' the African famine. They omitted the African voice and presented no explanation of the complex causal factors or historical precedents for the famine. These images conveyed the helplessness and passivity of Ethiopians not their dignity or partnership in development. These media images packaged, labelled and coded 'Africa' for easy identification, confirming and restocking racist images rooted in the West's colonial past. The reportage coalesced 'Africa' with 'Ethiopia' and 'Ethiopia' with 'famine'.

The impression given is of a country, poor to begin with, brought to its knees by famine and unable to feed itself without outside aid on a scale without historical parallels. (Horgan 1986:18)

For Northern audiences, Africa was already poor and underdeveloped, it was automatically populated by victims. These images reaffirmed this stereotype by providing evidence of this 'fact'. African nations reemerged as passive nations constantly threatened by the possibility of 'natural disaster' and always in need of assistance (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987:1; Nyoni 1988-9:9; Hart 1987,1989).

According to Harrison & Palmer this attitude was encapsulated in the reportage by the tabloid press, which focussed on the 'white knights' or 'Angels of mercy' who assured and safeguarded the future of Africa. Active Westerners were contrasted with passive Africans (1986:98). The unfolding of events in Ethiopia/Africa was brought to the attention of the average British reader through the philanthropic thoughts and deeds of Westerners9. The media constituted Africa once more as 'other'; a 'Dark Continent' and a timeless space where a biblical famine - an event alien to the modern industrial West - could unfold without resistance (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987:30).

Unfortunately, the media could not be held solely responsible for the predominance of these images and messages. According to the 'Educationalists', their persuasiveness lay in the fact that they were confirmed by the charity images produced by British and Northern NGOs.

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9 Band Aid/Live Aid was criticised in a similar vein: it included few black and no African artists (see Denselow 1990).
For Arnold, it was clear that a bandwagon effect had taken place so that British and Northern NGOs, in order not to lose out, had reproduced the 'negative' images of others (Arnold 1988:17) (Fig. 3.4).

To evaluate the precise nature of the coverage of the Ethiopian famine, especially by NNGOs, European (including Oxfam in this country) and African voluntary agencies (thirteen in all), initiated the *Images of Africa* project (Kaida-Hozumi 1989:26, Dialogue 1988). The British report was prepared by Nash and Van Der Gaag (1987) in association with Oxfam.

This British report carried out a content analysis of the most prominent images and messages produced by British development charities during 1984/5 - those produced for fundraising purposes. It concluded that there had been very little variety in British NGO fundraising images: these images had primarily featured women and children (50%) or women alone (24%), men were rarely represented (under 2%). Moreover the actual geographical location of the crisis in Africa was very rarely alluded to. The most commonly used words were 'help' (30%), 'poor' (20%), 'death' (36%); expressions such as 'long-term' and 'self-help' were infrequent (all together 18%).

Moreover the photographic images were often close ups taken from above, the camera angle according a 'superior' position to the photographer and the viewer. The camera 'looked down' on the subjects both physically and metaphorically. The images produced were said to be demeaning. The report also suggested that these photographs had fully realised their power to transform the *subjects* into *objects*, because they were both very intrusive and extremely personal, capitalising on people's despair and grief. They were truly 'pornographic': the photographers had exercised their power to represent (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987; Stalker 1991:6). There were, therefore, pertinent ethical questions to be asked about photographic practice. Had the subjects been aware that they were being photographed? Had they had the choice, or the capacity, to protest or exercise informed consent given their emotional and physical state (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987)?
It was clear that these 'negative' fundraising images had been used to anchor the story and render it real, human and authentic for the British population (to sell newspapers and to raise donations). Yet, the *Images of Africa* report concluded, to all intents and purposes, the photographic practice had been predatory and demeaning. The African subjects had remained largely anonymous. They were unidentified and unnamed; functioning only as symbolic presences. They had become the timeless mass of the starving Africans (Stalker 1991). For Nyoni (1988-9), a respected Southern partner who prepared the Zimbabwe *Images of Africa* report, all this was profoundly insulting.

Images represent people. People will fix images to the faces depicted, regardless of whose personal image it is ... Images should not be applied en masse, but to individuals; to people with dignity, with an identity. When images lose their identity, they become a way of looking down on people ... It seems to be that if you respect somebody you want to learn their name ... you want to know them as individuals. But the way that ... African people [were portrayed] is as if they were not people at all. (Nyoni 1988-9:7)

It implied that the African subject was good enough to validate the West's work, but not good enough to enjoy the privilege of representing her/himself. The ascendant image was of Africans who had no voice, no identity and no contribution to make during the crisis. They were the passive receivers of aid, whereas the western subjects were the bestowers of an interventionist miracle (Hart 1989, Bailey 1989).

The 'Educationalists' had further objections. According to them, these images were essentially 'false'. The reality of the situation in Ethiopia was a very different story, this 'reality' featured a very active and resourceful African population engaged in a number of different and effective strategies to circumvent the possibility of starvation. This 'positive' image of participation, self-reliance, and self-determination had simply not been available to the Northern publics (Simpson 1985: 21; Dialogue 1988; Nyoni 1988-9). Neither NGOs, the media, nor Band Aid had seriously attempted to portray these positive indigenous efforts to allay the crisis. NNGOs had produced educational materials but somewhat after the event. These were less resourced, less attractive and less widely circulated than their fundraising counterparts. The more enlightened images and messages had not reached the same audience (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987).
The *Images of Africa* reports surmised that these distortions were only possible because of the unequal relationship between donor/recipient, North/South. The North and Northern NGOs had removed information from the South, in quasi-colonial fashion, which they then packaged for their own glory and publicity purposes. Northern NGOs had the monopoly on 'reality' creation for Northern audiences and had abused that power. They had denied the South and their Southern partners both a voice and the ability to control their own images. The *Images of Africa* reports concluded that NGOs had to recognise their power and responsibility in order to change their representational practices in accordance with the principles of their new orthodoxy. To do anything less was hypocrisy. In the future there had to be greater dialogue and accountability between the *representer* and the *represented* with a fuller acknowledgment of the skills and expertise available in the South, and a stronger emphasis on public education in the North (Kaida-Hozumi 1989: 27; Dialogue 1988).

c Consumer Aid.

If the NGO images had fetishised and objectified their African subjects, for some (Allen 1986; Bennett 1987; Hart 1987; Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987; Simpson 1985) the Aid events had transformed them, horrifyingly, into consumption goods. According to Nash & Van Der Gaag (1987:38), for example, Live Aid was a

"global juke box" enabling compassion through consumption. People could buy the paraphernalia that denoted that they cared ... and watch pictures of themselves, or millions like them, caring. The Ethiopians themselves had a 'slot' when pictures which recalled the worst of the tragedy reminded the public how lucky they were.

For these commentators Band Aid/Live Aid/SportAid were not about politics but about hedonistic consumption and self delusion. These events were not the ingenuous outpourings of genuine concern but professionally conceived products: they were exciting, good value for money and accessible. Geldof was a moral entrepreneur, he had launched *Consumer Aid* by successfully marketing a product: 'Africa Starving' (Allen 1986: 34; Hart 1987,1989). This relied on simplistic, jingoistic and patronising messages - 'Feed the World', for example - something that 'we' - the West - could easily recognise and understand (Returned Volunteer Action 1991:19).
According to Nash & Van Der Gaag (1987) and Simpson (1985), Consumer Aid's message had been nauseatingly simplistic: the audience had been encouraged to consume *in abundance* to help the starving (either by giving or buying). Twentieth century progress, the shape of television satellite, had led to a situation where the 'rich' were able to witness, and consume, at first hand the death of the 'poor' and felt able to weave a celebration around it (Bennett 1987:11). African subjects were not only beholden to Western humanitarianism, but also to Western consumption (arguably the root of their problem). Ultimately it was pleasurable for participants; the overall mood was self-congratulation and celebration. *The Sun*'s headline after Live Aid was 'The Day the World Held Hands'. The Western consumer was permitted to celebrate her/his generosity in style.

For Hart (1987) the popular enthusiasm for this message rested on the fact that it did not challenge the established order, but offered the familiar, traditional, humanitarian and apolitical palliative - charity. *Consumer Aid* was a substitute for astute political analysis because it offered the public a means through which it could satisfy, quickly and with little self-reflexion, deep seated philanthropic desires. It reaffirmed divisions not unity. 'We' were the World and 'they' were the Third World, helpless and crisis ridden, hostages to 'our' aid permanently trapped in their 'otherness' (Hart 1987:17; Hart 1989:13). For Simpson (1985) Africa was, once more, the 'White man's burden'.

For all the 'Educationalists' the events of 1984/5 were deeply worrying. Their extraordinary nature had generated a situation whereby British NGOs - who had the power and the popularity to impose certain kind of images upon the British public - abused their position by opting for the cheapest, most effective and 'worst' images. They had reneged on their commitment to participation, partnership and dialogue by producing images which were not only judged to be demeaning - 'negative' - but were also produced by questionable techniques.

Although the 'Educationalist' critique of NGO images during the Ethiopian crisis was framed in the same manner as Lissner's - as an internal tension between fundraisers and educationalists, and between positive and negative images - this post-Ethiopia regime of
truth concerning images was different in three significant respects. The dilemma surrounding imagery was no longer a question of an internal power struggle between professional groups within Northern NGOs, it was a product of asymmetrical relationships between Northern NGOs and their Southern partners. Secondly, this new regime contended that in the production of images NGOs had to consider including the Southern voice. Thirdly, it insisted that NGOs had to be aware of the dangers and effectiveness of populist techniques of communication.

iii Campaigning Effects.

Black (1992:265) and Burnell (1992:12) reflecting from a greater temporal distance interpret the events of 1984/5 differently. They perceive two positive results: (i) the money had saved lives and (ii) the events resulted in a mood of concern about the developing world not manifested in over 20 years.

In November 1984, Oxfam commissioned a survey on public attitudes to the South, and found that the British public, notoriously vague about development issues, had an opinion. Three quarters of those interviewed declared that they wanted British overseas aid increased or maintained at 1984/5 levels and channelled into long-term development (Black 1992: 261-2). Even the then Overseas Development Minister Chris Patten admitted that Geldof, by then Sir Robert, had been far more effective than he had himself at galvanising the public support in favour of overseas aid (Burnell 1992:217).

In October 1984 Oxfam launched its grassroots popular campaign called 'Hungry for Change' which aimed to combine fundraising and development education. It set out the injustice of the global production system. Within weeks two hundred local groups were formed, many of which are still going today (Black 1992:261-2). A year later, on 22 October 1985 British NGOs organised 'Fight world Poverty', a march protesting about Britain's record of overseas aid (and the desire of the Government to cut Official Aid back). An unprecedented 20,000 people gathered in Parliament Square (Kaida-Hozumi 1989: 24; Burnell 1992:254; Black 1992:265).
Burnell claims that the combination of media exposure, Band Aid and the NGO lobbying in the mid 1980s had literally 'pushed' and 'shamed' Northern Governments into action, forcing them into pledging large amounts of relief (1992: 198). The high profile of NGOs ushered in a new era of respect for the views and the work of development non-governmental organisation on behalf of both national governments and international bodies (such as the UN). This, in turn, resulted in increased incomes for NGOs (65% of official relief went through NGOs during 1984/5) and a scaling up of their activities (Burnell 1992:26, 197-8; Black 1992:260).

One of the most remarkable aspects of the events 1984/5 was the degree of commentary it generated. The issues of charity, fundraising and overseas development assistance erupted onto the public agenda and provoked comment from those outside the usual arena of development professionals. Among those who felt qualified to comment were Hall and Jacques (1986) and Hebdige (1988) who analysed the events of 1984/5 from a 'cultural studies' point of view.

According to these commentators, the Aid events initiated by the Ethiopian Famine had rearticulated the political. Band Aid was oppositional populism\(^{10}\) : it inscribed politics into charity. Geldof had not been co-opted to a quasi-conservative, charitable agenda, as others - Allen (1986) and Hart (1987/1989) for example - contended, but had helped to redraw the political map (Hall & Jacques 1986:13).

Live Aid, Band Aid and SportAid offered ideal participatory forms for the young (it met them on their own ground) which could press for a renegotiated relationship between the developed and the developing world. Africa was not represented as passive - the passive object of a movement in the developed world - but as a self-realising, independent and active subject of a global movement. This was conveyed symbolically in SportAid since the Sudanese athlete, Omar Khalifi, was the central figure of that event (Hall & Jacques 1986:11-3).

\(^{10}\) In calling this populism, I am referring here to a grassroots movement. However the ambiguity of the term (given its use in Chapter 2) is intentional; as will become clear later.
For these commentators, Geldof had placed the responsibility for Third World development with those with whom it belonged: people and Governments. He had initiated a 'famine movement': a popular movement which involved Northern publics, most particularly their youth, in a 'primitive' kinship with the South. These events asserted the greater 'Family of Man'. Geldof's oppositional populism asserted the common-sense values of co-operation, mutual support rooted in 'human(e) values of good fellowship and neighbourliness' and expanded the conceptual horizons of the population beyond the 'Little Englandism' of Thatcherism (Hebdige 1988: 220). Geldof was not involved in promoting binary antagonisms - 'us' and 'them' - but solidarity - Us and Them - albeit in an unorthodox form. The ultimate beneficiaries of Live Aid, Band Aid and SportAid were all of 'us'. These events had exhorted the British populace to stop focussing on the local and to look towards the global (Hebdige 1988: 219-221; Hall & Jacques 1986:14).

In this section I indicated that the impact of the Ethiopian Famine on the organisational life of Northern NGOs was profound. The effects on the prestige and income of Northern NGOs were undeniable but greatly contested. Some feared the price of popularity was too great. Northern NGOs were dumbfounded and radically challenged by the extraordinary combination of messages and images, compassion and consumption that was typified by the Aid events. Their certainties were undermined and their closed debates were aired more publicly. In the following I suggest that the 'Educationalist' critique in particular was highly influential. I argue that it did not simply extend Lissner's argument, but that it rearticulated the various components leading to the emergence of a different body of truth on the question of representational practice - 'imagery' - within NNGOs.

Section 4. Taking the Mess out of the Message: Reinvestigating the Critiques of the Events of 1984/5.

The logic and persuasiveness of the 'Educationalist' critique belied the complexity of its claims. It constructed a powerful chain of equivalences between a series of binary oppositions - fundraising versus education, charity versus social justice and Modernisation discourse versus the new orthodoxy of development.
The 'Educationalists' described the events of 1984/5 as having exacerbated internal divisions: by allowing the fundraisers to rule the day, NNGOs had settled for the wrong, but undoubtedly, more popular and powerful messages and images. In so doing they had presented a 'curative/relief/charity' vision of the developing world rather than promoting a 'preventative/development/social justice' model. They had encouraged Northern people to act charitably and to adopt a patronising attitude to the people of Africa. In this way, they had allowed the comfortable prejudices of Northern publics to be confirmed.

Their image of Africa and the African has not been opened up, but is even more entrenched in notions of poverty and backwardness, which are now more closely linked than ever to ideas of famine and aid. Ethiopia has become the stereotype, not only of Africa, but of much of the Third World. (Allen 1986:37)

Ethiopia 1984/5 was a decontextualised and depoliticised catalogue of human misery which played on stereotypes of the developing world. The 'Educationalists' cited reports on multicultural and anti-racist education to back up these assertions. Children in the North had an alarmingly 'negative', and 'charity' influenced, view of the South (see Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987; Graham & Lynn 1989:23; Philo & Lamb 1986:23; Simpson 1985:22-3). According to the 'Educationalists' it had set the development education agenda back twenty years (Burnell 1992:19).

The 'Educationalist' critique was highly influential. Although it seemed, initially, to solidify Lissner's divisions, it ultimately resulted in a new regime of truth which created an overarching framework for the regulation and analysis of images irrespective of their institutional source. It unblocked the impasse that Lissner had described.

i Confirming the internal divisions.

The 'Educationalists' claimed that excessive quantities of poor quality material had a cumulative effect upon the Northern public's perception of the South. The 'negative' images had reached a critical mass and caused lasting damage: they had created the South as a 'theatre of tragedy' and the North as its oasis (see Adamson 1991 for the same argument). Such stereotypes were confirmed by Consumer Aid.
The angst of the 1970s has been replaced by the game of media hoopla in which star-studded rings are run around a fundamentally incurious and potentially guilt-ridden public. Famine must be given audience appeal. For we that live to please, must please to live. (UNICEF 1987)

The events surrounding Ethiopia 1984/5 had transformed the serious and complex issue of 'famine' into an 'ecstasy of communication' - a moment where images, information and televisual close-ups combined to produce 'famine' as hyperreal. The 'reality' of famine had been transformed into an image-bloated but empty simulacrum of famine. What emerged were powerful images and messages about famine, but their multiplicity caused the audience to suspend judgement in favour of emotionalism.

NNGOs had been hypocritical, promoting an interpretation of famine which had simply reduced the problem to the lack of food. Their new discourse, however, asserted that disasters were produced by a lack of entitlements, as the product of impoverishment not of freakish natural events (though these undermined peoples' survival strategies). So 'Educationalists' challenged the integrity of NNGOs: the latter had traded profit for integrity, and in so doing had misled donors and beneficiaries. Ethiopia 1984/5 had simply become a media opportunity for NNGOs and politicians alike (see Burnell 1992:179-204).

According to Hart (1989), the images and messages presented by NNGOs during 1984/5 were fundamentally 'false'. They bore no relationship to the reality of events - the process of impoverishment that resulted in famine - nor the spirit of intent of NNGOs. Consequently they had engendered the wrong kind of response and sentiments. In fact Geldof was redeemed only once he became co-opted onto the 'Educationalists' agenda: endorsing the roles of NGOs, seeing the benefit of long-term relief, doing some lobbying and finally leaving development to the professionals (see Allen 1986; Hart 1987; Benthall 1993).

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11 This implies that images become reality, because their position derives from within a system of signs, not from the referent 'real' outside that system of signs (Thompson 1992:247).
12 A constructed model which bears no relationship to any reality bar their own (Thompson 1992:24,246).
The 'Educationalist' discourse represented fundraising and education as mutually conflictual activities, but in doing so mobilised complex and essentialist 'truths' around each respective activity.

Fundraising was represented as a pursuit with questionable motives and methods. In order to raise money fundraisers had produced 'charity' or negative images: those which stereotyped, fetishised and objectified the subjects of development, making them into objects to be gazed at and pitied. These were also Modernisation images: images where there was no solidarity or dialogue, but where Northern concerns and insecurities, rather than Southern needs and realities, reigned supreme. So fundraising was in the business of normalising 'un-truths' about the South and about the work of development agencies - a process that was fuelled by its relationship with the advertising industry.

Whereas fundraising was cast as both corrupt and over-professionalised, development education was, transparently, 'A Good Thing': it automatically promoted empowerment, solidarity and democracy. Precisely how it achieved this was less clear, except that it was the inevitable result of producing 'truer', more 'accurate' and 'positive' images: those which represented the poor as human subjects. Similarly this critique provided no substantive analysis of the respective power of different information sources. The negative image of Africa was said to have been reinforced by the outputs of NGOs, Band Aid and the media. Analysing how these different stimuli were influential, and which images prompted what perceptions, was left to secondary sources (multicultural education reports) and circumstantial evidence. So development education was said to produce a deeper and more long-standing dedication to international development issues among donors, on the basis that an 'educated pound' was a more committed pound.

This faith in the possibility and worth of development education drew on several assumptions. First, the internal divisions within NGOs were rationalised by mobilising

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13 Professionalism seemed to function as a term of abuse when uttered in the context of fundraising. It denoted 'overslick', skilful manipulation of audiences by presenting them with over-emotional and 'untruthful' views of the South (Lissner 1981; Whitaker 1983). Consequently 'professional' fundraisers were typecast as disregarding educational priorities out of hand (Whitaker 1983: 161). This codification of professionalism had much in common with the new NGO discourse (see Chapter 2).

14 See Benthall (1993:66) for summary of an 'educated pound'.
essentialisms concerning the character of charity and development (see Chapters 1 & 2). Charity was unproblematically constituted as retrograde: a politically conservative activity which preserved inequalities between North and South and wished to maintain the subjects of development in a state of domination. Charities which operated in a social justice mode were *a fortiori* politicised and therefore supportive of democracy and dialogue. So the 'Educationalist' critique of imagery relied on essentialisms to substantiate arguments in favour of a posited ideal mode of conduct for Northern NGOs or, more precisely, third generation NNGOs (see Chapter 2). Northern NGOs had to incorporate social justice and empowerment into their imagery by producing and disseminating empowering and positive images.

Secondly, and related to the above, the 'Educationalist' critique produced representation (imagery) and intervention (charity, development) as directly linked. In other words, Northern NGOs reflected the depth of their dedication to their donors/recipients and the quality of their development practice by virtue of their representational strategies.

> [T]he problem of images and perception cannot be separated from the methodology of intervention'. (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987:77)

Clearly the 'Educationalists' used Lissner's terms: negative images represented and therefore created the *subjects* of development as *objects*. The distorted images produced in 1984/5 satisfied the fundraiser's crude agendas, by shaming and flattering the donor rather than upholding the dignity or resourcefulness of Africans. For Nyoni, the link went further: negative images of Africa were dangerous because they became self-fulfilling prophecies. They attracted the wrong sort of development - that which encourages dependence rather than 'empowerment', 'dialogue' or 'self-reliance' - and attracted the wrong kind of Northern NGOs (1988-9:7-8).

So the 'Educationalists' seemed to be suggesting that the response engendered by the 'negative' images had negative effects both on the overseas partners - by undermining their struggles for empowerment - and the donors - by mis-informing them.
Investigating the assumptions behind positive imagery.

As indicated earlier, the 'Educationalist' critique although flawed was highly influential. This ferocious critique forced NGOs publicly to address their representational practices. Both the context of production and the content of British development charity imagery were issues to be considered. The asymmetrical power relationships between North and South, as well as issues of access, consent and control were inserted into the discussion. This generated a new doctrine on imagery which intertwined the issues of charity, development and representation.

There were a number of transformations in communication practice within British development charities following the Ethiopian Famine and the critiques it engendered. First, there was a noticeable increase in the production of 'positive' images. Secondly, many organisations considered the possibility of guidelines on representational practice, although only a few actually prepared them (Oxfam and Save the Children Fund). These tackled both the content and strategies of production of images, and focussed less on text than on visual representations. Thirdly, there was a reconsideration of the value of a more populist approach. Northern NGOs were keen not to lose the constituency and support they had gained from Band Aid and Live Aid.

The most noticeable difference in the imagery before and after 1984/5 was the change in tone and content. In the late 1980s positive images - images which depicted the 'constructive, cost effective, practical, realistic approaches to solving' problems that the subjects of development were engaged in - became more widespread. The logic for this was clear. If negative images failed to represent the truth or the reality of the situations overseas (Nyoni 1988-9; Hart 1987,1989; MacCollum 1990; Adamson 1991), then positive images would. Moreover such images would address the concerns of the persuasive 'Educationalist' critique. Instead of engendering pity and charity in the donors they would foster hope and solidarity (Fig. 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2). These were
empowering and truthful images aimed at counteracting the distortions of the media (Hart 1989:14; Montague 1988:24).

Though the issue of representation and its linkage with intervention will be tackled more fully in chapter four, the problematic status of negative and positive images needs to be noted at this juncture. Both negative and positive images are effectively essentialist propositions: the unexamined 'falsity' of the negative is counterposed against the 'truth' of the positive. The opposition depends on an unexamined concept of truth and reality. But in both cases 'reality' can be legitimately called on not only to justify the production of the images - both these images reflect what was really there when they were taken - but also their reproduction - the use of each image can be vindicated by the work they will do either in raising money or changing opinions. Consequently the use of a discourse of accuracy and truth tells us more about how representations are being utilised to justify certain forms of intervention, than whether or not these images depict accurately or truthfully (Hacking 1983:146). In other words representations are discourses on the truth and the real rather than reflections of them (Nichols 1991).

Thus, when commentators such as Nyoni (1988-9) or (Lissner 1977, 1981) advocate greater truth and accuracy in future images, one must treat their petitions with scepticism and examine, instead, where they think those 'truths' lie. Perhaps inevitably, their 'truths' lie in positive images and the values of dignity, mutual respect, partnership and dialogue. Concepts apparently conveyed through images but also inscribed within the new NGO discourse and the discourse of social justice.

There is another aspect to the 'Educationalist' critique that is worth discussing here, because its assumptions are equally etched within the new NGO discourse and within the new doctrine on imagery this critique engendered (see Korten 1987; Elliot 1987b). This concerns the relationship between representation and intervention. Specific demands for more 'positive' images and imagery were based on several claims.
First, the 'Educationalists' proposed that positive images were closer to reality. Because they portrayed more accurately the quality of indigenous development efforts, they were said represent the subjects of development as, precisely, that. So representation was reflective of intervention: empowering images evoked empowerment. Secondly, 'Educationalists' affirmed that 'positive images' aided citizenship and participation in the North. In other words, positive imagery promoted dialogue and understanding between the South and North. Here representation helped the pursuit of proper intervention: empowering imagery encouraged Northern audiences to support and foster empowerment in the developing world. Thirdly, 'Educationalists' declared that representations could actually create human subjects in the South, that they had the power to influence/generate reality in the South. Here representation constituted intervention, or, empowering images engendered empowering development.

These claims were and are often conflated and confused. The link between representation and intervention was and is posited to be real and direct, but such assertions rest upon essentialist foundations. 'Reality' and 'accuracy' are reflected, aided and constituted by positive imagery. There is no consideration that meaning and 'reality' can be constructed through representations rather than reflected by them (Steedman 1991). So these concepts are deployed in order to normalise and authenticate a regime of truth which connects charity, development and representation. In chapter four, I interrogate these assumptions to posit a different type of link between representation and intervention.

The events of 1984/5 indicated that despite themselves, NNGOs had the ability and the power to represent their beneficiaries, and that they were largely unaccountable. They had guaranteed access and they had utilised this to produce predatory and demeaning images. The increase of positive imagery was in part a recognition of this fact. However British NGOs sought to address the issue of power more specifically through regulating representational practices: either by drafting formal guidelines themselves (SCF, Oxfam) or by obeying the new directives from the European Community in the shape of the NGO-EC Liaison Committee code on images (1989).
The precise nature, content and assumptions of these guidelines will be explored in chapter four. For the moment it is important to note that all these guidelines addressed both the content and context of production of images. The point of departure for most of these documents was provided by the conclusions of the *Images of Africa* reports. They generally aspire to regulate the conditions of image production, in order to guarantee greater dialogue and more accountability between Northern funding organisations (the representers) and their Southern partners (the represented). These are the quintessential manifestations of the new regime of truth on imagery. They interlink the practices of charity, development and representation in order to set up ways of regulating image production in a systematic and ordered fashion.

### iii Reassessing populism.

The most trenchant criticism levelled at the Aid events was that they fed into the ignorance and complacency of the British public. By choosing to reinforce the charitable messages, negative images and emotive responses initiated by the Aid events, British NGOs had compromised their principles. They had depoliticised, simplified and trivialised the complex and life threatening issue of famine. The culturalists Hall & Jacques (1986), and Hebdige (1988) questioned all these assumptions. They argued that there was no such thing as the 'wrong' response. The effectiveness of the images in preventing death and in mobilising the Northern publics to give and to act was undeniable. Geldof had recast the political by avoiding the simplistic opposition of conservative 'charity' against radical 'social justice', preferring instead to actively engage a previously ambivalent section of the British public. He had persistently challenged - and frequently insulted - the bureaucracies and bureaucrats that had the governmental possibility of altering the state of affairs between North and South\(^{15}\). He most definitely *had* acted politically, albeit within a populist mode (see also Denselow 1990).

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\(^{15}\) Geldof toured again in October 1985 and later in 1986. Both times his agenda was more political and was targeted at the United Nations and European Parliament (see Denselow 1990:247).
Clearly the events of 1984/5 challenged the interpretation that fundraising and development education were necessarily conflictual activities. Band Aid, Live Aid and SportAid suggested that fundraising, education, and campaigning activities could all be incorporated into one communication strategy. The events had made millions of people, worldwide, aware of the crisis unfolding in Ethiopia, albeit by virtue of populist methods. Bob Geldof had captured the imagination of a cross-section of the public, youth included, of whom the development professionals had little knowledge and with whom they had traditionally had even less fundraising success.

The 'Educationalists' were disparaging of the activist populism generated by the Aid events. However their attitude contained a contradiction. Although the 'Educationalists' repeatedly called for the prominence of Southern issues, they did not welcome the compromises they were called on to make to engage 'the public' in the North. What Kouchner (1986:185) calls *la democratie par le don* - democracy by virtue of the gift - was judged distasteful, negatively populist and potentially damaging because it catered to the 'lowest common denominator'. It appealed to *The Sun* reader, that apparently fickle, hedonistic and bigoted section of the British populace.

In the same breath however, these 'Educationalists' endorsed populism, or activism from the 'bottom-up', as a prerequisite for development in the South (see Chapter 2). In other words pedagogical practice in the North and South had to be very different. Northern audiences had to be told what to think, Southern subjects could decide for themselves. In the North only the aware, 'educated' *Guardian* readers, could be trusted on to act properly as citizens and mobilise the 'proper' projects of global interdependence and democracy (see Firebrace 1991).

As I suggested in chapter two, avowed romanticism vis-a-vis Southern subjects is also inscribed within the new orthodoxy of development. The implication is clearly that Southern subject-hood is inherently preferable, and of a higher order, than Northern subject-hood. It also reinforces value judgements concerning the manner in which the public in the North can and should be made to respond by charities. This attack against populist methods of fundraising clearly posited some motivations - compassion/solidarity/
judgement - as nobler than others - charity/guilt/emotion. It equally assumed that motivations for giving could be clearly discerned and disaggregated.

In this section I highlighted and commented on the critiques delineated in section three. I indicated that commenting on the tumultuous events of 1984/5 involved the 'Educationalists' in the production of 'truths'. These truths posited a direct relationship between the quality of representation produced by NGOs and their discourse of charity and development. *I argued that although the 'Educationalist' critique was essentialist it was nevertheless had very powerful effects, helping to revolutionise representational practice within British development charities. I contended that as a result a new 'body of truth' interlinking the practices of charity, development and representation emerged. The ethics of representation was transformed into central issues of concern for Northern NGOs, since images now reflected both their institutional commitment to the poor and the quality of their development work. I will argue in the next section that in contradistinction to Lissner's analysis, this body of truth did not restrict itself to the confines of the internal workings of Northern NGOs. It provided a broad organisational framework which focused on power and regulation, and in so doing permitted the blurring of communicational roles within NGOs and an adoption of more populist and pluralist styles.


According to Elliot (1987a), a former director of a British development charity, the events of 1984/5 proved instructive for Northern NGOs. It caused them to address two important issues. First, that NGOs were more successful at mobilising people on the basis of a finite and comprehensible, if simply-packaged disaster, than they were at encouraging them to commit themselves to the enormous and complex problem of world poverty. Second, that the people of the rich countries could be made to care about the poor, albeit for humanitarian motives (Elliot 1987a:10-12).
The Aid events were a watershed in communication and fundraising terms. Poulton (1988:4) clearly articulates the importance of this moment in the lives of British development charities:

Bob Geldof and his Band Aid explosion produced a world wide demonstration of public feeling quite unexpected in its extent. It came and happened and passed but it will never be forgotten.

NGOs could not proceed as they had done before; they were forced to consider new ways both to raise funds and to educate the British donor.

i Redefining 'fundraising' in the 1990s.

The reassessment of communicational practice occurred for a number of reasons. First, the events of 1984/5 had shot British development charities income through the roof. These rates of growth of British NGOs need to be sustained to maintain operative ceilings on Government funding and therefore independence. Moreover long-term sustainable development required long-term funding, and this necessitated a stable, and predictable, income growth-rate. Fundraising, therefore, entered a new era in the late eighties, as this quote from a Charity Projects fundraiser indicates.

A big organisation like Oxfam or Save the Children Fund ... has annual requirement of fifty or sixty million pounds a year. That's a million pounds a week they've got ... to make. ... Divide it by seven and every morning their fundraising [department] has got to come up with one hundred and eighty thousand pounds... that's just to meet commitments, that's a hell of a lot of money. So the pressure on ... fundraisers ... is extreme. ... They can't let the side down because what suffers is the fieldwork. [sic]

This intensification of pressure has necessitated diversification. British development charities now use a variety of techniques and a plurality of propositions in order to segment the market and target certain social groupings. Press advertising, direct mail, corporate sponsorship, covenantee, press advertising, legacies and, most recently, television advertising have all become part of British NGOs' fundraising profile. What British NGOs want in the 1990s are committed donors because these provide a security of income. Secondly, the events of 1984/5 reposed the problem of communication. Did there have to be a distinction between purity and pragmatism, education and fundraising messages? Critiques which reinforced these binary oppositions are now said to represent the
humourless and sanctimonious strands of development professionalism rather more reminiscent of Victorian philanthropy - don't joke about the 'deserving poor' - than a twentieth century communication technique. Indeed they are now infrequently deployed even by mavericks outside the NGO sector (Adamson 1991, 1993).

You do not have to be gloomy and doomy to be able to help other people or to be able to understand what their needs are and respond. You don't have to be sackcloth and ashes and Oh! God it's charitable. You can have a bloody good time ... and other people around you can have a good time ... and you can get involved and you should get involved. It is not a subject for gloom and doom because that way leads back to pity and back to 'there but for the grace of god'.

This is the view of an Overseas Programme Officer at Charity Projects, the trust which runs Comic Relief, arguably the charity which learnt the lessons of 1984/5 with greatest ease. Comic Relief's trademark is that it is 'known to be funny about serious issues', an asset which guarantees it success and therefore income, yet its 'educational' content is widely praised by other NGOs.

The benefits of populism were equally articulated by a Senior Advertising Executive whom I interviewed. He was influential in preparing strong advertising campaigns for several British NGOs. He stated that British development charities had thankfully lost their puritanical streak. According him, the discussion around Band Aid and Live Aid had been woefully misplaced, centring round motivation, rather than effect. It was largely irrelevant that the public had participated out of a desire to witness a 'bloody good pop concert' and buy the T-Shirt, rather than a more deep-rooted need to demonstrate solidarity with the starving. It had visibly mustered what seemed like significant public support for a political and humanitarian issue. This illusion of public support had been sufficient to guarantee real effects; it had created the desired political leverage which had influenced the practice of Governments and international organisations. So it overall impact was undeniably beneficial.

This view has become ascendant among British development charities. Populism, pluralism and strategy inform their communication work. This will be exemplified in chapters five and six. But one only needs to think of increase in charity catalogues and charity-linked consumption goods in the last ten years to know that the lesson that development can be made both pleasurable and fashionable has been learned.
ii Redefining education in the 1990s.

Coincident with a greater investment in fundraising, the 1990s has seen a greater investment in areas of education and advocacy. According to Arnold, development education in the late 1980s was transformed from an activity that simply sought to communicate the 'appropriate message' into an approach which used a 'series of strategic choices and compromises to enable the message' to be presented and heard (1988:10). So development education ceased to be simply 'A Good Thing', as was implied in Lissner's categorisation. The field of education is now pluralised, embracing multiple educational agendas and different strategies. This is equally inscribed in Korten's (1987) generational typology, since for him, different generations of NGOs have divergent, but increasingly pluralised and politicised, communication strategies. The characteristic trait of third generation agencies is said to be their interest in advocacy and campaigning.

Advocacy is cast by many (Black 1992; Burnell 1992; Arnold 1988; Clark 1992; Dolan 1992) as a post-Band Aid phenomenon, a product of internal reflection by NGOs, as well as a natural extension of their education and operational work (Clark 1992:199; Dolan 1992: 206; Arnold 1988:8). NNGOs were charged with being over-cautious during 1984/5, a caution that undermined their commitment. The bid to be bolder and take more risks - in other words to be entrepreneurial - is portrayed as a practical application of the Northern NGOs' new orthodoxy (Clark 1992:199; Arnold 1988:27).

Advocacy is also projected as the future of Northern NGOs (NNGOs).

The major trends have been an increasing strength of the 'NGO lobby', a more strategic approach to advocacy, closer integration of lobbying and public campaigning/education, and more attention to the use of the media. (Clark 1992:198)

Dolan, quoting Korten, suggests that advocacy and education, in the 1990s, are possibly the most meaningful forms of assistance that NNGOs can provide (1992: 204). He suggests that the time will come when development work will be done only by Southern NGOs (SNGO) and that the proper role for NNGOs, in retreat, is an educational/advocacy one (see also Gordon Drabek 1987a; Tandon 1989:19; Dichter 1988: 183; Clark 1992:195). Such a division of labour between SNGOs and NNGOs is perceived to be
consistent with the relationship of partnership and co-operation between NNGOs and SNGOs advocated by the new orthodoxy. If development is a question of mobilisation and empowerment, then all those factors that aid it - including grassroots political activism in the North - are equally valid. NNGOs may not be addressing emergency needs by investing in advocacy, but they are addressing vitally important issues with long-term benefits, for themselves and their partners (see Clark 1992; Dolan 1992). NNGOs are entreated to have an open mind and to use popular methods because this allows their message to be heard. Ultimately they must extend their networks and their capacities to influence.

There are, moreover, significant institutional advantages to 'speaking out'. British NGOs have striven, post 1984/5, to understand how the media works, in order to use it and effect it in accordance with their own agendas. Charities frequently orchestrate newsworthy events with celebrities and good 'sound bites' to promote their cause (Cater 1989; Chapter 5). For Dolan (1992) this is an ambiguous achievement, because it feeds competition within the charitable sector. He remarks that 'it seems to be a case of survival of the fittest in which the promotion of individual charities, 'distinctive images rather than the image of the sector as a whole is of prime importance' (Dolan 1992: 206; Chapter 5).

So the events of 1984/5 created an intensification of debate on imagery; and this, in combination with increased income and a realisation of the possibilities of communication, led to a different regime of truth surrounding the processes of fundraising and development education.

The 1990s have seen a pluralisation of strategy and roles, a blurring of the categories of positive and negative images as well as a move towards populist styles. One Oxfam Campaigner I interviewed articulated this new uncertainty.

I think there are times when you have to use images that are out of context and would be seen as negative images because you're describing reality ... There are going to be times when you cannot say things which are good about certain areas. You've got to be honest and balanced in the view in that particular context. ... In campaigning terms, we would not go along totally with the line that an image which shows smiling people is the only one you can use because at times you have to show pain and suffering. ... Is a negative image determined by ... what it's trying to do rather than what it is? Is there a 'means justifying the end' type of approach to this? ... Is there an element in which negative
images are OK depending on what it is used for: giving money is wrong, getting people to get angry and take militant action is alright? I just don’t know.

Many NGO staff now claim that all 'fundraising is education' and vice versa; raising money and raising understanding are complementary not conflictual activities, though the balance may be different in different materials.

In the 1990s all communication materials are targeted, so the new regime of truth pin-points 'appropriateness'. Lissner writing in 1977 was outraged that some agencies used outside consultants for their advertising purposes. In the 1990s, for NGOs not to do so would be alarming. NGOs now routinely use outside professional expertise in the areas of direct mail, press advertising, public relations and market surveys, depending on the kind of appeal they want to run and the sort of feedback they need.

Moreover this purchasing of expertise is judged to be a wise investment, a testament to the NGOs' professionalism and accountability. As British charities, they have a duty to keep administration costs down (the public require it to remain at 15%), and this means efficient and effective fundraising (Prochaska 1988:15). As third generation, 'people to people', development agencies, they must make their messages accessible to bring on board greater numbers of more committed donors. For Nyoni (1988-9), it is a question of being realistic. NGOs (Southern or Northern) cannot pretend to have the 'permanent' solution to development but they do have the key to mobilisation of people in the North and South.

In this section I argued that the mid-1980s debate concerning 'education and fundraising' was transformed. I contended that before the mid-1980s the debate in communication centred around whether NGOs prized their goal of engendering subject-hood of the poor above and beyond ensuring their own institutional survival as 'charities', and whether they were prepared to risk institutional suicide to uphold the 'voice of the poor' (Lissner 1977:206-7). I asserted that in the 1990s the situation is different. British NGOs now debate how the goal of engendering subject-hood for the poor can be made 'fashionable' enough to ensure their institutional survival as charities, without overly compromising their integrity, or abusing the trust of their partners. According to this new regime of truth a plurality of mutually reinforcing strategies is essential: fundraising, education,
campaign and advocacy must all work together to portray an appropriate image of the NGO and its partners. There are no rigid internal divisions but key organisational concepts - for instance 'accuracy' and 'balance' - that must be upheld across the organisation and within representations and communicational materials.

Conclusion

In this chapter I considered in detail one historical moment in the trajectory of British development charities: the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5. I selected this event because of its impact on the discussion on imagery within British development charities. I argued that previous to this event, the question of imagery was a marginal concern and was most frequently spoken of in terms of an internal division between two professional groups. I then demonstrated how the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5 disrupted this interpretation by setting into motion a whole series of events and issues which confused and challenged Northern NGOs' preconceptions. I contended that as a result of the surfeit of negative imagery that was produced and which prompted previously unthinkable levels of donation in the West, the ethics of representation became a central issue of concern. In particular I showed that the events surrounding the Ethiopian Famine engendered a damning critique, mobilised mostly by those who had previously petitioned for increased quantities of educational and informational material on development and the developing world. However I also suggested that although this critique seemed to reproduce the terms of previous discussions on imagery it effectively engendered a new regime of truths concerning imagery, which interlinked the practices of charity, development and representation. This new regime addressed questions of access and control, as well as the asymmetries of power between Northern NGOs and their Southern partners. I demonstrated that the initial effect of this critique was an increased production of 'positive' imagery and formulation of guidelines. However, the long-term effect was to create a greater plurality and populism in communication practices in British development charities, albeit within a regulatory framework. So in this chapter I argued that the Ethiopian Famine
of 1984/5 had a profound effect on representational practice within British development organisations because it led to the emergence of new regime of truth concerning imagery.

In chapter four I focus more explicitly on the formulation of these truths, both in the context of positive imagery and in the image guidelines. My purpose is to question the definitions of power, truth and reality deployed in this new regime of truths on imagery. In doing this I conclude the first part of the thesis.
Chapter four

Regulating Representation.
Introduction

In chapters one and two I interrogated the concepts of development and charity in order to examine contemporary attempts to fix their meaning. In chapter three I considered how the momentous events of 1984/5 reconstituted a body of truth on imagery which connected the practices of charity, development and representation. In this chapter I propose to examine in greater depth how this body of truth is made manifest in both the visual representations and the image guidelines produced by British development charities in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In order to highlight the specific assumptions of this body of truth concerning positive images and power, I shall use insights from theories of representation.

The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section I delineate which theories of representation might prove useful in this particular context. I argue that semiotic theory as defined by Chaney (1988) provides the most insightful analysis. In section two I move on to describe which particular tools will be used. I then deploy these tools in the context of a concrete example, a positive image produced by the British development charity, Christian Aid, in 1990. In this section I seek to disrupt assumptions concerning the reality or truth of this visual image in particular and visual imagery more generally. I show that positive images are as much the products of artifice and power, as negative ones. In the final section I consider several sets of Northern NGO image guidelines in greater detail. I argue that these guidelines incorporate a definition of power, but because the phenomenon of power is mislocated, British development charities must finally fail to achieve their dialogical and empowering aims in representational practice. This chapter concludes the first part of the thesis.

Section 1. Delineating the Terrain of Representation.

i The 'crisis' in representation.

As I indicated in chapter three the outcome of the events of 1984/5 was a re-consideration of the content and process of production of visual images amongst British development
charities. The most immediate result was a move towards positive imaging, producing images which stressed the 'strength, dignity, and self-determination' of the human subject in the face of adversity, rather than images which objectified and 'dehumanised' the subject of development (Chapter 3; Montague 1988; Hart 1989). But the new body of truth around imagery put into question the quality and the quantity of NGO images as well as their techniques of production and reproduction. The guidelines subsequently drafted by Oxfam (1987), SCF (1988a, 1991) and the NGO-EC Liaison Committee (1989) emphasized the need for greater accuracy and 'truth' but in tandem with substantial verbal contextualisation, dialogical production and appropriately controlled methods of reproduction. Representation and intervention were decisively linked. From this point on a new body of truth emerged which asserted that new theories of development and new modes of charity required new techniques of representation (see Korten 1987). So the 'crisis' in development was apparently accompanied by a parallel 'crisis' in representation. This latter crisis, however, was not confined to the development field, it was significantly more widespread than this1. Edward Said's (1989:206) comments on this matter are apposite:

> to represent someone or even something has now become an endeavor . . . complex and . . . problematic . . . with consequences for certainty and decidability as fraught with difficulties as can be imagined.

The mid-1980s critique of NGO representational practice was said to have been timely: it highlighted the ambivalence of NGO activities and forced these organisations to question their responsibilities. The debate that followed the events of 1984/5 ostensibly sought to challenge established patterns of imagery production and reestablish ethical criteria in recognition of the 'power-ladenness' and 'politics' of NGO representational practice (Chapter 3).

For some, the negative imagery produced in 1984/5 had significantly failed to encapsulate the truth or the reality of the situation or had knowingly distorted them for the purposes of Northern consumption (Nash & Van Der Gaag 1987; Adamson 1991). The counter-

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1 Some NGO staff claim that the debate about representational practice was catalysed by the code of ethics of the photographers they used, and movements in photography generally. Look for instance at Becker (1991) who considers control in the light of new technology in photography.
argument posited that the negative images were undeniably truthful and reflective of reality. Furthermore they imparted a sense of immediacy, authenticity and authority which were prerequisite to their functioning as credible NGO images.

Clearly this discussion operated according to a 'realist' premise, it posited that 'out there' there was one real truth or reality ready to be captured and conveyed in visual images. However it can convincingly be argued in opposition to this position that neither truth nor reality can ever be encapsulated and that all representations are, at best, partial truths and persuasive fictions (Clifford & Marcus 1986). Moreover the desire to capture these certainties can be cogently attributed to an impulse which is primarily grounded in Western Modernism and Imperialism and therefore a specific history and culture (Chaney 1988; Tagg 1988; Sekula 1984, 1986a/b).

So the very ambiguity of truth and reality makes the essentialist propositions of positive and negative images hard to sustain. Indeed the change from the initial NGO reaction of simply producing 'positive images' towards circumscribing representational practice, in the shape of formal or informal guidelines, is a tacit recognition of this ambiguity. It covertly acknowledges that frequently despite the best of intentions, visual images articulate something very different from what Chaney calls the 'dry truth' or 'reality' (1988).

According to Chaney (1988) there are three perspectives from which to deconstruct the ascribed authenticity and truth of photographic images. First, he cites the 'political economy' perspective which studies differences in photographic technique in accordance with the different forms of activity in which it is used (journalism, advertising, etc). Secondly, there is the 'ideological' critique of photographic conventions whose proponents argue, for instance, that photography has facilitated the development of consumer culture, or that, through its 'democratic' functioning, it has contributed to the construction of identity and iconographies of specific social groups in different periods. Lastly, there is the semiotic critique. According to Chaney, this concerns itself, primarily, with the codes and conventions which allow images to 'make sense'. It argues (very broadly) that all images are both motivated and descriptive. It also asserts that 'truth' and 'reality' claims are part of
Western discourse and an extension of the ideology of naturalism. Chaney includes in this category a more Foucauldian understanding of representation which casts photographic recording as a product of new technologies of dominance, those constellations of practices and institutions that produce knowledge of subjects and seek their subjugation (see for instance Tagg 1988: 62-3). Consequently, photography functions both as a method of surveillance and a powerful means of 'myth mobilisation' (Barthes 1984, 1989; Alloula 1986; Graham-Brown 1988). Ultimately then, according to the semiotic critique, even the most self-effacing documentary image, works on the basis of signification and is a means of constructing persuasive 'truths', rather than reflecting them.

When Chaney posits the category of semiological critique he unites a broad range of approaches under a single banner. It is perhaps useful to note that there is a difference between those which draw more on linguistic theory to enunciate a description of images in terms of signs and signification - writers such as Barthes (1967, 1977, 1984, 1989) and Burgin (1982, 1986) - and those that attempt a more Foucauldian analysis, where representation becomes a 'politics of truth' - authors such as Sekula (1984, 1986a/b) and Tagg (1979, 1984, 1988, 1989). These approaches, share common ground, as the latter takes as read the premise of the former and posits a more 'forensic' critique of representation. As such this latter critique foregrounds the conditions of production and consumption of the image, rather than examining how the image establishes meaning and works specifically to interpellate an audience (Edwards 1992).

In this chapter I deploy both of these semiotic perspectives to explore NGO imaging practices. In fact one can draw a neat parallel between the different 'depths' of semiotic analysis, and the different means through which representations were regulated in British NGOs in the aftermath of 1984/5. As mentioned in chapter three, the most immediate and tangible consequence of the critique that arose in 1984/5 was an increase in the production of 'positive imagery'. This demonstrated an appreciation of the practices of signification; these positive images sought to address how meaning was constructed within the frame of the visual image. The drafting of image guidelines which followed not only tackled image
and meaning, but also outlined means of policing how these images were obtained and reproduced.

In other words, the purpose of this chapter is to move beyond the debate about positive and negative images. I argue that the most useful analysis of representation must take the shape of a 'deep' description, one which explores the social, institutional, discursive and historical conditions of production of imagery. So I consider representations to be historically contingent discursive practices, in other words practices 'which are systematically subject to a certain (attempted) regimentation and patterning by or more discourses' (Minson 1985:126). I elaborate the usefulness of this perspective in the context of concrete examples namely in relation to imagery produced by British development charities, but also in reference to the image guidelines.

Section 2. Exploring the Usefulness of Semiotic Analysis.

I will initiate this analysis by delineating the insights that semiotic theory can provide in the context of visual representations. This treatment of semiotic theory will begin with an examination of the work of the French theorist Roland Barthes. Barthes' early semiotic theory draws from Saussurian linguistics which asserts that linguistic signs are essentially autonomous and unmotivated. Their relationship is arbitrary so that the meaning of each utterance - parole - is constituted within a pre-determined and static system of meaning - langue (see Barthes 1967; Nichols 1981; Burgin 1982). The relevance of this branch of semiotic theory to photographic images lies in its conviction that visual images are never pure analogons - 'messages without a code' - but on the contrary, that they constitute a language in themselves and in their wider circulation within society (Barthes 1977:17). All images are composed of signifying elements and are themselves elements in a highly structured signifying system (Barthes 1967, 1977).

I shall root this excavation of semiotic theory in the context of photographic imagery, because this is the predominant mode of 'imaging' for NGOs, and constitutes a very important part of their communicational practices. It is also the area most hotly debated for reasons that have to do with the phenomenon of 'power'.
i Questioning photography.

Photography can be ascribed one of two broad modes: 'scientific' or 'romantic'. The purpose of the former is documentation and realism, it aspires to a condition of authenticity and truth, whereas the latter mode's purpose is art - it can be creative and fictional. In its documentary/realist role, photography persuades that it has, quite literally, transcribed reality and 'resurrected' the 'real' (Barthes 1971). It promises to deliver something that no other imitative art (with the possible exception of cinema) can: the transparent, unmediated, reproduction of 'reality'.

Photography seems to record, rather than interpret, the piece of the world in front of the camera. A human artist may filter the 'real world' through her or his creative imagination, but the camera and lens are often regarded simply as piece of machinery which allow an image, a duplicate of the world to be transferred onto film. A photograph stands as evidence that whatever is inside the frame of the images 'really happened', was really there: it is authentic, convincing, true. (Kuhn 1985: 26)

Both painting and cinema testify to a voluntary act (of time and money) whereas documentary photography appears as if involuntary, a spontaneous capturing of the 'real' (Burgin 1982:142). For this reason photography is often perceived to be an objective, mechanical and truthful process.

Photography's ingenuousness derives from its indexical and iconic properties. The iconic relationship between sign ('photograph') and referent ('reality') is based on the similarity/resemblance between the icon and reality, the verisimilitude of the photograph. It is, therefore, defined as a perceptual relationship. The indexical relationship, on the other hand, describes the existential bond between pre-photographic referent and the sign, the necessary linkage between the two, in the sense that the referent must 'have-been-there' in order to cause the dispersion of light that created the photographic image (see Barthes 1984; Burgin 1982; Metz 1985).

The coalescing of these two properties justifies photography's claim to be the reflection of in the case of scientific mode, the pre-existent reality: the 'necessarily real thing' that it depicts, or of, in the case of 'romantic' mode, the presence of the 'author'. Photography, therefore, always seems to act as a conduit for an essential presence beyond or behind its
surface, either in the shape of the 'reality' from which it derives, or in the character of the author (Tagg 1988; Burgin 1982). For Burgin (1982) and Sekula (1984, 1986a) this endows photography with a 'mystical' quality, one which allows it to 'raised above' rigorous analysis, leaving unexamined the relationship it has with power. Barthes, also, throws aspersions on a 'mystical' quality, but roots his objection in realism:

The Photographers "second sight" does not consist in "seeing" but in being there. (Barthes 1984:47)

According to the Foucauldian John Tagg (1988), Barthes' confirmation of the indexical relationship in photography is problematic and deceptive. For Tagg, the existence of a photograph is no guarantee of a pre-photographic existent and he cites photomontage as a clear example of this. He also asserts that this causative link is highly complex and can guarantee nothing at the level of meaning. Tagg links Barthes' assertion that such an existential bond exists, and his resurrection of photographic realism in his last work, Camera Lucida, to the death of Barthes' mother and the demand for consolation through the necessary linkage between her previous presence and her present image (Tagg 1988: 1-3).

For our purposes what is important is the reality and truth effects of the combination of iconic and indexical properties, rather than their specific functioning; and in particular the manner in which documentary/realist photography operates, since this is the predominant mode in British development charity imagery. What is contended here is that the reality and truth effects are particularly deceptive with regard to 'scientific' photographs. They present factual claims not fictional ones; they aspire to be 'testimonies of', rather than 'fashioned by'. The word fashioning is particularly apposite, since it does not endow fiction with a negative meaning but attributes to it the dual sense of its latin root - fingere which imparts a notion of 'making' and 'making up'. The argument presented here is therefore that for photographs to be meaningful they must be persuasive fictions and partial truths. They are, therefore, constructed artefacts, rather than being either pure art or fact (Clifford 1986:6).

Photographs are the material result of a mechanical mode of production. Thus photography inevitably flattens, frames and crops reality, but it also fashions images within specific
historical contexts, and within the discursive frameworks of those institutions that produce them (Tagg 1988:3).

ii Some semiotic tools.

Barthes' semiotic theory aims primarily to unpack meaning, and it provides numerous tools with which to do so, only a few of which I will allude to here.

The premise of semiology (the science of signs) is that sign and referent must not be confused (Barthes 1967,1971). Barthes defines a sign as composed of a signifier and a signified. These are defined in *relatum*, and crudely correspond to the separation of *expression* and *content* (Barthes 1967:101, 112-3). Barthes also provides another set of useful, and related concepts: *connotation* and *denotation*.

According to Barthes all imitative arts contain two sorts of messages: the denoted and the connoted.

> [T]he denoted message, which is the analogon itself, and a connoted message, which is the manner in which society, to a certain extent, communicates what it thinks of it. ... Of all the structures of information, the photograph appears as the only one that is exclusively constituted and occupied by a 'denoted' message. (Barthes 1977:17-8).

In visual images the realm of denotation focuses on the analogic or iconic nature of the sign; to clarify denotation reference must be made to the system of signs. Connotation functions as a second order of meaning; it is the way in which the image is understood, so reference must, therefore, be made to the 'rules of social life, of history, of social practices and usages ... to what Barthes has called 'collective field of the imagination of the epoch' (Hall 1972:66). In other words, it functions in relation to what is alternatively called 'ideology' (Barthes 1971; Hall 1972), the 'pre-constituted world of discourse' (Burgin 1982), or 'endoxical discourse' (Baker 1984). For Barthes the existence of the image depends on its ability to communicate. This implies that all images are 'constructed' and 'motivated', they must follow a trajectory that starts at the source of emission, through the channel of transmission, and ends at the point of reception (Barthes 1977:17; Nichols 1981:44).

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2 A useful means of distinguishing denotation and connotation is by reference to their Latin roots. Denotation comes from notare 'to mark', whereas as connotation derives from connotare 'to mark along with'. (Hall 1972:65).
With the above discussion in mind I now proceed to examine a 'positive image'. My purpose is to undermine decisively - by virtue of close examination and an application of the semiotic tools outlines above - the assertion that a positive image is nearer to reality or the truth than a negative one. The analysis presented below will document how positive images are heavily coded and have truth effects.

iii Deconstructing a positive image.

The photograph that I examine below was used by the British NGO Christian Aid primarily as a poster image, but also a press advertisement (Figs. 4.1, 4.2), in the run up to their 1990 Christian Aid Week (see for greater detail Chapter 6). I have chosen this image because its production was strongly motivated by the desire to make the Christian Aid fundraising images more positive. As the 'priming' April advertisement for Christian Aid Week it was one of their most widespread fundraising statements in 1990. In addition this image received widespread approval from other members of the British NGO community who agreed that this was a positive image and it was making the right kind of statement.

This was partly attributable to its perceived political nature. The 1989/90 series of Christian Aid appeals, of which the poster and press advertisement formed a significant component, had a theme of bringing Third World problems closer to 'home' (Fig. 4.3). The 1989 September poster and press advertisement stated 'Make Water Public' (in reference to the privatisation of water in the UK), whereas the Christian Aid Week statement was 'The World is Our Community, This is our Charge' (1990 was the year the community charge was introduced in Britain) (Fig. 4.3, see also Chapter 6, Figs. 6.11, 6.12).

The following semiotic deconstruction will use the poster as the main object of analysis and the press advertisement as secondary material to emphasize and amplify certain points. This parallels Christian Aid's use of the two materials. The reading I shall make is obviously at one level personal, but it also has more general relevance, since as motivated and public images, ones that hoped to elicit donations and support, these images clearly sought a wider audience than an academic researcher.
The first thing to note about the poster image (Figs. 4.1, 4.2) is that it inserts itself into the documentary/realist mode of photography. It is almost as if the photographer just happened to be there as the woman was riding by, early in the morning on her way to work (we know she goes to work early from the press advertisement). She took him by surprise, he ‘froze her in time’ (Hall 1972:79). The photograph has a literal content, it is seen to be analogical to the event that was fortuitously caught. This is amplified by the dynamic of the men and the cow, peaceably going about (we suppose) their daily business, and the fact that the bike and its rider are slightly out of focus.

This realistic style and the image’s usage encourages the impression that it is simply denotation, that its analogical plenitude is sufficient to justify its existence and validate its functioning as an evidential and objective document. To have taken the photograph, the photographer must ‘have been there’. It is, therefore, an authentic record of ‘what happened’, an unprompted, representative visual image of the everyday in the South and Christian Aid’s work there. The connotation is effectively that this photograph was the result of a ‘lucky find’ for the photographer - in a Barthian sense, a fortunate trouvaille (1984:33).

The primary message delivered by the poster is a linguistic one, present in the very obvious caption and explanation. This linguistic message locates the visual image and navigates the reader through it. It appears to operate purely at the level of denotation - non-connotation - because, though it doesn’t describe the photograph, it amplifies it, the only noticeable construction being the pun (this is more evident in the press advertisement).

The linguistic message of ‘Keep the Health Service Going’ is reinforced at the level of the visual image; the woman (‘Elizabeth’) represents/embodies the health service: denoted by her bag with the cross on it (connoting the Red Cross and its medical services). The bicycle connotes mobility and dynamism. There is also the obvious message/connotation

3 The photographer was a male and a regular Christian Aid photographer.
aimed at the British viewer which draws parallels between the underfunding of the British Health Service and that overseas.

This is a humanitarian and universalist message, a testament of similarity, of 'common struggle', over and above difference. All world citizens, we are given to understand, should have access to adequate health care, and all those who have it within their power to do so should ensure that public provision of health services are sustained, as Christian Aid does.

In the poster the short verbal message leaves room for a fuller visual image. First of all one is struck by the fanfare and intensity of colour. This is not the sepia tones, or black and white coding of the negative image, it is positively 'up-beat'. The scenery is green and lush distancing itself from the deserts and desiccated sceneries of negative images. The hut, the cow (complete with 'pats'), the young woman in a Punjabi suit, the flip-flops, the 'sit up and beg' bike, the old umbrella and the rudimentary medical equipment (one bag with a green cross suffices to contain all that she needs) connotes spatial location ('ethnicity') through 'local colour' (what Barthes (1971) might call 'Indian-ness'), perhaps 'community' (Is she smiling at those inside or outside the frame, or both?), but most especially 'authenticity' (the photographer and the subjects 'were there').

It denotes a different kind of health care, the health worker's 'medical technology' is contained in the bag with its green cross, and her transport is the bicycle. This could have the positive connotations of 'primary health care' - grassroots, appropriate and participatory - or the negative ones of 'rudimentary' health provision - technologically backward and ineffective. This largely depends on the reader of the image. The latter reading, however, would be somewhat contradictory, since the tone of the image is clearly 'joy', and the connotation of success and dynamism is conveyed by both visual images and verbal messages.

What makes the poster compelling - what Barthes might call the punctum (Barthes 1984: 27-60; Graham-Brown 1988:3) - that 'something' which draws the viewer in and requires
his/her attendance, and which presumably distinguished this image from others during selection, is clearly the central subject - 'Elizabeth' (identified and depicted alone in the press advertisement) despite the fact that she is not centrally placed. This glowing image depicts her in a neat and clean suit, with a whiter than white scarf casually draped over her shoulders and sporting a beaming smile on her face. She connotes health, cleanliness and purposefulness, she 'knows where she is going'. There may also be an element of feminine 'liberation', the connotations of mobility, professional status and public participation defining themselves in opposition to consensual notions (in the North) surrounding Muslim/Asian women as domesticated and docile. This image was clearly chosen to be oppositional and non-stereotypical, one which leaves little room for pessimistic and predictable readings. Elizabeth is a squeaky clean, hard and conscientious worker, so we cannot help but admire and warm to her. Moreover, for the more informed, the visual image and the verbal message combine to constitute her not as the object of development - helpless and despairing - but as its glowingy empowered subject: independent, competent and self-determined. These connotations can be read against the text of the press advertisement which focuses quite explicitly on her diligence - She symbolises the new NGO's utopian dream, the active citizen/participant, who through her own 'self-realisation' empowers others. Maybe she is the elusive Freirean 'revolutionary leadership'? (Chapter 2).

'Elizabeth' as a named subject satisfies dual needs. She satisfies both fundraisers' criteria through 'human touch', and the educationalists' criteria connoting partnership because she is personally identified. She rises above sheer statistics, she is as a genuine person, embodying the triumphs and tragedies of the developing world. Elizabeth is the 'mythical signifier' (Barthes 1989:134-5), part analogy, part motivation, she purposefully hails the viewer in the name of 'Third World/health/development/empowerment' and makes her/him take note of her as a self-determining subject. This naming device, therefore, encourages a convenient slippage between representation and intervention. There is an inference that by being the identified/iable subject of representation, Elizabeth is concomitantly, the
identified/iable 'partner' in development. So the empowering image is linked to 'empowerment' though, as indicated in chapter three, the precise dynamics of this correspondence remain unexamined. She is clearly not an object of pity, and although the ostensible purpose of these visual images are to elicit donations, the British donor is not misled into thinking that Elizabeth is exclusively dependent upon their magnanimity.

On closer observation, it is clear that she is not one of the 'poorest of the poor' (compare her to the old man). As one NGO worker commented to me, she seems 'positively middle class'. So her status is undefined, is she a 'do-gooding' charity worker or is she a politically motivated, empowered and self-realising subject? This ambiguity permeates at another level. Care work is usually feminised, so no revolution there: the particular roles being accorded to 'Elizabeth' in maternity, pregnancy, nutrition, immunization and sanitation work are hardly controversial, or, indeed, areas typifying the contribution of the new NGO discourse. So though this image was hailed as 'positive/political' it focuses on areas which NGOs would normally consider to be traditional arenas of charity concern. This image is advantageously ambivalent, since its message could as easily be read as a humanitarian and charity one or as an exhortation to be in solidarity with the poor. There are also some intriguing and unanswered questions. 'Elizabeth's' identity, for instance. How did she acquire a Christian name in a predominantly Muslim country? What does this imply about Christian Aid selection of beneficiaries, or representatives? For whose benefit was the 'green cross' added? Is one seriously asked to believe Bangladeshi workers cycle round the countryside with such a bag, held in such a manner?

This analysis, though revealing, does not go far enough. Ultimately one needs to consider the conditions of production of this image: indeed part of the reason for selecting this image was the fact that some reference could be made to these.

The first thing to note is that the photograph's existence was not entirely 'fortuitous'. The photographer described how he obtained this image.

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4 This was initially a red cross, but given that the deployment of a red cross is in breach of the Geneva convention, Christian Aid had to speedily alter the colour.
This picture was part of a series of pictures. I mean there was the health issue and we'd agreed that we would take local community health workers and Gerry [the person from the advertising agency] had been looking at old stuff and he'd picked up the bike, you know cycling around. He thought that would be a good idea to have one of them cycling around due to the red cross which wasn't such a great idea. So I shot loads of pictures of these health workers riding around all over the place. We thought we'd got it and then we were walking back from one village and we passed this little scene and I thought 'that looks almost archetypal' - the old man and the cow and the little grass hut and the banana tree. And so he said okay well look, get on your bike, cycle past this one say three or four times backwards and forwards on a bike.

Though the setting of the image was partly due to luck, the image was largely constructed-scripted and framed - before it was finally executed and selected. If this is a representation of 'reality', it operates only in a 'generic' manner, in the sense that it is true that health workers do ride on bikes through the Bangladeshi countryside, but in this instance this 'truth' was set up. This positive image is therefore a technical truth: something which Adamson contends is the province of negative images only (1991).

This image was also situated temporally, in the sense that it defined itself strongly in relation to negative images, but also referred to previous Christian Aid communication images and messages. It was positive because it was noticeably different, it did not reify the desperate condition of the poor, with the connotations of 'all past and no future' (Taylor 1987a:50). Moreover in the backlash following the events of 1984/5 the concept of positive imagery was most frequently translated into 'empowering' images of smiling, working, females ie: 'women being constructive'. The implication being that women, both in intervention and representation were being included in the frame: occupying different roles than simply mothering and dying.

According to Christian Aid's Head of Communications this was a 'soft' and 'easy' image which had audience appeal, but which also contradicted people's expectations. It was unusual in both its message and 'colour' - 1990 was the only year in which Christian Aid used colour. Its 'feel' was 'celebratory'. The Head of Fundraising was less enthralled, particularly with the Christian Aid Week poster and theme (Fig. 4.3, 6.11). He likened the theme to a *Times* crossword; over-cerebral and self-referential, not actually geared to a wider audience. These problems were tackled in the 1991 advertising images (see Chapter 6).
The 'positiveness' of the image was signified by its 'active' nature and 'up-beat' tone. This subject of development was 'participating ... hardworking, industrious and self-determined' (Hart 1989:14). The image and message connoted 'empowerment' and focussed on the named human subject; for those producing it, it connoted hope and achievement. The South was consequently rescripted as a place were people were subjects and where successes took place in the everyday.

It can easily be argued, however, that positive image was only superior to the older drabber, heavy-handed, socially concerned negative images (Figs. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4) in the areas of subtlety and audience appeal. Its subtlety, and the fact that it was quite obviously the result of a very motivated production, undermines any claim that it was closer to truth or reality qua positive image.

iv The usefulness of a positive image.

According to Nichols (1992) the deceptiveness of documentary or realist photography lies in its deliberate ingenuousness (his argument takes place in relation to film, but is equally applicable to photography). It seems to present unmediated 'evidence' from the real world which is offered as a source of knowledge, yet the root of its persuasiveness lies in its rhetorical strategies and stylistic form. Nichols' contention is that such representation combines argument and evidence, merging representations of the world with those about the world. As such, photography in the realist or documentary mode functions both as a reflection of reality and as a discourse on it. Though the viewer may engage in the structure and meaning of the image, what s/he recognises, and inevitably responds to, is its 'realism' (Nichols 1992:ix-x,177).

What Nichols' critique does, and does conclusively, is undermine the argument about negative and positive images as oppositional entities which, respectively, mobilise falsehoods or truths. For Nichols all representations are quotations from rather than samples of 'reality' and consequently hold the ambivalent status of 'argument' and
'evidence'. By favouring positive images over negative ones, NGOs deny positive and negative images the same level of motivation; positive images are not concerned with money but primarily with ethics. So a historical and discursive linkage between positiveness and truth is transformed into a 'natural' connection.

It is argued here that the discourse of accuracy and truth tells us more about how these representations are being used to validate intervention rather than whether or not they depict accurately or truthfully (Hacking 1983:146). When considering NGO representational practices, the more pertinent question becomes not which image is closer to reality, but why NGOs select a realist and documentary mode of representation as the most appropriate?

A possible answer to this question would posit that it is the manner in which the documentary mode invests the discursive assertions of NGOs with immediacy, poignancy, but more importantly authority that is important. The audience is encouraged subjectively to witness and believe the analogon of overseas reality with which they are presented. An objective depiction functions as evidence of NGO experience, it demonstrates that these development organisations 'were/are-really-there' and acts as conclusive proof that they 'were/are-really-doing-something'. Documentary/realist representations work simultaneously as the basis for knowledge, the validation for the correctness of NGO discursive assertions, but also as inspirational images: images that require some form of active response (Edwards 1992; Scott 1991).

NGOs produced 'positive images' as a result of the proposition that there was an explicit link between representation and intervention. As delineated in chapter three, this body of truth was somewhat confused. It stated that representation reflected, supported or prompted certain kinds of intervention, and therefore that there was a moral imperative to steer away, as much as possible, from negative images. However a discursive analysis would deny these types of linkage. Representation, and various forms of intervention - charity, development - are discursive practices: in other words they are regimented and regulated according to the operation of one or more
discourses. Discourses are here defined as strategic forms of knowledge, knowledges that do not solely designate 'reality' but serve to create it. They do this by prescribing certain types of practices, they make 'reality' amenable to be seen and spoken of, in other words, to be represented (Rajchman 1988). So the link between representation and intervention is discursively produced, since discourses inevitably have representational and interventional effects. A discursive analysis does not seek to reveal the truth or reality of the situation, because its premise is that nothing is anterior to discourse. Objects, or in this case human subjects, are judged to be constituted through discourses (Barrett 1991:126-130).

Consequently the work to be carried out is not to 'discover' whether certain statements or representations are true or real but why specific statements and representations, rather than others, have the status of truth and reality at any given moment. So the researcher must consider the historical, discursive and institutional contexts in which these statements and representations operate.

As such the work to be done in relation to the images produced by British development charities is not simply an evaluation of the worth of individual representational documents, their content and signification, but an excavation of what Edwards (1992: 12) calls the 'hidden histories', documenting how and why they are produced, and why they attain the status of truth.

In this section I introduced theories of representation in order to deconstruct the two assumptions behind positive images: (i) that they were closer to the truth and the reality of the developing world, and (ii) that they were the product of more ethical practices. I exemplified this by analysing a positive image using the tools provided by semiology. I showed that artifice was positioned at the very heart of imagery production. I suggested that positive images constructed and created the recipients of development and social justice as subjects, deducing that they were neither truer or more real than negative images. I therefore argued that this type of a semiological analysis had the effect of disrupting the posited link between representation and intervention, where images were said to mirror, forge or help the empowerment of human subjects. As I indicated in chapter three if the
body of truth surrounding imagery was seen as discursively produced, then the linkages between representation and intervention were an effect of the operation of discourse. I proposed that a body of truth which connected development, charity and representation would create an equivalence between representational prescriptions and interventionist ones. In the next section I build on these conclusions. I explore how the assumptions (concerning empowerment and the human subject) and pitfalls (concerning power) of discourses of social justice or empowerment (Chapters 1 & 2) are inscribed in the body of truth which surrounds the circumscription of representational practice.

Section 3. Power and Representation - Questioning the Assumptions of the NGO Guidelines on Imagery.

If the move towards constructing affirmative images was a constitutive element of the desire to score the image with the discourse of empowerment and social justice, then the guidelines produced after 1984/5 sought to build on this by laying down the rules for 'photography-as-intervention', ie: to integrate a theory of power. Drawing partially from the conclusions of the Images of Africa report (NGO-EC 1989) these guidelines aimed to circumscribe not only the content and the messages of images but, additionally, their processes of production and reproduction. These documents clearly enunciated the new body of truth connecting charity, development and representation.

i Outlining the content of the guidelines

In the larger and more bureaucratic agencies (Oxfam and Save the Children) formal guidelines were developed. Oxfam's guidelines What makes an appropriate picture for Oxfam? originate from 1987 (Document 4.1). The Save the Children Fund (SCF) is unusual in having two versions: the Impact of Images Guidelines (SCF 1988a, Document 4.2) and Focus on Images (SCF 1991j, Document 4.3). They are different in content through not in aspiration (see Chapter 5). For the smaller agencies, there are claims of an informal consensus based upon the NGO-EC Liaison Committee guidelines: Codes of Conduct: Images and Messages Relating to the Third World (1989; Document 4.4).
Although among these agencies Christian Aid, for instance, has produced educational documents for children called *Images of development* (1988). These guidelines are explicitly concerned with reconciling the varying goals, professional standards and ethical persuasions of different sections of the organisation: to make 'good practice' and 'critical awareness' organisation-wide, so that each producer of images is aware of what s/he is engaged in. SCF's 1991 guidelines state that 'images are everybody's business', and that they aim to arrest 'bad practice' which is defined in terms of negative, stereotypical and cliched images. More unusually, they also propose to put the bureaucratic mechanisms in place which would hold people accountable for 'bad practice' (see Chapter 5; SCF 1991j).

Although the guidelines are not uniform in their focus, they all explicitly connect representation and institutional credibility. For Oxfam 'images represent Oxfam's values and work, and inevitably affect the way the organisation is viewed' (Oxfam 1987). The directness of this link is also made explicit in SCF's *Focus on Images* (1991j) which defines as negative that which 'trivialises, distorts or misrepresents' not the subjects themselves directly, but indirectly through misinforming about the work of the institution (ie: The Save the Children Fund).

These guidelines are not so crude as to posit a particular type of imagery as acceptable or not - no image is automatically out of bounds - but its use depends on 'appropriateness' (Oxfam 1987) or 'balance' (SCF 1991j). This is perhaps a recognition of the complexity of the issue, but also that meaning is a combination of text and visual image. So images of starving children are legitimate if they are properly and 'accurately' presented and contextualised: 'pictures of weak sick or dying victims of famine or other disasters must not be used out of context' (SCF 1991j).

This move to greater contextualisation leaves me, and some NGO staff, sceptical. It seems to undermine the power of the visual image, despite the fact that most NGO communicators agree that this is the key attraction (the *punctum*) of all publicity material for audiences. Indeed most press advertisements are designed so that donors do not need to read the text,
responding to the visual image in combination with the headline (see Chapter 5). So there is an ambiguity because though the guidelines produce an equivalence between visual and textual aspects, and stress that their functioning and content should be complementary, it is privately admitted that it is the visual image that is crucial, and which has the greatest power. It is, therefore, the element in most need of regulation.

ii The visual image and its dislocations.

The need to control the visual image is grounded in the recognition that all photography works on the basis of spatial and temporal dislocation, and that this is the source of both its persuasive power and its ability to be manipulated (Edwards 1992:7).

A photograph is of the past, in that it freezes a moment which has ceased to be, yet it functions in the present, transforming the 'there-then' into the 'here-now'. Moreover, its immediacy and realism can be replayed an infinite number of times: 'the photograph repeat[s] mechanically what could never be repeated existentially' (Barthes 1984:4). This combination of factors allows the photograph to stand for and symbolise historical events while never transmitting within its frame the conditions under which it came to exist. The existence of the photograph does not allow the viewer to distinguish whether it is the result of a 'candid' shot of the subject, or one that it posed - that is thick with 'performative elements' or 'trick effects' (Nichols 1992:150-1; Barthes 1977). Temporal dislocation is linked to spatial dislocation. Photography frames and shapes the moment, it 'exposes' it to historical scrutiny. Furthermore it travels, it can make what is spatially distant, and what may never be personally encountered, familiar. Consequently the most basic characteristic of the documentary snapshot is that it simultaneously appropriates an image and decontextualises it. The camera, then, rather than being seen as a medium which represents the real must be cast as an instrumentality (Burgin 1986:43). It is instrumental in the sense that not only does it construct meaning but also, as a tool of representation, it is intrusive. It has the power to observe at close proximity but also to remove the image absolutely from its original context. According to Sontag, for instance, this power causes the camera to act as a sublimation of the gun, something that is 'loaded', 'pointed' and
'shot' at subjects, which 'captures' their image and 'exposes' their reality, for the purposes of consumption (cited in Pinney 1992).

Sontag's argument is similar to those arguing against negative images, but her remarks also refer to the ignoble history of photography: the fact that as a scientific tool of documentation, in the nineteenth and twentieth century, photography provided the evidence for eugenic theories (see Green 1984, 1986; Sekula 1986a/b). This 'history' leads critics such as Tagg (1988) to cast photography as a disciplinary and regulatory tool whose 'science', ascendancy and prominence is allied to the rise of regulatory human 'sciences'. These human 'sciences', it is argued, sought to codify and therefore control particular sections of society such as women, natives, the infirm and the criminal classes, which they discursively constituted as real on the basis of photographic evidence (Alloula 1986; Graham-Brown 1988; Green 1984, 1986).

This argument contends that because visual images are taken by the powerful of the powerless, photography is both voyeurism and control - the subjects of the photograph are transformed into objects by virtue of being 'shot' (Chapter 3). Photography produces the colonised and the powerless as fixed realities: entirely knowable and visible, but also as 'other', irreconcilably different and therefore the objects of desire and derision (Young 1990:143). The representer/viewer combines both epistephilic (derives pleasure from knowledge of/over) and scopophilic (derives gratification from looking at) desires. Photography constitutes subjects not only as objects of knowledge, but also as fetishistic objects, docile and visible bodies. Photography is recast as an instrumentality, because it betrays the desire for, and aids the functioning of, absolute knowledge and power.

Ultimately, therefore, the phenomenon of 'being seen' is not an automatic or natural process, but a constructed one, where being visible is an ambiguous pleasure, linked to the operation of power, and dependent on one being 'given to be seen' (Burgin 1982:188; Nichols 1992:178, 201-4; Rajchman 1991).

This argument about 'colonial photography' - where photography is portrayed as an instrumental realism, the aggressive conqueror of the world's truth - is in fact quite
convoluted and beyond the scope of this thesis. However it is clear that the substance of this representational critique has been influential on NGO self-reflection. British development charities are uneasy about their representational role: they want to dissociate themselves from certain representational practices and a range of previously commonplace images. In the wake of their increased income and prestige, they fear being typecast as the newly ascendant neo-colonial force in the developing world. They recognise that their survival depends on the production of representations of the developing world and that these involve temporal and spatial dislocation. This 'ignoble' history of photography is, therefore, something NGOs recognise and strive to live down through controlling and moralising representational practices.

This critique was much in evidence in the discussion on negative images, for instance in Lissner's description of fundraising images as pornography. But it was also enunciated in the vocal call for greater equity between North and South contained in the conclusions of the Images of Africa reports (Chapter 3). The guidelines spawned from the mid-1980s imagery debate specifically attempted to address the issue of power in the context of production and reproduction of visual images.

iii Power and Production.

The concern about power and production is reflected in a number of formal and informal guidelines (see Documents 4.1-4). First of all, there is a great deal of rhetoric about the pre-selection of photographers. Several NGOs say that they only use reliable, sensitive and known photographers: photographers who have the same ethical premises as themselves, or who are familiar with the territory and can quickly engage in a dialogue with their subjects. These abilities and the photographers' heightened sensitivity are read into the photographs, they acquire a mystical and superior quality which justifies their use (Chapter 5 & 6). The notion of dialogue is pushed further as photographic subjects are now invariably named and identified in published material. This is now viewed as de rigueur; a sign of respect for the inherent dignity of the portrayed subject.
Some organisations even have 'consent' procedures - SCF (1991j) for instance - but most NGOs state that subjects are always asked if they mind having their photographs taken and have the right of refusal. However, there is some doubt as to how effective this 'consent' can be. Arguably even though subjects/partners may be informed as to how their images or stories are used, and may receive copies of photographs taken (many of the photographers insist this should happen), there is justifiable uncertainty as to the extent that these subjects comprehend the actual process of circulation of these images. After all, their consent very much depends on how the proposition is made to them and who it is made by. In addition, Southern subjects are rarely offered the right of veto. British development charity staff stated that though they adhere to its possibility in principle, to regularly implement such a procedure would be unworkable. Furthermore there is some doubt as to whether partners would choose to exercise it, even if offered, given the nature of the funding (power) relationship (see Chapter 2; Elliot 1987a).

In this sense, both the formal and informal image guidelines aim for a utopian notion of participation and dialogue in the context of image production.

The people with whom Save the Children works risk "exploitation by camera" if their identity or opinions are excluded in the promotion of development issues. (SCF 1991j Focus on Images)

This is reinforced by the exhortation to quote subjects verbatim. British development charities now steer clear of paraphrasing or putting words into subjects' mouths. Their direct messages reinforce the images connotation of immediacy and authenticity, and therefore authority, so the burden of authorship is putatively displaced. It does, however, ultimately, rest with the NGOs themselves since they produce the images/messages and in-depth consultation and co-operation in production is time-consuming and therefore impractical. The guidelines rest on the assumption that 'participatory reality' can be linked to the 'participatory text': one where 'realist' photographs connote empowerment, and verbatim quotes suggest partnership and mutual respect in production. Clifford (1983) notes appositely, albeit in relation to dialogic representational practices in anthropology, that the ability to be magnanimous and to represent 'dialogue' is itself anchored in power.
He remarks that in dialogical representations 'the authoritative stance of "giving voice" to the other is not fully transcended' (Clifford 1983:140).

The guidelines therefore produce a body of truth which proposes an equivalence between the putative absence of power in image production or within the frame of images themselves, and power-free intervention. A positive and empowering image connotes and denotes 'empowerment'. Yet, as indicated in chapter two, this casts power in a unidimensional and negative role either as 'repression' or 'ideology': something which is on top of, and can be stripped away from, 'reality', and therefore in this case its concomitant 'image'.

iv Power and Reproduction.

This view is further elaborated in the guidelines codes on 'accuracy' or reproduction. 'Accuracy' is accorded the dual sense of contextualising the subject of imagery historically and spatially in a way that is a reflection of the reality in which the photograph was taken, as well as keeping the photograph within the 'spirit' of the moment when it was taken. Two levels of truth are posited: one of fidelity to reality itself, another to its spirit.

Most NGOs have photographic 'archives'. These are effectively banks of illustrative material. All photographs now are captioned when they are entered into the archive. This is obligatory, and older non-captioned or 'out-of-date' photographs are, supposedly, no longer used. However, it must be noted that the specific meaning of 'out-of-date' is obscure, since agencies frequently use old photographs which they claim hold the position of 'generic' or 'technical' truths, since they are representative of a 'reality' which parallels the reality under description. It therefore does not have a relation to 'real' time, but rather to the 'spirit' of events/places.

For Sekula (1984, 1986a/b) the archive is not an innocent 'bank' of information, but the manifestation of a powerful capacity to collect and hoard information. Accordingly these images describe a social terrain and the people within it. The archives of British development charities provide them with infinite amounts of serviceable 'evidence'. They
are the ones who are able to 'pick-and-choose' which images are appropriate and when. This returns to the Foucauldian point about power and discourse. The archives allow certain types of statements to be made at certain points, and others to be excluded. They limit what can be said about the developing world and how it can be represented. Indeed given the size of these archives it is amazing how many NGOs buy their photographs from elsewhere. This maintenance of an archive also leads back to the question of power and consent: how does this operate historically over a protracted period of time? Is consent reobtained, and how? (Some answers to these questions are contained in chapters five and six.)

In the guidelines (Documents 4.1-4), reproduction is equally the site of regulation, because it encompasses mechanical tampering procedures such as 'cropping', 'touching up' and so forth. Acceptable practices are again those which are conducted within the limits of the 'spirit' of the reality. SCF's *Focus on Images* illustrates this point (1991j). It explicitly states that 'images must not be cropped or edited in a way that distorts the accurate situation'. How cropping, for instance, can make a difference is frequently illustrated by the following example. A number of British development charities cited how an image of a mother holding a crying baby could be distorted if it was cropped down to the photograph to show the crying baby only. The consensus was that the 'meaning' of the photograph would be altered 'fundamentally' if cropped because the (positive) message of 'comfort', 'warmth', 'caring' and 'hope' would be transformed into (a pessimistic) one of 'hopelessness', 'despair' and 'desolation'. The edited photograph would misinform as to the 'real' situation in which it was taken (see SCF 1991j, since it contains this very example).

The guidelines are, therefore, entrenched in a discourse of realism which disallows 'obvious' tampering or 'trick effects'. Altering images becomes an ethical question, because it is seen to reflect a desire to manipulate the 'real' circumstances, to take advantage of the spatial and temporal dislocation, in order to produce 'false claims', and thereby to have similarities with 'colonial photography'.

In fact it emerged during interviewing that cropping and general tampering were commonplace in visual imagery (for all materials). However these alterations were always rationalised within the context of integrity, of being consistent with the spirit of the photograph. One successful child sponsorship agency claimed they routinely 'rubbed out' certain marks in their photographs of children such as snotty noses or dirty patches, to make them more 'consumable', but also less 'negative' (though dirty children are by no means confined to the developing world). Agencies also frequently masked exposed breasts in photographs. This was judged as legitimate because it testified to the 'integrity' of the NGO: they did not want these women to be seen as sexual objects. Yet this is clearly a form of censorship, and therefore involves a relationship of power.

I was also told that sometimes mistakes occur, due to inefficient cataloguing, or time pressure (which means the consultative process is by-passed). One journalist candidly admitted that her picture of a very dry golf course in Kent was used in a fundraising insert to illustrate 'parched earth' in Ethiopia. She claimed it wasn't worth getting excited about, since it was consistent with the message, and did not do anyone any damage.

There are other inconsistencies, when the guidelines, formal or informal are by-passed. For instance, the original of the photograph that forms the focus for ActionAid's very successful 'banker' press advertisement 'Do you really...' (Fig. 4.4) depicted a parental hand on the child's head. In the press advertisements' visual image this was 'blotted out' to create the child as more isolated and appealing. Despite the fact that it transgressed both the spirit and the reality of the situation, this cropping was nevertheless judged to be acceptable. Indeed this example explicitly contradicted the instance cited above which focused on another child-parent photograph. Only one Senior Campaigner I interviewed who worked in a prominent NGO vocalised the 'nihilist' perspective, claiming that he, personally, could not see any problem with any of these 'alterations' since all photographs, by their very nature, were multiply dislocated and only truthful to the moment when they were taken.
Needless to say, this was a minority opinion. While there was a range of opinion, institutional and personal, on the extent to which the adherence to the guidelines could and should be policed, staff nevertheless enunciated connections between representation and intervention. They would read visual images in terms of whether they exemplified social justice, empowerment and hope, and always qualified transgressions as exceptions, or as being inconsequential in the wider scheme of things.

But these inconsistencies illustrate two important points: (i) that representational practices are not controllable in an absolute manner, and (ii) that the guidelines are statements of intent, consistent with the new NGO discourse and the new style of charity. The images are spoken of as affirmations of values as well as a reflections of 'reality'. Accuracy and realism function as a 'certificate of presence' (Graham-Brown 1988:113); the visual images demonstrate the worth and substance of the NGO's word. Dialogue and participation in representation substantiates other claims concerning the method of development practice and the aims of charitable activity. These representations, both by virtue of content and process of production, confirm the respect these organisations have for their partners. They prove, therefore, that the donor's trust and money is well placed. To posit such a direct and simple correspondence between visual images, and the practices of charity and development, is to deny among other things the operation of power in representation. It is to this issue that I shall now turn.

v Reinscribing power in NGO representational practices.

In these image guidelines (Documents 4.1-4) power is conceived to be a uniform and unidimensional entity, something which is defined in opposition to powerlessness, and which is imposed on people: it oppresses and objectifies (Chapter 2). Negative images are synonymous with this power. There is, therefore, an imputed regularity between the
content and practice of representation and power. The implication is straightforward: when power is not represented or not seen to be happening - this knowledge is imparted through visual and textual representations - then it does not exist. Power and powerlessness hold the status of obvious phenomena which can be detected as such both within representation and intervention. This is clearly an oversimplification, one that receives tacit acknowledgement in the need to produce guidelines, because the role of these documents is ostensibly to circumscribe 'unethical' practices which derive from unequal status and, therefore, relative power.

If power is viewed as something that is neither exercised or possessed but as something which is incorporated into practices, then the slippages that occur in representational practice are not mistakes ultimately 'integral' to the spirit of 'reality', but a testament to the operation of power (see Barrett 1991:135-6). Those different interpretations of what exactly the 'truth', the 'reality' or the 'spirit' of the photographs may be, testify to the ability to decide what kind of practices to engage in and what kind of messages to promote. So the move from negative to positive images and from these to the regulation of representation in the form of guidelines, denotes the changing manner in which power is exercised, rather than its eradication. The guidelines simply render the power relationship more subtle.

The operation of power is sometimes more blatant. SCP is an interesting example because it produces images of both its operational work at home and overseas and though the consent procedure is formally the same, in practice they operate quite differently. In the case of British subjects, for example, SCF require that they or their guardians (if they are under-age) formally sign consent forms. Furthermore these subjects can easily be reconsulted if the images are being used for more public purpose than the low-level use (publicity documents, not large fundraising campaigns) to which they originally assented. British subjects are arguably more cognisant of what they are being asked to do, and how their images will be used. There is furthermore an informal method of veto, since subjects could object if they felt they had not been properly consulted, and would possibly be aware of the 'inappropriate' use of their image. This is not likely to be the case for images of
subjects from the developing world. Subjects may not fully understand the meaning of 'low-level' use, and although identified, may not be traceable later on. Potentially, then, they may not be available for reconsultation: additionally, there may not be time to do so, and therefore SCF project staff may be asked to answer for them (Chapter 5). This, therefore, cannot be classified as 'power-free' and dialogic representational practice.

Effectively, NGOs constitute their representational role in much the same way as their interventionist one. They cast themselves as moral and neutral mediators, who root their knowledge in the 'reality' of the South, and act as cyphers for 'bottom-up' information and practices. It is perhaps more accurate to view them as 'interpreters', organisations which create 'areas of concern' that operate according to a system of exclusion or inclusion. Though issues enter the public arena under the neutral auspices of 'urgency' and 'greater need', at any given moment the choice of what to publicise, and correspondingly which image to use, must be motivated by something more complex than a direct consideration of the 'real' urgency of any given situation. Furthermore this decision rests with the NGOs themselves, not their partners. As chapter three showed, British development charities as institutions can derive great benefit from making the 'reality' publicly available. So what enters the public arena at any given moment reflects a 'strategic' and 'political' choice, a desire to prioritise some statements over others. It corresponds to a 'politics of truth' (Lissner 1977:70-2; Steedman 1991; Barrett 1991).

vi Questioning the truth of NGO images.

By attempting to redress and control representational practices, the image guidelines (Documents 4.1-4) posit a morally superior and 'dialogic' method of representational production. As such they deploy a body of truth which connects the practices of charity, development and representation.

A recurring and central theme of these guidelines is the truth concerning the 'dignity of the poor' and each set of written guidelines gives voice to this fact.

The dignity and humanity of people must be preserved in the photography, however grim the circumstances. (SCF 1988a, Impact of Image Guidelines).
Save the Children recognises the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family without distinction. (SCF 1991, Focus on Images).

All people must be presented as human beings and sufficient information provided as to their social, cultural and economic environment so that their cultural identity and dignity are preserved. (NGO-EC Liaison Committee 1989, Code of Conduct: Images and messages relating to the Third World)

This premise is very interesting. What these organisations appeal to in proclaiming the dignity of the Southern subjects is a presumed equality amongst human subjects - in effect, the 'unity of Man'. The truth that charity images seek to emphasize is the formality of difference between nations and cultures. They assert that beneath diversity there exists a common mould so that the world is a place which is, ultimately, composed of equal neighbours/partners. Many advertisements clearly proclaim this fact. ActionAid has a 'Village Neighbour' scheme, Oxfam a 'Project Partner' one. The 1990 Christian Aid week denoted this 'common humanity' through the proclamation 'The World is our community - This is our Charge'. These are advertisements which deny the 'us' and 'them' but celebrate the pluralist pun, the 'world of difference'.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, this is the obvious outcome of using photography as an illustrative tool, because photography always broadcasts the concept of communal integration and identity. In the case of British development charity images the community is widened to the world community or 'Man' (Bourdieu 1965; Krauss 1984). Consequently although British development charity advertisements emphasize the multiplicity of human experience, by providing contextual details on their subjects, they seek ultimately to strip this away: to expose the underlying unity of Man, to testify to one human nature and one human essence.

It must be noted at this juncture that these are profoundly humanist constructs rooted in Enlightenment concepts, where the assumed universal of 'man' was premised on the marginalisation or exclusion of very significant categories of person, for instance 'woman' or 'native' - those categories, in fact, which NGOs seek to reestablish as having equal

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5 In fact Oxfam considered using this very phrase as part of the title for its commemorative book of photographs. However it felt that this was too divisive, and settled instead for 'our world in photographs' (Oxfam 1992:13).
status as subjects. So the certainty with which NGOs quote the ontological and essentialist categories of 'human' and 'human nature' must be put into question, since their construction is inextricably linked to the violence of Western history, something which NGOs supposedly define themselves in opposition to. It is, therefore, important to note that in their attempt to both de-colonise intervention and representation, NGOs have resurrected the humanist myth of the seamless contiguity of humanity which is inextricably linked to a history of subjugation. The same history that sought to document its hegemony and reaffirm its discursive premises through photographic 'evidence' (Young 1990:122-5; Barthes 1989; Burgin 1982).

The prevalence and ambivalence of humanist discourse within the guidelines puts into question the root of the new NGO discourse's ascription of inferiority to the 'charity' discourse, since at base they seem to share the same foundation. A chain of equivalence is constructed between the charity approach, and negative images which portray powerless and dependent objects. Another one is constructed between the new social justice orientation, empowerment and positive, appropriate, and balanced images which depict independent, empowered subjects. In fact, one could easily assert that both positive and negative images have their roots in notions of 'humanity' and 'humanitarianism', so neither statement is 'naturally' superior to the other. What is contended here is that there is no essential connection between the elements of these chains. The oppositions of social justice/solidarity versus charity, positive versus negative or power versus powerlessness are more satisfactorily described as discursive ascriptions, a battle of 'truths' waged, according to Tagg, by those 'institution(s) privileged and empowered in our society to produce and transmit 'true' discourse' (1988: 94).

What has been presented as an 'ethical' struggle around the accuracy of representations of reality may, therefore, be more reasonably described as a struggle over truth, where 'truth' is an ambiguous and discursively produced entity.

The struggle around 'truth' or the status of 'truth' in photography is not a struggle for something 'outside' the photograph ... It is a battle around the rules operative in our society, according to which 'true' and 'false' representation are separated. It is a battle around those institutions which are privileged in our society to produce and transmit 'true' discourse. It is a battle, around the specific effects of power of this 'truth' and the economic and political role it plays. (Tagg 1979:71)
The 'traffic of images' and the power of the truths of participation, empowerment, social justice and dialogue in intervention and representation are finally dependent on the practices within NGOs as institutions and the agents that define these practices and put them to work (Tagg 1984:11).

The search in the 1980s and 1990s for more realistic, authentic and true images is therefore not essential, but historical, it is presently necessary to fashion NGO images in line with certain development and charitable prescriptions. This confirms Rajchman's remark that what one sees - what is 'visible' - is not determined by what exists but what is 'shown' to knowledge and power. In other words, it concerns how things are given to be seen, rather than what they essentially are (Rajchman 1988). In this case, the question of whether a 'representation' is faithful to the 'reality', whether it is a 'just image', rather than 'just an image' (Tagg 1988:4), is dependent on the conditions under which it is produced and what discourses are being articulated through it.

The new regime on imagery is ostensibly motivated by authenticity and ethics. But holding to these values obscures the fact that the photographs of the developing world do not and cannot represent subjects as-they-were, or as-they-are, they portray them as NGOs want-them-to-be-seen-to-be which is a different issue altogether. The right for people of the developing world to be represented as subjects may be constituted as a prerequisite of representational practice and an ethical right by NGOs, through deploying notions of dignity, humanity, self-respect and so forth, but it remains a political right. Whether or not it is enforceable is determined by the relationships of power between those who represent and those who are represented. Barthes provides a personal commentary on this fact in his work Camera Lucida.

One day an excellent photographer took my picture; I believed I could read in his image the distress of a recent bereavement: for once Photography had restored me to myself, but soon afterward I was to find, this same photograph on the cover of a pamphlet: by artifice of printing, I no longer had anything but a horrible disintemalised countenance ...
The "private life" is nothing but that zone of space, of time, where I am not an image, an object. It is my political right to be a subject which I must protect. (Barthes 1984:15)

From this we can conclude that British development charities are engaged in the promotion of certain kinds of 'truths', the representational effects of which are the 'dialogically' produced representations of the named, active and empowered subjects of development.
These truths are political, since to assert one set of truths one must displace another set. NGOs act 'politically' when they proclaim the humanitarian basis for a political statement, the right for Southern subjects to be considered as such. To prescribe certain modes of representation is to deny the possibility of others. So what presents itself as a debate about the broader implication of self-criticisms, and progress in the light of them, results in the establishment of a new status quo which is as powerful as the one it replaced. It may have recognised the contradictions of previous regimes, but ultimately, it remains unable to solve them.

In this section I sought to examine the content of the guidelines on imagery produced by British development charities. I argued that these guidelines mobilised a body of truth concerning imagery which posited an equivalence between practices of charity, development and representation. I demonstrated that these guidelines rehearsed the essentialisms of other discourses, namely in relation to charity and development, truth and power. I contended that a concern with the power relationship inscribed into representational practice motivated the drafting of these guidelines, but that these documents failed adequately to theorise the phenomenon of power - constituting it inadequately at the level of an obvious and repressive force. I posited a different definition deducing that once power was reconsidered as a seductive and pervasive force, its insertion into representational practice became evident. Moreover I argued that the guidelines themselves acted politically by circumscribing how and what could be represented, and by favouring certain charitable and development practices.

Finally, I asserted that in order to relocate power and discourse in representation, the pertinent method of analysis was not the analysis of the individual descriptive document - the image - but the excavation of its 'hidden history', of the motivations, methods and conditions that informed its production. This is the subject of the ethnographic chapters five and six.
Conclusion

In this chapter I sought to use theories of representation to examine the representational practices of British development charities. In so doing I critically examined the representational effects of the events of 1984/5. Initially I was concerned with delineating which perspective to use and argued that semiotic theory could provide valuable insights into the representational practice of British development charities.

In the second section of the chapter I utilised semiotic theory to deconstruct a particularly popular positive image, showing that the discourse which constituted positive images as 'true' copies of 'reality' was essentially contestable. I then moved on to consider why such an argument was deployed. I asserted that this derived from a body of truth which constructed representation and intervention as directly linked, so the absence of 'negativity' and power in the former was perceived to reflect its absence in the latter. I contended that empowering and positive images were constructed as transparent reflections of 'reality', rather than as constructed events. The semiological critique undermined this position, showing that all images were motivated and strategically deployed; that even the most ingenuous documentary image combined the qualities of evidence and argument in order to make it compelling. I deduced from this that a 'positive image' - such as the Christian Aid image used in the example - was constitutive of the 'proper' object - the subject - of charity and development. From this I surmised that any link between representation and intervention was not real, essential or moral, but discursively constructed as such.

In the third section of the chapter I considered the NGO image guidelines produced in the late 1980s and 1990s which sought to forefront 'accuracy' and 'dialogue' and to minimise the operation of power. I argued that these guidelines operated according to a restrictive definition of power, where power existed only as a negative and repressive force. I suggested that a Foucauldian interpretation of power as a creative, seductive and pervasive force, would be more appropriate. I demonstrated this by showing how this could illuminate the essentialist and humanist assumptions inscribed into the guidelines and explain the slippage and trick effects commonly inserted by British development charities into their representational practice.
In this chapter I set in place an argument for looking beyond the content of images to the context of their production and reproduction in order to discern the operation of discourses and the insertion of power. I concluded that the representations constructed by British development charities had to be treated as discursive practices regimented and regulated through the operation of discourses ascendant at a specific historical moment. I argued that the pertinent method of analysis was not the excavation of the individual document, but the investigation of its 'hidden history', the discursive, institutional and historical context of production and reproduction.

This chapter brought to an end the first part of the thesis. It made out a case, finally and definitively, for the kind of analysis and methodology deployed in the two ethnographic chapters which constitute the second part of the thesis.
Part two.
Chapter five

Save the Children Case Study: Appealing to the Masses.
Introduction

In the first part of this thesis - chapters one to four - I outlined a theoretical perspective which I used to interrogate the practices of charity, development and representation. In particular I traced how British development charities in the 1990s posited a connection between these practices in order to advocate the production of certain types of representation of the developing world.

In part two of this thesis - chapters five and six - I draw on my empirical research to develop this framework further. In keeping with the perspective elaborated in the first part of the thesis, I consider the hidden histories of two campaigns organised by two British development charities - The Save the Children Fund and Christian Aid. Both these chapters take the form of case studies which progress chronologically. They locate representational practice in its historical, discursive and institutional context.

Chapter Five initiates the second part of the thesis. In this chapter I question why the British development charity - The Save the Children Fund (SCF) - selected, planned, launched and executed an emergency appeal. I argue that the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' appeal for seven African countries must be viewed as a historically contingent and discursive product, one that reconciles development and institutional needs. To fully explore the context in which this appeal was orchestrated, I divide the chapter into two sections.

In the first section I begin by examining the structure and organisation of Save the Children, exploring how it perceived itself and its mission. I suggest that Save the Children Fund, in 1991, held an ambiguous position: it aligned itself with the new NGO discourse of development but was criticised by other NGOs for being a conservative and an 'old style' charity. I then examine how, in 1990/1, SCF was seeking to rectify these tensions. I explain SCF's desire to revitalise its image as a development organisation and to implement an Equal Opportunities policy across the Fund within this framework. In the first section, therefore, I investigate the institutional, discursive and historical context of the 1991 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' appeal. In section two I focus specifically on the appeal.
I start by examining how Save the Children justified its decision to organise such an appeal. I then consider the choices Save the Children had to make, not only in selecting what kind of appeal to organise but also what kind of representations to produce. I show that Save the Children opted for a populist campaign because it satisfied both SCF’s ethical and pragmatic criteria. But I also describe how SCF sought to stem the appeal’s populism by producing alternative messages and images. In this section I argue that the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' appeal vindicates the conclusion of chapter three. Chapter five shows that British development charities, in the 1990s, are willing to consider populist and pluralist solutions to raising funds as long as these do not transgress their need to be accurate, balanced and ethical in their representational practice.

Section 1. Mapping Out the Context for the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' Campaign.

The Save the Children Fund in brief.

The Save the Children Fund (hereafter SCF or the Fund) had a long and impressive history. It was founded by two sisters, Eglantyne Jebb and Dorothy Buxton, during the First World War, but had since become primarily associated with the identity and character of Eglantyne rather than her sister (who dutifully followed and supported her husband’s career in politics) (Freeman 1965; Jebb 1930). The Fund had antecedents in the Victorian charitable consciousness. Eglantyne Jebb worked for the Charity Organisation Society, which promoted the ideals of self-help and self-development for the respectable poor, and early accounts of the Fund's work and mission jarred with the organisation's discourse today. Eglantyne Jebb's importance to the organisation, however, could not be underestimated. Her mythical presence and sterling work were conjured up in all documents produced by the Fund and at all public occasions when she is freely and frequently quoted. Her presence was also felt in International Law. Her 'Declaration of the Rights of the Child', drawn up in 1924, was altered and adopted first by the League of Nations, then by the United Nations in 1959 as part of the UN Charter which was further modified in 1989 and 1991.
Because they shared the same origins as SCF, these declarations were used to confirm the worth of the Fund's work. SCF's charter shared their pluralist and deeply humanitarian message concerning the rights of all children to a quality of life:

Save the Children see the new Convention (1989) as a re-affirmation of the values enshrined in its Charter and a setting a yardstick against which children's conditions throughout the world may be judged - but always in the context of differing and changing cultural, economic, social and political circumstances. (SCF 1988b)

The authority of the Fund was thus linked to both its 'hands-on experience' and its long and evolving relationship with international law and the issue of children's rights. It identified and promoted itself by invoking the principles of its founder and its experience as the 'largest international voluntary agency concerned with child health and welfare' (SCF 1990, 1991c/d/e). When assessing its share in the charity market in Britain in 1990, it compared itself to both Oxfam and the NSPCC which both had greater incomes.

Save the Children Fund usually ranked, in fundraising terms, among the top five charities in Britain (ranked by Charity Trends published yearly), though it competed with Oxfam for first place among the development charities. In 1991, some within the charity sector forecast that it would be the most influential development charity in the 1990s thanks to the astuteness of its Director, Nicholas Hinton, but also to its prominent Royal patron - The Princess Royal. SCF's popularity was envied by other charities. It was spoken of as being more charity orientated than some of its competitors, most notably Oxfam. There was, at the time of research, no love lost between the Directors of SCF and Oxfam.

For many, the popularity of SCF was easily explained. It rested with the continuity of a female figurehead - from Eglantyne Jebb to the Princess Royal - but more crucially with the simplicity and emotive resonances of its name 'Save the Children'. For the staff members at Ogilvy and Mather Advertising, SCF's advertising agency of long-standing, the reasons behind SCF's high ranking in the British public's estimation were obvious.

I'm sure it's because it's children ... children are fluffy and warm and nice, and you know, ... Save the Children as a statement is such an emotive thing, of course we want to save children.
The structure and organisation of Save the Children.

SCF was a very impressive and substantial organisation. Although based in London, its influence was far reaching: it had projects in the UK and in the developing world (see Chapter 1). Save the Children UK was also part of the International Save the Children Alliance - founded in 1976 as a consequence of the Guatemala earthquake - which was geared towards coordination and resource sharing. This network was used to protect the Save the Children name and logo (SCF 1990).

In 1990/1 Save the Children's income reached £56.3 million (increase of 8% gross over the previous year), of which £50 million were spent on projects: 43% on Africa and 24% on UK projects. Unsurprisingly then, it employed a large number of staff who had a wide range of skills. In 1991 its personnel count was 950 for the UK (including its UK project staff and the 250 who worked at Headquarters), and 150-190 for expatriate staff (including project co-ordinators but also emergency and technical staff (medical officers, nurses, engineers, etc)). In addition to this Save the Children estimated that it employed about 2,500 - 3,000 indigenous staff (SCF 1991b/e).

The Presidency of the Fund was held by the Princess Royal. Although she was an important figurehead and an active member (the Presidency is for an indefinite period), she had little power. Control of the Fund ultimately rested with its Council. The Council was composed of twenty members who served on, and elected members of, the departmental Advisory Committees. These Committees consisted of SCF members and experts with relevant experience or interest in particular fields. The Council had a sub-committee - the audit committee - which monitored the internal financial dealings and was advised and supported by the seventy strong SCF Assembly (SCF 1991e). SCF was divided into six Departments: Overseas, UK, Fundraising, Public Affairs, Finance and Personal and Administration. Each of these Departments was run by a Director who reported directly to SCF's Director General - Nicholas Hinton (Fig. 5.1). SCF was unusual in having project staff in the UK department in addition to the Overseas department.

The Overseas Department concerned itself with the management of the overseas projects as well as staff recruitment, training and child sponsorship. Overseas, the work was run
through five regional offices and thirty five country offices. Regional offices were established to provide 'technical back up and advice' as well as to search out opportunities for additional work for those expatriate staff employed by SCF. These expatriate workers were typically health practitioners dealing in child and community health (midwives, health visitors, disability specialists) though they included technical staff. In keeping with the new orthodoxy of development, these staff were said to be engaged for their expertise, but more importantly for their ability to train local staff. Country offices were 'manned' typically by a field director, with perhaps a deputy field director or project coordinators. These were in charge of the management, the accountability (financial and otherwise) and the development of SCF's project work in any given country in liaison with governmental and other voluntary agencies.

In the UK project work was coordinated from Headquarters by a Director, three Assistant Directors (in charge of policy and research; staff development and training; planning and administration), and supporting staff. Projects leaders (who developed, managed and coordinated the activities of individual projects), project workers (whose duties depended on the nature of the project) and development workers (who worked with the local communities to change policy and practice) were all employed by SCF.

The UK had an extensive regional network which serviced the needs of the Fundraising Department. In 1991 the Fundraising Department encompassed: legacies, corporate fundraising (a quite significant factor in SCF's annual income forming 7% of its annual income in 1991\(^1\)), appeals, government funding (forming 26% of SCF's annual income in 1991), trading and regional fundraising. This diversity of fundraising techniques was seen internally as a considerable strength (SCF 1991\(^1\)).

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1 Corporate Fundraising was a relatively recent addition at SCF, dating from 1987. It aimed 'to increase funds raised from the corporate sector during the boom 1980s'. Corporate fundraising sought to generate donations which also 'met the company's commercial objectives'. For SCF corporate support meant pledging to generate £10,000 p.a. for a period of three years (through staff fundraising, pay-roll giving, covenants, gift in kind). This was presented as a long term commitment complimented by one-off projects giving (SCF 1991\(^1\)). During 1991 one of the most prominent corporate sponsors was The Observer which donated £1 for every newspaper sold. SCF was very fortunate in being able to attract considerable amounts of corporate sponsorship. Other agencies such as War on Want found it impossible (because of their profile) and Christian Aid found it very problematic (fearing co-option to the corporate sector) (see Chapter 6).
In 1991 SCF devolved into seven regions, forty areas, 150 shops\(^2\) and 800 branches for the purposes of regional fundraising. The Branches were the instruments of local, day to day, low level fundraising (through coffee mornings, selling trading goods, sponsored events), or other, less frequent, but higher profile events (such as concerts or generating income in association with major events such as Wimbledon or the Chelsea Flower Show). They were dependent on voluntary labour and enthusiasm. This they held in common with the shops which were also managed by voluntary labour (SCF 1991d). Voluntary staffing was said to be as much a question of public relations as good financial sense; by costing nothing it increased the profit margins. During 1989/90 shop sales (70\% of which are second hand goods) generated over £4 million (gross), a net profit of £1.6 million. By 1990/91 this had risen to £2.4 million (4\% of total income - though this also included trading goods) during the same period the branches raised a total of £11 million (14\% of the income) (SCF 1991k).

The public relations benefits of shop and branch work were not underestimated by Headquarters. Branches were said to have a key role in bringing and renewing the messages from Headquarters to the periphery. Shops were perceived to be the 'constant reminders of the existence of Save the Children' which increased the 'public awareness' of the Fund's work. In the late 1980s shops were a significant area of growth (SCF 1991a/b/e).

The value that Save the Children attributed to its Branches and shops was exemplified by the Annual Public Meeting (APM) in 1991. This event was orchestrated primarily for the edification of these SCF volunteers. For the Head of Publications it was, officially, 'their day, it's a day to tell them about what we've been doing, a day to thank them and a day to inspire them really'. The stalls, the displays and the talks were all targeted at these Save the Children workers. Indeed a very distinctive tone permeated this occasion. The emphasis was primarily on the role of the Fund in the lives of children, catering to the tastes of what Headquarters staff called the 'corsetted and blue-rinsed ladies', the mainstay of SCF's

\(^2\) For the purposes of comparison, it is worthy of note that Oxfam had at this time approximately 800 shops throughout the UK.
voluntary support. Only new Headquarters staff were invited to attend the APM. This was in addition to their Save the Children I and Save the Children II orientation courses, because the APM initiated them into another aspect of the Fund's work. For other Headquarters staff, there was no analogous annual 'Razmatazz at the Barbican' (The Annual Public Meeting in 1991 was held in the main Barbican Theatre).

In 1991 the APM was inaugurated by means of a five minute audio-visual presentation featuring smiling children (of all creeds), with super-imposed animation (depicting spiders bouncing between the children's' faces, face painting, etc) aligned with the tunes of familiar nursery rhymes ('Jack and Jill', 'Pop goes the Weasel') complemented by the happy voices of periodically chanting children (the 'audio' part of the presentation). Needless to say, this was extremely popular. It elicited huge applause. The theme was 'Lasting Benefits', a phrase which permeated many of SCF's publications in 1991.

To the outsider the emotionalism of this Annual Public Meeting seemed a little contrived and uncharacteristic. It was clearly a public relations exercise staged at an impressive venue which enabled the organisation to proclaim the contributions of its unsung heroines. It provided an opportunity for SCF to celebrate its achievements and longevity. There was a great deal of positive endorsement of the Branches' work and its importance to the continued existence and success of the Fund. The President was most explicit.

Your Royal Highness if you had one message to take away what would it be?
I think you've discovered what it is really, it is the value of each and everyone of the Branches and their members, the extraordinary variety and methods of fundraising, the work of the shop helpers, the regularity of their appearance, but equally I don't think they should forget, that although it is sometimes difficult to gauge just how much you are contributing ... there is also the service it pays to the community as well and that shouldn't be underestimated and that is part of the value of the Fund and it 's a service with a smile, along with the Fundraising.

For some the general tone of the event was somewhat of a shock. I refer both to myself and also a previous colleague from Christian Aid (who had changed jobs) who was feeling slightly sea-sick at the end of the occasion. This was a far cry from the Christian Aid Annual Staff Conference where seminars and debates were run on theme based material relevant to 'development'. In fact the 1991 SCF APM was a roaring success, but its attempts to deconstruct or educate were significantly less than the previous year whose theme had been 'famine'. By all accounts the 1990 APM had catered to Headquarter staffs' notions of what Branches should know rather than the latter's preference.

This impromptu interview with the Princess Royal took place during a session in the Annual Public Meeting in which the compere for the day, the Revd Roger Royle ('a very cheeky chappy') ran through the audience (and his image and that of the audience was projected onto a screen so everyone could see). He interviewed a number of Branch members to hear them recount fundraising success 'stories' of the past year. This was without doubt a very 'managed' affair.
So SCF projected itself as having a role within the British community as a charity (shops provided affordable goods for the less wealthy, it enabled people to be 'active citizens') and for the wider global community (it mobilised peoples' energies to work for a better quality of life for children all over the world).

The APM created an SCF community, it rallied the more conservative do-gooders to the cause while subjecting them to an onslaught of information. It's raison d'être was to make those who had a mediated relationship with the Fund feel as though they were part of the family while also introducing them more actively to Headquarters' discourse (through lunchtime talks, stall and exhibition stands). Branches and shops were quite seriously seen as the vehicles through which the less informed general public could start to understand and get involved with SCF. They were represented as the 'human face' of the Fund.

Consequently they had to be made aware of the value and the values of the Fund's work in order to carry out their ambassadorial responsibilities as effectively as possible. The presence of the President was judged to be critical, she gave the event a certain weight and guaranteed a large attendance. The message that the regional network remained fundamental to the fundraising and organisational success of Save the Children was encapsulated by the Director of Fundraising who asserted: 'Every little bit counts in order to create the Save the Children Fund partnership which raises the funds to do the work'.

iii Save The Children's identity as a development charity.

In 1991, Save the Children was the second largest development charity in the UK in terms of income, but its prominence was frequently assigned to its prioritising of fundraising over education. The critical reports produced about the state of development education and the ethics of imagery in the late eighties habitually compared Oxfam to SCF, showing that the latter produced few educational materials, and did not fund external development education projects in Britain (Arnold 1988:9; Reeves 1989:11; Chapter 3). Although SCF made moves to rectify this in the late 1980s, in 1991 there was still a marked contrast between the staffing of the Fundraising and Education Departments (the staff ratio that was

5 Those who came out with the greatest expenditure on education - both in house, and through providing funds to outside organisations - were Oxfam and Christian Aid. They were deemed more 'progressive' in terms of overall organisational messages (Arnold 1988).
quoted to me was 120 versus 6). The organisation was still represented as being 'fundraising led', although by then the Education Department had been operational for four years.

Other development NGOs were doubtful of Save the Children's commitment to education and advocacy, describing SCF as a 'conservative' and somewhat retrograde institution. Its 'political' caution was especially criticised. One senior manager from a more overtly 'empowerment' focussed NGO recounted, with marked distaste, SCF's tendency to proclaim itself 'apolitical' at NGO meetings in order to curry favour with the Charity Commissioners. This was seen as both bad form ('scoring points') and inconsistent with its proclaimed goals of 'rights'. Staff at Save the Children defended the organisation saying that its distinction was located in method not commitment. SCF, according to them, had the same, if not more, influence because it was more subtle: 'It's very much how you say things'. SCF's militating was done 'behind the scenes': lobbying MPs on the quiet, getting people to write to MPs and using the voice of experience to persuade the British Government or other national governments to listen to its recommendations. SCF staff quoted the Charity Commission guidelines in support of their tactics. These stated that a charity could advocate against that which hindered its work directly, 'if we see a situation where children are actually being damaged, we have a sort of duty to campaign about it'. It was said that SCF did not challenge overtly because its constituency, unlike that of Oxfam, Christian Aid or War on Want, did not require it to do so.

One SCF staff member claimed that SCF's supporters would have a 'mass heart attack' if it started to campaign more overtly.

Oxfam is very much more politicised, in the way they do their press advertising, it has a stroke of campaign in it ... it's much more a sort of CAMPAIGN!, whereas we're more sober, we ask for money to do things, we don't ever have a campaigning element in what we're doing it's never ... 'please give £10 to help eradicate children dying from diarrhoea related causes', instead it's 'this is the work'. Its work is very service provision orientated. Oxfam isn't in that respect and Christian Aid is very issues oriented.

Save the Children staff preferred to use the word 'influence' rather than 'campaign', but for them there was no doubt that SCF was a pioneering and innovative institution. The worth of its work was undeniable, there was no need to shout from the 'rooftops': 'I think we're also seen to be efficient and effective. We're seen to be the people who perhaps get
on with the job'. Staff were confident that SCF had a reliable and solid image which capitalised on the 'built in attractive subject' - children.

The Public Relations consultant employed for the SCF Week appeal in April 1991 summed up the difference between Save the Children and Oxfam in the following manner: SCF was 'worthy as opposed to being virile in the marketing sense'.

The criticisms levelled at SCF by other NGOs were effectively value judgements concerning what an NGO should and should not do, made on the basis of the strictures set out by the new NGO discourse. For them, SCF clearly typified an old-style charity, which communicated a vision of beneficence rather than empowerment and which sought to dispense charity not forge social justice. SCF's royal connection fuelled these criticisms. In response SCF stressed the worth of its work and its long-term perspective. Staff pointed out that SCF's work sought specifically to influence 'policy and practice' at the national and international level in line with children's rights.

Save the Children aims to maximise the impact that its relatively small resources can make in order to realise lasting benefits for children. Ideally, this means long-term work aimed at influencing policy and practice at national and international level and setting up or improving services on a sustainable basis. But Save the Children also has a clear humanitarian mandate to make appropriate, rapid response to mitigate the suffering which disaster and population movement inevitably cause. In addition to its long-term work overseas Save the Children is therefore substantially involved in emergency and refugee programmes. (SCF 1991c)

In fact the worth of SCF's overseas work was rarely criticised.

In 1991 one SCF fundraiser remarked that he had the distinct impression that moves were afoot to render SCF more campaigning in tone. SCF was beginning to adopt harder lines on issues and was actively trying to recruit a more committed public to support its work. However, this fundraiser was slightly sceptical about these developments. He claimed he could not imagine which issues SCF would choose since its concerns were not macro-political ones, but primarily orientated towards mother and child health and welfare. In 1990/1 SCF was clearly debating the merits of campaigning as against lobbying and the emphasis that should be placed on each by the Fund. It was significant that SCF opted to call its 1991 Africa appeal a 'campaign'.

iv Save the Children's development mission.

Save the Children was judged, internally, to be radical and innovative, at the forefront of development policy and practices. Staff were keen to assert that it shared the development discourse of the more overtly radical agencies such as Oxfam and Christian Aid.

In 1991 Save the Children represented its mission as working to achieve lasting benefits for children in accordance with Eglantyne Jebb's credo that all children 'beyond and above considerations of race, nationality or creed' should 'have the right to equal opportunities and equal choices in life' (SCF 1991f). All of SCF's work, be it in the UK or overseas, was said to have the same roots and aspire to the same goal. The principles and values of the organisation were reflected in its charter, which stressed equal opportunity for all. It was this strident humanitarian message which united the Fund. This was clearly enunciated by the UK Director at the 1991 APM.

Wherever Save the Children works whether it's on a housing estate in the UK, or in a shanty town in Peru, or with a refugee family in Africa, the same aims and principles guide that work. We work in areas where there is real need, but because we only have limited resources we always have to balance that need with the benefits our work would bring to other children and families. In other words we must use our money and our resources in the most cost effective way possible... poverty is relative... But throughout the world there are children who suffer the disadvantage from a whole range of different causes and much of our work is aimed at tackling these causes so that as many children as possible are able to achieve their potential.

The similarity of the work in the UK and overseas lent weight to this universalist credo. In 1991 both the APM and the Annual Report (1991k) reinforced this message by presenting project work at home and overseas together. In previous years they had been separated.

At the APM guest speakers from Newcastle (Cowgate) and Uganda (Kampala) told similar stories of project trials, tribulations and triumphs. The message was clear: needs may vary from region to region but the methods and the commitment of the Fund and its staff remained constant. The root of this commitment, and the central factor underlying Save the Children's success, was partnership,

sharing the experience and expertise with family, with communities and with other voluntary and statutory agencies as well as with government departments and decision makers. We're not trying to impose solutions or to direct peoples' lives - whatever the setting in which we work. We try to work with rather than for people and to work towards a situation where people can exercise real choice and control over their life and the kind of care and support they are able to offer their children. And it is in this way that we hope to make a reality of children's rights and achieve lasting benefits for children in whatever part of the world we're working in. (ibid.)
The new orthodoxy was enunciated, but at the level of community participation and partnership; empowerment was not mentioned. SCF discussed its commitment in the context of 'good practice', of building blueprints and models that would serve local communities the world over. The ideal of 'good practice' was etched into organisational discourse encompassing SCF's perceived relationship with its staff, its voluntary supporters and its partners.

Projects were described as sound investments achieving lasting benefits for the world's children. Save the Children's work was portrayed as pioneering, not service orientated (except, perhaps, in emergency situations where certain needs had to be met). By virtue of method and example - 'working with rather than for people' and 'seeking an involvement in their communities over a sustained period of time' - this work would have a sustained and broad impact. SCF's first hand experience and long-term involvement allowed it to speak with 'real authority' about the needs of children and the communities in which they lived.

In this context, Save the Children staff were not aiming to paint a picture of SCF as the trendiest or most outspoken of agencies (in contrast with War on Want or Oxfam) but rather as the most reliable and experienced of the British NGOs - attributable in part to its longevity. It was represented as an organisation that got things done, that was 'good', 'responsible', 'trustworthy' and irreproachable; it did not jeopardise the welfare of its beneficiaries for self-serving 'political' ends. It was the stable force in overseas development. At the 1991 APM, the Head of Finance offered a somewhat uninspiring, but perhaps apt analogy encapsulating the character of SCF's contribution as a development agency.

I concede that the public often shows a naivety when giving sometimes substantial sums which they wouldn't display, for instance, in the purchase of a pint of milk. We all know the places where we can obtain the freshest milk, and wouldn't dream of buying from someone we met casually in the street. Why then are people so ready to put donations in the hands of organisations they've never heard of, or know nothing about? Caveat emptor, to you non latin scholars is 'buyer beware', applies as much to charitable giving as to any other sphere of economic life. But if you're looking for a recommendation, I think I can safely say you won't find a 'fresher pint' than Save the Children.

So the reliability and quality of SCF's work was manifest in its caution. It prided itself in its good financial management, but also in its project provision. It valued its relationship
with donors and beneficiaries. SCF was portrayed as an organisation that was well managed and which implemented rigorous accounting procedures, safe in the knowledge that these were as important as the qualitative indices that evaluated its development work.

v Save the Children: projecting its role into the Nineties.

Save the Children may have been sure of its own worth and commitment, but it had niggling doubts as to whether this was being effectively communicated to the general public. The Fund believed itself to be well on target with certain sections of the population, namely the older or retired well-to-do suburban types, but felt that it was under-represented in other areas, mainly amongst generous young executives with families. In 1990/1 SCF's advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather (O & M) researched various aspects of image and profile with a view to the future, and SCF's potential development in the nineties.

In assessing Save the Children's profile in 1990, Ogilvy and Mather Advertising (O & M Advertising) isolated seven factors that could be of relevance to the Fund's image and market share: familiarity, trustworthiness, heritage, personal relevance, sphere of influence, effectiveness and distinctiveness. The research concluded that SCF scored high in three areas: familiarity - partly because of the logo, but mostly because of the Princess Royal - trustworthiness and heritage, but ambivalence was recorded in the arenas of personal relevance, effectiveness and distinctiveness. The alienating factor was judged to be Save the Children's association with the developing world. This was perceived to be its sole sphere of influence. SCF's UK work remained unacknowledged.

The involvement of the Princess Royal and the centrality of 'children' to SCF's work were viewed as assets, the latter especially provided an 'emotional hook'. For O & M Advertising, however, neither factor was powerful enough to engender the right response in the relevant categories (1990: 12-6).

The research took place in the context of looking for new advertising styles. O & M Advertising tested two advertising executions: one called 'Mother Love' and another in

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6 Ogilvy and Mather (O & M) was composed of several 'arms': one dealing with high profile campaign (above-the-line) advertising (O & M Advertising), another with direct mail advertising (O & M Direct) and another with public relations (O & M PR).
which Michael Crawford was piloted as the 'caring star' who could endorse SCF. The report concluded that

Showing someone who cares seems to be less motivating and powerful than producing an execution which generates that sense of care in the viewer. (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1990:40)

It suggested that the most successful advertising paths for SCF were those which encouraged substitution - putting yourself in someone's situation, transferral - putting the situation into a familiar environment, or comparison - drawing comparisons between different people. These recommendations were relevant because the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' appeal of 1991 which was prepared by O & M Advertising used precisely these techniques to generate public interest.

In early 1991 further research was conducted by Ogilvy and Mather Direct (O & M Direct) to address, more specifically, the brand image of SCF. O & M Direct argued that in an atmosphere of increased competition for resources, the successful charities would be those which sustained their traditional constituency while attracting new donors. Charities would have to cultivate distinction by evolving more effective brand identities. Their research showed that SCF was viewed as efficient, well organised, committed to 'helping people to help themselves' and positively apolitical - 'providing help wherever and whenever it is needed'. It was evaluated as an established and trusted charity which produced self-restrained advertising (for which the public were grateful) (Ogilvy and Mather Direct 1991:4, 13-5). In general SCF's image was good, and O & M Direct broke it down into its constituent parts:

Operationally:
- Practical
- Effective
- Campaigning (but not militant)
- Professional
- Established (but not 'old')
- Concerned with Third World projects (not UK)
- Apolitical
SCF had a warmer and softer image than other charities, most notably Oxfam and the NSPCC, it was less authoritarian, aggressive and political. SCF was said to have enormous, and as yet untapped, potential. It could appeal to a variety of groups ranging from 'Mrs Kindly' (the middle aged, female, 'feeler rather than a thinker') to the 'Big hearted Sun Reader' (traditionalist and chauvinist with narrow views).

SCF's distinction ultimately rested with its Royal patron. The report concluded that although SCF's brand profile was positive, it was weak. It suffered from being perceived as 'warm and woolly' rather than 'warm and purposeful' (Ogilvy and Mather Direct 1991: 23-4, 30). O & M Direct advised that:

> It is essential that SCF also cultivates and accentuates the "stronger", less sentimental, more practical, thinking and resolute side of its character. (By association, the Princess Royal currently lends a very effective - but worryingly, lone representation of these attributes to The Fund - relative to the main sources of brand imagery). (Ogilvy and Mather Direct 1991:31)

Respondents' opinions that SCF was a practical and effective organisation were not borne out by substantial knowledge of the organisation. So the public were not responding to SCF because they recognised its pioneering nature. The internal view of SCF as an agent of change - a catalyst with a broad and lasting impact on a wide range of communities - was clearly not being communicated to the general public. For O & M Direct it conflicted with the public's view of the Fund (1991: 31-2).

The report advised that, in the future, SCF should throw into prominence its ability to innovate and cause progress. It should cultivate the image of 'a proactive leader not a reactive follower', by emphasising the breadth, value, longevity and commitment of its work. It should also stress that it followed through its commitment *in situ*, ensuring *lasting benefits* for the communities (not only children) concerned. In particular the report suggested how the tone of communication could be altered (Ogilvy and Mather Direct 1991:33). A statement such as:

**Emotionally:**
- Warm
- Caring
- Concerned
- Maternal
- Effective in securing happy endings

(Ogilvy and Mather Direct 1991:17)
SCF believes in the rights of the child, providing professional care and support to help build better lives for children all over the world.

could be modified to impute a different kind of commitment, such as:

SCF upholds the rights of children everywhere, providing innovative and sustainable support with communities at home and around the world.

The report recommended that any changes should be effective at all levels. It advised greater use of 'informational spaces' (either shop spaces or Branch material or the media), stronger press campaigns and a more prominent role for the Public Affairs Department not only in the arena of public relations. It also suggested a reconsideration of the effectiveness of the logo7 (Ogilvy and Mather Direct 1991: 36-42).

These two pieces of research clearly influenced both the substance and the methods employed for the 1991 Africa appeal which is the focus of section two. The appeal sought new audiences, had a 'campaigning' or at least a proactive feel, united various Departments within the organisation and used a variety of communication techniques to get its message and the brand of SCF across.

There were other moves in 1991 to tackle the issues of greater corporate mobilisation and strategic planning. In April the first meeting of the Corporate Communications Group was convened. This Group was allocated the responsibility of discovering how SCF could communicate more effectively with the public: how it could 'bridge the gap' while simultaneously achieving distinctiveness. The pre-pitch research implemented by the various advertising agencies for the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' April appeal convinced SCF that this was a pressing issue8. The Corporate Communications Group was assigned the task of isolating suitable development issues which could bring the Fund to prominence and involve all Departments. SCF were promoting the belief that 'in unity there is strength'. The explicit agenda was to reunite the whole Fund, to break down divisions, so that all within the Fund, as one Director put it, would end up 'singing from the same hymn

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7 This recommendation was not followed up, and is ultimately unlikely to be, since the present logo both gets the message across (it looks like a child) and has a direct link to the original 'bambino' logo used by Eglantyne Jebb. It is therefore invested with a certain amount of history (Fig. 5.2).
8 The advertising agencies' findings confirmed that SCF 'merged' in the public's imagination with other development organisations.
book'. All this work, it was stressed, did not involve a reevaluation of SCF's mission, but rather derived from it. SCF's values, principles and work remained constant throughout this process which was a bid to popularise SCF's discourse. To unite the Fund was 'good practice' because the whole Fund would be united in a common task, which was, amongst other things, to bring their message more forcefully to the British public.

vi Save the Children and the question of imagery.

Making a reality of 'good practice' seemed to be a guiding philosophy for SCF and appeared to inspire many of the organisational changes that were taking place previous to and during 1991. The SCF Week 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign carried the marks of the reformations that preceded it.

As has already been noted, Save the Children was a large organisation composed of staff with a variety of roles and these professional groups were sometimes spoken of as conflictual. In particular, Fundraising and the Public Affairs Departments were often described as being at odds. The focus of this dissent was the issue of imagery. Each Department ostensibly had fairly stringent views about the types of images that were acceptable. Paradoxically for an organisation that supposedly prioritised fundraising over education, Save the Children was one of the very few organisations to have drafted guidelines on imagery.

For SCF (more precisely the Director of Public Affairs) the question of imagery was tackled within the unusual and broader context of Equal Opportunities and 'good practice'.

Equal Opportunities is good practice and good practice is Equal Opportunities. It's as simple as that, and that is actually what we have been working towards at Save the Children.

Indeed the question of imagery was raised in 1984 not by the Overseas Department but by the UK Department at the UK Child Care Department Staff Conference. Reputedly, it was agreed at this conference that the issue of racism should be examined in relation to the structure and the practice of the Fund (SCF 1987:8). The UK Department addressed the issue in the context of anti-discriminatory practice in the UK. It was argued that SCF had a duty to work towards reducing disadvantage and discrimination by
exploring its own practices in terms of staff appointments and opportunities, but also in the area of communication. SCF was asked to examine how its projects were run, how staff worked in the field but also how the work of the Fund was communicated to the 'outside' world.

A review working group was appointed - The Policy Development Group - to investigate SCF practice. It sought confirmation of its actions in the letter and spirit of Eglantyne Jebb's words, in particular her exhortation that the Fund should challenge all 'social evils' and that it should work 'beyond and above all considerations of race, nationality or creed' (SCF 1987: 7). So the work of the Fund was judged against these statements to see whether the Fund's practice was consistent with its own charter. Thereafter, the issues of staffing and imagery became a Fund-wide issue. The self-examination was extensive. The Policy Development Group gathered testimonies and evidence from people employed by the Fund, it observed the running of projects working in Britain, and consulted outside organisations on the issue. The aim was to develop a coherent and full Equal Opportunities policy for the future by interrogating what the implications might be for the Fund. 'Policy' was being drawn up to guide Save the Children 'practice'. The conclusions were written down in the report *Beyond and Above all considerations of race, nationality or creed*... which was ratified in 1987.

This report dealt with the different manifestations of racism in SCF, first of all in its institutional manifestations but also in the light of the way in which SCF appealed to a predominantly 'white' and 'middle-class' audience. It stated that the Fund should avoid representations or messages that robbed people of their dignity, or encouraged prejudice or stereotyping. It argued that SCF should always attempt to ensure that a balanced image was projected and use the opportunity to talk in depth about the work of the organisation, especially when working with the media. The report recognised that the Fund often used photographs of dire need - 'negative' images - and assented that sometimes this was unavoidable, but it asserted that these should always be balanced by more 'positive' images which 'emphasised the results after its (SCF's) intervention', the potential 'happy endings'
that O & M Direct referred to in 1991 (SCF 1987: 10-15, 28-9). The working group advised:

... that the Fund strives to achieve a balance in the material it produces and that no images are used which are unnecessarily demeaning to black and other ethnic minority group. 
... that images are used which emphasise the self-help training and long term development aspects of the work 
... that good practice is identified and disseminated throughout the Fund...
(SCF 1987: 30)

The report's recommendations were adopted as an issue of policy and as a direct result the Public Relations Department was renamed. The new Public Affairs Department had a new and more developed role. Specifically it was expected to deal with the media, attempting to project the issues underlying the Fund's work (SCF 1987:18). In addition a new Education Unit was created which had the role of providing 'more information to specific groups about the issues behind domestic and overseas SCF programmes and to improve understanding of the links between rich and poor countries' (SCF 1987: 29). This role had previously been taken on by the Fundraising and Public Relations Department. The first assignment given to the Education Officer was the drawing up image guidelines, applicable to journalists, editors, advertisers and photographers.

The guidelines produced in 1988 addressed the fact that Save the Children had persistently been accused of capitalising on the over-emotive resonances of its name. In particular it was criticised for utilising, almost exclusively, images of distressed or starving children in its fundraising material. The 1988 guidelines were framed within the anti-racist and Equal Opportunities policy of the Fund.

The Impact of Images Guidelines (SCF 1988a; Document 4.2) revolved around two key interrelated concepts: dignity and balance. By 'dignity' SCF meant that no representation (in words and images) should simply confirm the 'donor versus recipient' image of aid, where white benefactors employed by Save the Children were portrayed as giving copious handouts to helpless and hapless black victims. 'Balance' implied that all images had to accurately convey 'the spirit and diversity' of Save the Children's work (SCF 1988a; Document 4.2). The guidelines explicitly connected representation and intervention.
Images had to reflect at all times that SCF was committed to work with people, not for them, so subjects had to be depicted as actively engaged in their own development. The guidelines also advocated a certain amount of involvement on the part of the subjects in the process of representation. Subjects first and foremost had the right to choose anonymity. The guidelines stressed that all efforts had to be made to identify the subjects - preferably by name - and obtain contextual information on their life histories. In addition their words had to be related verbatim where possible, rather than being mediated by Save the Children (SCF 1988a; Document 4.2).

Clearly both Beyond and Above... and the Impact of Images Guidelines were the result of a widespread discussion among and within development charities about the implications of representation. However in drafting these documents SCF did not see the issue as resolved. The documents were a prelude to a more involved debate about Equal Opportunities, which started afresh in 1989 having received the consent of the Council.

By taking the issue of Equal Opportunities further, SCF hoped to yield three further policy documents - codes of practice - to ensure complete permeation, organisation wide, of the Equal Opportunities policy. The Director of Public Affairs explained:

"By a full policy I mean a policy that related to UK Child Care practice and a policy that related to employment and recruitment and a policy that related also to images. Because practice was very much related to images, obviously these are reflective of the work that we do."

Three of the six SCF Directors were charged with the responsibility for drafting these policy documents and three separate working groups were set up.

The Public Image and Presentation Group (the only one that concerns us here) was assigned the role of assessing practice in relation to written messages and visual images. The Group was carefully constituted to represent the interests of all those who habitually dealt with imagery within the Fund, including members from the Fundraising, the operational - UK and Overseas - Departments, as well as volunteers. The chair of the Public Image and Presentation Group was the Director of Public Affairs, at the time one of the two women Directors, and the only black Director at SCF. She felt that the group had to address all those parties that might be responsible for producing information about the
Fund and it had to represent the range of views. In order to be 'responsible' and set 'standards that the whole organisation could work by' it had to allow space for the full gamut of objections to be voiced. The process was not plain sailing; the Director of Public Affairs commented that this particular dusting made a lot of people cough, because most considered that 'very little further investigation would be needed'. It was conceived as a formality, an embellishment of the previous, 1988, guidelines.

But the Director of Public Affairs had other ideas. She commissioned a piece of 'in-house' research to investigate the prevalence of written guidelines or ethical codes of practice on imagery or any anti-discrimination documents among organisations dealing with the developing world or disability. Twenty eight voluntary organisations were consulted. The report found that only Oxfam among the development NGOs had written guidelines (Oxfam 1988; Document 4.1). Other development charities confirmed that they referred to the NGO-EC Liaison Committee guidelines (1989; Document 4.4) for a framework. This suggested that although most development NGOs spoke of the issue's crucial importance, they were content to work according to an informal consensus, an 'unofficial policy', rather than a document of inscribed policy. All, however, manifested an interest in the guidelines that SCF hoped to draw up. The report strongly advised SCF to take the issue further. It hinted that SCF could seize this opportunity to take a leading role in institutionalising a Code of Practice on imagery and, could in the future, perhaps offer its services to other NGOs in a consultative capacity.

To speed up discussion and to minimise dissent, but also to avoid producing guidelines by Committee - said to be 'fatal' - the codes of practice were initially drafted by the Public Affairs Department on the basis that it was they who had the most 'hands-on' experience. This draft was subsequently presented to the Group. It was hoped that it would 'convince

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9 Some groups investigated were chosen largely because of their similar profile to SCF, both in term of work and image. Others were chosen because they were prominent in a particular field, or because they depended on imagery for fundraising (for example those agencies which used child sponsorship exclusively to bring in money) (Roubicek 1989:4).

10 Oxfam emerged as having the most institutionally developed commitment, with equal opportunities training courses, guidelines and an active development education group.

11 Using consultative vetting procedures, ie: images had to pass through the more 'enlightened' departments/members of staff.

12 In fact a discussion of the use of guidelines was coordinated at the Africa Centre in London in March 1991 to discuss the use of the NGO-EC guidelines, and ended up suggesting more inter-agency cooperation on the issue.
people of something that they kn[ew] already'. During the process of consultation it became apparent that some sections within the Group felt that both the tone and content of the draft codes of practice were inappropriate. Adjectives such as 'governessy' and 'bossy' - interestingly applied to a female Director - were used to describe them. They were judged to be authoritarian rather than authoritative. Against its chair, the Group decided that the recommendations should be called 'guidelines' rather than 'codes of practice' because the latter term was too prescriptive. This renaming of the recommendations as 'guidelines' gave the illusion that staff had the right of dissent. This was seen by the Director of Public Affairs as typifying resistance to the seriousness of the issue of representation. For some it was still marginal to SCF's practical concerns. To ease their path of approval, the Director of Public Affairs made an issue of the guidelines' presentation.

You know they had to look good, they had to appeal to everyone, they had to be easy to understand, they had to be something that people would actually want to use, they had to be accessible ... people had to welcome them.

The resulting guidelines *Focus on Images* (SCF 1991j; Document 4.3), designed in black and white with photographic illustrations, contrasted strongly with the shorter more roughly produced *Impact on Images Guidelines* (1988a; Document 4.2). Before and during the process of production of the guidelines the Public Affairs staff, in particular its Director and the Head of Publications, were considered to be the 'image guardians'. It was a position neither of them relished; the Head of Publications complained that 'it ain't no fun being a gatekeeper'. The purpose of *Focus on Images* was to diffuse this role, so that everybody could appreciate 'what constitutes an image that reflects our work, so we want everybody to have that responsibility'. For the Director of Public Affairs the remit of these new guidelines was much wider. They tackled the issues of representation and intervention in the light of corporate strategy.

We're saying that we have a certain way of working, we work with people not for people and that needs to be expressed in our communication. It says that these guidelines cover all communication not just, you know, magazines, newspapers, it covers Branch talks, it covers the production of audio-visual presentation, it covers seminars, it covers conferences. It also makes clear who is responsible for making sure that the things

13 The other two Equal Opportunities Working Groups were permitted to call their findings 'codes of practice'.
suggested in here happen ... it allocates responsibility for the way images are chosen. ... And so the guidelines provide a structure, we hope, which promotes good practice and arrests bad practice, and provides mechanisms that call people accountable. As I said I want people to be responsible and to be accountable about this.

The guidelines were broadly divided into three parts.

The first dealt with how people in the developing world were portrayed; they had to be represented with dignity and accuracy, avoiding caricature and stereotype. The next specifically addressed Equal Opportunities in relation to disability, asserting that the disabled had to be depicted as part of their families and their communities and had to be spoken of in that light. The last section considered photographic practice. The guidelines examined the photographic process in its entirety, both the ethics of taking photographs (getting consent, information, establishing a balance) as well as their subsequent use (no cropping, tampering, inaccurate or decontextualised information). The issue was that of *accuracy* in representation. Bad representation and bad practice were said to diminish the subjects of photography by demonstrating mawkish sentimentality, by patronising, or by cropping/editing in a way which distorted the 'accurate' situation.

In this new system, the responsibility for bad representation ultimately fell on the line manager, although doubts about certain photographs could be aired organisationally as well.

Public Affairs held that these guidelines did not ban or promote any particular kind of image, neither did they specify that particular types of photograph could not be used, they simply stated that no image could be used 'out of context'. According to the Director of Public Affairs, the aim was not to reduce creativity but to make people more vigilant, to force them to consider all the angles and to make an informed choice which reflected not only the image guidelines but also the breadth of Save the Children's work. It was a question of accuracy first and foremost, then of context and balance.

These considerations were especially significant when using potentially 'negative' images. Balance had to be secured within publications - by choosing several different kinds of photographs, or by using text and photographs - but also within the photographic archive, so that a representative sample of peoples' 'community of life' was always available. It was said to be no longer a question of 'positive' versus 'negative'. The Director of Public
Affairs asserted that both 'negative' and 'positive' images were potentially boring and stereotypical, adding that the 'smiling happy black child' was as much a form or representation to be avoided as the 'starving Ethiopian'. It was a question of confronting and wrestling with the ethics of representation to ensure the circulation of a more appropriate, 'total image', of the Fund and its work.

I think the ideal is that everybody working in the Fund has an understanding of how you've got to think about the imagery you're using. Think again, don't just rely on just your own opinion, talk to other people about it, on the understanding that everybody uses a picture differently and to use it with ... appropriate text, captions, article, whatever it may be.

At the beginning of 1991 there was considerable enthusiasm about the possibilities of the guidelines and suggestions that they should be 'launched' internally and externally. Launching them externally would raise the issue 'in an important way', to offer guidance to others as to how images could do 'good' as well as 'harm'. It was even thought that a press conference may provide some publicity for Save the Children in this instance. In the event they were only launched within the Fund, with members of the Public Affairs Department presenting and explaining their use to members of other Departments. It was thought that too much publicity could prove counterproductive and might provoke criticism. There were fears that it might be seen as an attempt for SCF to put themselves on a pedestal as the 'perfect image people', thereby antagonising other NGOs and anti-racist organisations (who felt SCF was middle of the road and a new recruit to such issues). So the Press Office decided to 'break it' to the media in a different way. This resulted in an article in *The Times* (11.03.92) and one in *Journal of the Institute of Public Relations*. It was hoped that this 'softly, softly' approach would make it easier for SCF to monitor the guidelines' dissemination while offering a greater opportunity for reevaluation and redrafting afterwards.

Public Affairs staff anticipated a cool reception in certain Departments. I attended a presentation to the Personnel and Administration Department and this seemed very amicable. There were reputedly more problems with the Fundraising Department where a certain amount of confrontational rhetoric persisted. Fundraisers did sometimes claim that

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14 It resurrected for her, a different kind of stereotype of black people, often seen in Malibu advertisements, 'happy blacks, happy to work, happy to dance, happy to party'.
the guidelines were unduly restrictive, outlawing some of the most effective images. This opinion was equally held by a staff member of Ogilvy and Mather Advertising (SCF's advertising agency).

Their guidelines are actually pretty strict if you follow them. If you follow them properly you would only show happy-go-lucky Africans having a great time in a refugee camp which you don't see very often. ... You know you can't show people starving, you can't show this, everyone has to look like they're being looked after ... you have to sort of circumvent that slightly.

This O & M Advertising staff member protested (to me) that he could not raise money by showing fit and healthy people. But he also stated that the difficulty lay not in SCF's guidelines but in its personality clashes. There's a lot of politics going on there and a lot of sensitivities that don't want to be trampled on'.

According to the Head of Publications, it was difficult to convince both fundraisers and Branch members that they 'were not simply going off at the deep end' or producing guidelines with the explicit purpose of curbing the creativity or autonomy of these two groups. She remarked 'it would be much nicer if people really believed in them ... if they really would take these guidelines seriously and read them properly instead of saying they inhibit them'.

It seemed to me that the Fundraising staff were as adept as Public Affairs staff at negotiating the image guidelines. Scratching beneath the rhetoric of opposition, it soon emerged that those who regularly implemented the guidelines, be it Fundraising or Public Affairs, were able to utilise them to satisfy their own needs.

The guidelines were, in fact, most explicitly targeted at external organisations with whom SCF worked, such as advertising agencies, designers and corporate sponsors, as well as the volunteers. For the former, the guidelines worked to safeguard the integrity and the logo of the Fund. For volunteers it was a means of conveying how the Fund felt about images in order to steer the Branches away from using 'negative images' in their communication material. For the Head of Publications it was a taxing task. Conferences and workshops organised for Branches resulted in dissent. Branch members clearly preferred to use the tried and tested method of showing unqualified need in graphic detail. By all accounts the Branches remained sceptical: 'They're the front line, the people trying
to raise funds, and they've ... not bought this whole images thing at all'. This reluctance was not entirely surprising since most charities describe their voluntary and regional staff as less sophisticated and radical than those at Headquarters.

For the Director of Public Affairs this concern with representation was definitively not a passing phase. It was a crucial aspect of SCF's work which reaffirmed its integrity and commitment.

I can't seem to get it through that these image guidelines really do come straight from Save the Children's principles, and goals, and objective, and aims. They're not just something Public Affairs dreamed up, it was a cross-Fund initiative.

The guidelines served to remind those within the organisation that all the images and the words used to describe SCF's work should reflect the principles and values behind that work.

VII Save the Children and imagery: principles in practice.

Even though the image guidelines were not launched internally until November of 1991, they had been ratified by Council a year earlier and were, therefore, formally in operation. The guidelines were prescriptive in the sense that they had to be upheld by every member of SCF staff once passed by the Council.

For the Public Affairs staff the guidelines simply inscribed within the organisation's consciousness what they had been considering for years. For the Photo-librarian whose role it was to commission photographers and maintain an 'active' store of accurate photographs, the guidelines vindicated his practice of getting rid of those that no longer had contemporary relevance, or that were improperly captioned.

There were several other procedures used to regulate photographic practice. SCF hired known and trusted photographers. The Photo-librarian claimed that he only employed photographers who were in agreement with the spirit of the guidelines (some actually acted as consultants during their drafting). He encouraged photographers to 'merge' as much as possible with the local population, to respect their subjects (particularly their right to refuse being photographed) and at all times take accurate rather than manipulative pictures.
We do ask photographers not to produce artificial situations purely for the sake of the camera because ... you're basically violating the rights of kids and the people in the pictures. ... It's important to try to be as honest as possible in your use of pictures. ... And I think photographers have got to just be aware that they should be affecting the situation of photography as little as possible.

So the integrity of the photograph depended on the photographer. Part of the reason behind this was SCF's formalised consent procedure and its use of a photographic contract. Photographers had to obtain both the relevant information and consent. All these procedures were enacted to ensure honesty and accuracy in images. Conversely it depended on SCF knowing the photographers, on owning the images and safeguarding the contract. This combination precluded indigenous photographers from being used. The Photo-librarian remarked that this could not easily be defended under SCF's Equal Opportunities policy.

The Fund's formal consent procedure involved alerting subjects to the fact that their image might be used. It was the photographer's responsibility to obtain consent. 'Consent' meant specifically that SCF was entitled to 'low profile use', in other words the images taken would be eligible for publication in SCF materials (in-house publications). Problems arose when the same images were required for 'high profile use', for instance in national posters, or national press advertising. Certainly when there was significant temporal and geographical displacement, the reaffirming of consent was impractical, even impossible. The Photo-librarian admitted that it was only the British subjects whose rights were vigilantly policed since their relationship was less mediated and distanced. Furthermore there was, with them, the real possibility of redress if they felt misrepresented. Subjects overseas had no real, or subsequent, control over their images. The ambiguities of this consent procedure were not lost on the Photo-librarian.

You have more chance of going back and getting that person's further consent when necessary - you know physically it's more likely (in Britain). You can go back to a project in Newcastle and ... (a) it's fairly certain that you're going to find the people, (b) it's fairly certain that they're going to understand what it's going to be used in. If you've taken a picture of some women in an African country or whatever ... and you want to go back and check on the use of that photograph in a television programme, in a *Panorama* programme, you've got the problem of going back to find that person or their parents or guardian ... that maybe extremely difficult, then you've got the problem of does that

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15 The contract demanded that SCF have control of the after use of the photographic material.
16 SCF did not have a programme of encouraging travelling staff or field staff to take photographs for the Fund. This was in contrast to Oxfam which encouraged and trained its staff to have photographic skills (taking and developing film) as well as supplying them with equipment. This contrast was claimed to be a fact of historical circumstance on both parts (Oxfam can process its own film).
person really appreciate what you mean when you say 'Can we use this picture in a Panorama programme?' Panorama may have no significance to them - so are you really getting their agreement?

In such reflections, it was possible to see the practical implications and effects of power in representation as discussed in chapter four. Consent procedures provided an ethical and humanitarian framework ostensibly based on a notion of partnership. They did, however, beg more intractable questions, concerning the politics of representation: who decided what was appropriate or accurate, and for whom did they did so.

The 'delicate chain of responsibility' that allowed photographs to be used was essentially composed of SCF employees: it started with the photographer, and then passed to a combination of the Photo-librarian (who gave an opinion on the overall tone and verified its technical and artistic worth) and the Departments concerned with its use, usually in consultation with staff from Public Affairs. Images were said to be assessed on whether they portrayed the subjects in a 'fair light', whether they achieved a 'balance' and were 'accurate'. For Public Affairs staff the use of each image depended on 'context', 'interpretation' and 'appropriateness'. Ultimately, the aim was that each image had been through a series of negotiations and discussions to secure that even if there was no absolute agreement, those using the images were aware of the its possibilities and origins. Most people within the Fund denied that images could be inherently 'positive' and 'negative': suitability depended on their use. The key principle was accuracy.

On this point Public Affairs and Fundraising staff were united. Taking the example of an 1985 image of the Ethiopian famine, an Appeals Fundraiser explained under what circumstances it could be used. It would not be acceptable to give it the caption 'this child is now benefiting from Save the Children's work' because that was untrue. But SCF could justifiably say 'this is an example of a ... feeding programme that Save the Children wants to undertake in the current famine'. This did not claim that a feeding programme was in place but it was an example of what SCF hoped would be achieved in that region. The photograph had to be a 'truthful' or 'accurate' representation of a supplementary feeding programme in a famine situation.

The mental gymnastics behind this conception of 'truth' came to some staff more automatically than others.
It sounds very much like scholasticism, it really does, I mean ... how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, but that's the problem when you're dealing with something that does not tangibly exist. There's not a file in the photo library that says 'good photos' ... 'usable in any context' so...

The tortuous logic surrounding 'truth' and 'falsehood' in visual images was reputedly too complicated for the staff at O & M Direct. An SCF Appeals Fundraiser complained that they persistently failed to understand this simple concept. At the time of interviewing, the O & M Direct staff allocated to the account were new and had failed to go through the proper procedures to vet certain photographs. They were proposing to use a 1985 famine photograph with its previous caption as an example of how feeding camps could aid children on the road to recovery. According to the SCF Appeals Fundraiser, this was unacceptable since it transgressed the guidelines. First, SCF had no refugee camps and second, SCF were not claiming that anyone was on the road to recovery. The Appeals Fundraiser bemoaned the fact that he had to constantly check what the advertising agency was doing. He qualified this by saying once these blips had been ironed out, O & M Direct were a very effective agency.

There were other areas of dissent within the Fund, between the Fundraisers and Public Affairs staff. One Appeals Fundraiser was bemused as to why his work had to be so policed. He said he would gladly amend an advertisement or change an image if an Overseas or Public Affairs staff member objected to it on the grounds that it was factually inaccurate. He would not accept criticism, however, if Public Affairs required changes in tone or emphasis on the basis of personal opinion. His role was to raise funds, and in his view he knew the best way to do that (he had the figures to prove it). Although he started the interview by saying 'on the other side of the building there are people who hate just about everything we do', he retracted this statement afterwards. He conceded that relations had warmed in 1991 and a modus vivendi had been reached with greater communication and mutual respect flowing between the two Departments. Both asserted that it was important to keep the dialogue going, to debate the issues, and most probably, to agree to differ.
The greatest sticking point between the two Departments was press advertising, which contained some of SCF’s most public images. SCF mainly advertised in the press on the basis of what are called ‘20 doubles’ - the slim rectangular spaces normally used by charity advertisers. Fundraisers used distressed space advertising because it was cheaper (‘distressed space’ means last minute availability). The success of these press advertisements were assessed on the basis of return not response - ie: financial cost versus return - aiming for a ratio of income to expenditure of 3:1. When Public Affairs sought to criticise Fundraising’s work it was usually these advertisements that were referred to, partly because according to one Public Affairs staff member, they remained boring and predictable.

In 1990/1 SCF used four ‘creative themes’ for their press advertisements: ‘famine’ (Fig. 5.3) (which functioned on the basis of an early warning system, warning of the impending famine unless something was pledged), ‘immunisation’ (Fig. 5.4), ‘oral rehydration’ (Figs. 5.5, 5.6, 5.7) and ‘refugees’ (Fig. 5.8). These themes were rotated so that they remained ‘fresh’ and achieved a high level of response. The plan was to keep using them until they were exhausted.

For the SCF fundraisers the format of the press advertisements was very restrictive, offering too little space for information or innovation. These advertisements contained three major elements: the headline containing a proposition, the photograph - the hook - and the coupon, which guaranteed return. The visual image, in particular, had to draw the reader's attention from other items on the newspaper page towards the advertisement. It had to have some form of emotional pull. For SCF fundraisers this meant that it would most likely be a ‘negative’ but accurate image, preferably a portrait of a child, ideally with some form of eye contact. The advertisement would also contain some ‘body text’, normally short, succinct and resonating with the initial proposition announced by the headline, of the sort ‘will you give...?’ or ‘this will do..’ (Figs. 5.2-6).

The press advertisements were designed so that a reader could proceed from the headline to the photograph and thence straight to the coupon, having understood the ‘need’ and her/his
part in its resolution. The coupon included financial suggestions to nudge respondents towards a particular order of donation. For SCF fundraisers this was not alchemy, but a fusion of pragmatics and psychology. The tricks were familiar to all charities: 'there's no magic wand to be waved to get it right, we just take whatever's available'.

The objections levelled at these press advertisements by Public Affairs revolved around their lack of information, their oversimplification of the issues, as well as the repetitive use of certain images (Figs. 5.5-7). Public Affairs and Overseas Departments deemed that the frequent depictions of lone, and often distressed children, contrasted too starkly with SCF's development discourse which emphasised empowerment and community participation. The images were judged to be unrepresentative of both the people of the developing world and SCF's development work.

The fundraisers answered quite simply that the expectations of the Public Affairs and Overseas Departments were unrealistic, remarking that they never seemed to grasp the simple idea that fundraising, and communicating with the general public, required compromise. Fundraising had to involve people who were fundamentally less informed, and arguably more indifferent to the issues, than the people addressing them. According to an Appeals Fundraiser donors wanted simple, arresting messages and easy solutions.

We cannot tell the story of Save the Children in a twenty double ad. So the best I can do is say there's going to be a famine, give us some money because we're going to do this and there's people who try to change the copy and say 'well put in we're working with local communities, and we're working in partnership'. What does that mean? I mean you're reading a thing about famine, what does local communities and, ... local partners mean? ... If you're Mrs Bloggs ... the last thing you're going to be thinking is Tm glad they're working with local partners, because that's really important in long-term sustainability'. What the hell does sustainability mean to these people? ... All these terms are meaningless, there are knowing-words.

According to this Appeals Fundraiser it was clear that SCF needed to address the public at their level of understanding. Save the Children was not in 'the business of saving healthy, wonderful children' but children in need. This was the work the public wanted to support and to present alternative images would appear dishonest. He was bemused as to why other Departments were prepared to go to extremes to avoid using certain words, which though accurate, were deemed to be offensive. To prevaricate over terminology, and to
censor vocabulary to such an extent seemed to him a waste of effort. He described a typical instance.

The amazing thing is I go to these meetings every Friday morning where people are telling me there are people starving, and there's people who don't have enough food ... whose food is going to run out by such and such a date, and I write a press ad on it and they're all going 'You can't say that!'. I mean wait a minute.

The funniest thing I've ever seen is 'Sorry you can't use the word starvation', 'Why not?', 'Well because then it portrays these people as being poor and dependent', 'Well these people are poor and dependent'. So we can't lie to people and ... say that these people aren't, at the same time if people think you're knocking down the imagery by saying these people ... do need food supplies, well then there's no point doing a campaign on it ... people aren't going to give this because they care. "Oh! that's terrible these ... dignified fabulous people, they're not really asking me for a handout, but I'll give one anyway'. People don't work that way.

The conflict was ascribed to different interpretation of the guidelines and subtle deviations in the discourse of truth.

Fundraisers obeyed the letter of the guidelines, they upheld 'accuracy' and 'truth', but their values were lodged in pragmatics. Fundraisers freely admitted that they frequently resorted to images that could be described as 'negative', but they insisted that these images faithfully represented the effects of famine/disease on children. These images were used to reflect the urgency, or need, or the uniqueness of a situation. They reinforced the message of the advertisement encouraging the donor to 'do something now, because these people need it now, these people...can't wait'. According to the Appeals Fundraiser a bleak image, accompanied by a message of hope was the most effective means of inspiring a relatively uninformed audience in a small space.

No press advertisement could hope or seek to deconstruct the complex issues relating to development; this was the role of other Departments. If they were as effective as the Fundraising Department at promoting their messages, then their alternative interpretation would surely get across. For the Appeals Fundraiser the choice was simple: 'the bottom line is I couldn't run an advertisement that said "Save the Children needs your money for this particular project please give", because people need to be motivated'. But this also required that Fundraising staff steered clear of the 'really horrible' images, since these were said to 'switch people off'. Respondents had to be encouraged to hope for a better future for the children by being comforted that their contributions would have a tangible effect.
For Public Affairs, however, it was the spirit of the guidelines rather than the letter that had to be defended. The root of the guidelines was SCF's commitment to the human subject and dignity of the poor. Public Affairs staff wanted to institute greater democracy in representation and to convey this through their images and messages (an ambitious and unattainable goal).

Several sites of contestation arose during 1991. One involved a Direct Mail pack produced by SCF. Direct Mail packs were usually said - by Fundraising and Public Affairs - to offer a more 'positive' picture of the developing world since packs had greater opportunity to involve the donor in a human 'story'. In 1991, a Direct Mail pack containing a sachet of oral rehydration salts was sent on a cold mailing (to people who were not regular donors) and brought in significant donations. Fundraising pronounced it a great success. The pack contained a letter 'from' Nicholas Hinton to the donor which claimed 'The 10p sachet of rehydration salts in this envelop is all that keeps Shireena from a death that will claim 5 million children this year'. Or as the Appeals Fundraiser put it, the letter proposed that 'oral dehydration could save children's lives at little cost to you'. For Public Affairs staff the solution it offered to the problems of the developing world were simplistic and misleading. They were concerned as to the long-term effects of this representation. fundraisers, on the other hand, justified the creative conception. The pack was very powerful and ultimately optimistic, both about the future and what the donors could engineer. Moreover it obeyed the guidelines, it was 'technically true'.

We've got complaints ... from Overseas ... they're afraid we're oversimplifying the situation ... so we try to be as accurate as possible in saying here's a very specific focus on the work that we do. ... There is a simple solution to a very big problem in this respect ... I don't think we make promises ... and anyone would be a fool if he thought that 'OK the child has the sachet they will live forever'. I mean some children will need a sachet, some of them will need five, some who have five will die, some who have one will die, some who have one will live. ... So you have to ... find what is accurate, but which at the same time isn't biting off any more than anybody can chew.

Typically the tensions between Public Affairs and Fundraising resulted in conflicting definitions of the 'truth'. Public Affairs suggested that the 'truths' being disseminated by the fundraisers were the wrong ones, or feared that their persuasiveness created the wrong perception of the developing world. There was a need to balance these images and
messages, with those that did not overly empower the respondent or appeal to the emotions rather than the intellect.

During 1991 Public Affairs staff put their beliefs to the test. They produced a press advertisement 'in-house', using technical advice from the Fundraising Department. The Head of Publications christened it the 'rad ad' (Fig. 5.9). The press advertisement focussed on the effects of war on children. The image was of a Mozambican child covered in bandages, with a bruised and bandaged face, sitting on steps looking forlorn. The image used was old and the Director of Public Affairs remarked 'let's hope he's out of his bandages by now, it was taken a long time ago'. Nevertheless the image was judged to be appropriate, accurate and more interesting than the usual images of children in distress. It 'illustrated a real situation, a real child'. In using such an images, Public Affairs were hoping to prove that the guidelines did not discount certain types of images, as long as they were accurate.

The Appeals Fundraiser I spoke to liked the image. According to him it was a photograph which moved the viewer on a 'really boring subject, war-traumatised children'. The child seemed to be sustaining a 'very adult head wound' and had a body that looked like it had been through 'boot camp'. The problem was more its lack of originality. Even if it summed up the 'feeling' of the advertisement, it had been used several times by SCF and Oxfam17 and had become almost a stereotype of unconventionality.

The Appeals Fundraisers was equally equivocal about the text; it was too 'rational'. He cited this as the reason for the advertisement's apparent lack of success (though it only featured in a few publications The Guardian and The New Statesman). The underlying message that 'children shouldn't have their childhood stolen by adult wars' was too thoughtful, and contained no proposition for the reader, no 'way in'. The Appeals Fundraiser would have included a more direct challenge, such as 'help us fight the effects of war on children'. According to him this would have clarified the course of action the

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17 It was featured in a programme made by Oxfam for BBC 2's Open Space which looked at the ethics of fundraising. So to some extent there was consensus on the 'radical' appropriateness of this particular image.
respondent was expected to take. The copy that Public Affairs had produced only asked her/him to agree.

So the results were not as favourably portrayed by the fundraisers as they were by Public Affairs staff. This was, nevertheless, a significant moment in that it proved that Public Affairs and Fundraising staff could collaborate productively and thereby establish some middle ground. It was clearly not a simple choice of populism versus accuracy/truth. These were criteria to be addressed in all communication materials. These changes were related to the review process that had been initiated by the initial guidelines. The Director of Public Affairs summed up the changes in 1991 by commenting that 'five years ago Save the Children was a very different organisation to what it is now.'

In this section I aimed to set the scene for the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign by delineating the institutional, discursive and historical context of Save the Children Fund in 1991. I started by considering Save the Children's structure and organisation and its position in relations to its competitors. I found SCF to be a large and bureaucratic organisation: one which adhered to a discourse of 'good practice', but which was represented by others as being fundamentally conservative. I examined this accusation in the context of SCF's discourse of development and found that SCF aligned itself with the new orthodoxy. Indeed I found that SCF, an agency frequently criticised for both for its imagery and for its 'old style' approach, was one of the few development charities to produce guidelines on representational practices. So in this section I represented SCF as a complex institution which confounded simple descriptions, since its ascribed conservatism led to seemingly progressive acts such as producing Focus on Images. Hence from this description SCF emerged as an institution which was contemplating change and embracing new ways of instituting 'good practice', particularly in the arena of representation.

In section two I describe how Ogilvy and Mather's research findings and the new guidelines influenced representational practice during the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign. To do this I chronicle the decisions, negotiations and compromises that were
necessary during the selection, production and launching of this unprecedented Africa campaign.


The crisis in Africa: the campaign pitches.

The first report of SCF's unusual decision to orchestrate a high profile appeal - a 'campaign' in 1991 appeared in the advertising magazine *Campaign* (13 March 1991; see also *PR Weekly* 4 April 1991). By then, Save the Children had already made the unorthodox move of asking four advertising agencies to pitch for this account. *Campaign* reported:

> It [SCF] feels an above-the-line approach is needed to develop a hardhitting radical campaign to make the appeal a success in the wake of other charities such as Comic Relief, which is raising money for people hit by the African famine. (*Campaign* 13 March 1991)

According to the Save the Children Fund the reason for the 'campaign' was 'the need': the impending famine in Africa. By means of press releases and articles, Save the Children could prove that it had been persistently warning of the impending famine since the autumn of 1990. It now felt that the moment had come to organise a 'campaign' because both the public and the powers-that-be had simply failed to take notice. Unsurprisingly, the Gulf War had overshadowed the issue of Africa and continuous warnings to governments and the world community (on behalf of all the NGOs and 'other monitoring organisations') were having no apparent effect. It was up to SCF to take action.

According to Save the Children, some 20 million people in five African countries were facing severe food shortages. Over half of them were children. The scale of the famine far superseded that of 1984/5. Sudan in particular was already reporting the inevitability of widespread deaths.

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18 SCF used the word 'campaign' rather loosely. It denoted a higher profile and more concerted appeal, but did not signify the kind of lobbying endeavour characteristic of organisations such as Greenpeace or Oxfam.
SCF's creative brief to the four advertising agencies stressed that any advertising campaign should portray the population of these African countries as victims of circumstances beyond their control. The coincidence of environmental, social and political factors had overridden these peoples' valiant efforts and survival strategies. More importantly the campaign should not encourage a 'Band Aid' phenomenon where large amounts of money were raised on the promise that this would provide 'magic solutions' to the problems. The campaign had to emphasize long-term solutions and the benefits of development, rather than concentrate solely on relief efforts (SCF 1991g: Appendix B).

The campaign had to coincide with the start of the Save the Children Week (SCF Week) forecast for 28 April to 4 May in 1991. A regional affair, Save the Children Week was aimed at the Branches and hoped to raise general income. Before 1991, the fundraising events and the house to house collection yielded an annual income of approximately £600,000. (SCF 1991g: Appendix B). In 1990, SCF produced a media pack which outlined the 'dos' and 'don'ts' and included a count-down sheet that suggested how Branch organisers could obtain maximum coverage for their local activities. This was circulated again in 1991. Initially the proposed theme for SCF Week 1991 was 'Make a Donation, Make a Difference'. Indeed the pack was complete and ready to be sent out by the time the Fund decided to plan an Africa campaign. Some of the SCF Week materials were dispatched to Branches with a 'stop press' warning them of the imminent arrival of a new Africa-focussed mailing.

The Fund set itself quite a task by opting to launch an 'Africa campaign'. One problem was repetitiveness. Each year since 1987 had seen the launch of an Africa appeal, either by individual NGOs (including SCF) or on behalf of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). Another problem was familiarity. According to most NGOs, Africa is a blind spot for the British public, it is synonymous with famine. So in 1991, the issue of 'Famine in Africa' was said to be tired and over-exposed because appeals for Africa had lost their urgency. The Fund's campaign was planned in the wake of other high profile appeals, notably the DEC 'Crisis in Africa' appeal in January and February and the Comic Relief
appeal in late February. It was also in danger of being overshadowed by the Gulf War and the Kurds issue (SCF 1991g: Appendix B).

In addition, the decision to inaugurate a special appeal had been very sudden. The Head of Publications remarked that 'when the need in Africa became so clear' that they decided to restructure SCP Week 'all hell broke loose'. The advertising agencies were presented with a brief at the end of February for a campaign that had to be planned and executed by April. This left neither the Fund nor the advertising agencies time to develop a truly imaginative 'campaign'. There was also the question of resources. The budget for the campaign was a very modest £225,000, which only allowed £150,000 to be spent on advertising.

The Fund presented each of the four advertising agencies pitching for the account with a copy of the creative brief and *Focus on Images* (1991j: Document 4:3). The 'overall objective' of the campaign was outlined in the following way.

**Overall Objective**
To create a campaign to launch an appeal at the start of Save the Children week to raise £2.5 million for Save the Children's famine relief work in Africa. The creative theme for the appeal must be *energizing* and *provoke action*, amongst both existing supporters and amongst a broad and diverse group, hitherto untouched by Save the Children appeals. (SCF 1991g: Appendix B) (my emphasis)

The campaign had 'to provoke a wide range of people to make a donation by bringing home the human scale of the famine in Africa'. The financial target of £2.5 million was unprecedented for an SCP Week.

Each of the four advertising agencies proposed a distinctive solution. They had to raise the issue of famine in Africa and a great deal of money. Interestingly, three out of the four chose participative - conceptual - campaigns which involved participants giving things up, rather than relying exclusively on the impact of visual imagery. One SCF fundraiser explained this unusual trend in the following manner. According to him the advertisers were aware that pictures of 'starving Africans' were no longer sufficiently arresting to inspire donors, nor acceptable to NGOs. To use them would diminish their chances of winning the account. Such suspicions, he felt, had been reinforced by the content of *Focus on Images*. At the same time, he also thought that advertisers had a hard time conceiving how 'positive' images and messages could be made novel or motivating.
It's really a challenge to use positive images and convey the urgency of the situation when people are dying of starvation, you know. And we actually have said ... in times of emergency and famine that images can be used that we wouldn't use normally. But even so it's a difficult path to tread.

One advertising agency proposed a type of food tax, getting supermarkets and food chains to ask people to pay an additional amount, say 10p (or more), at the point of sale. SCF liked the idea but felt that it was impracticable given the time constraints. Another suggestion was a personal tax - a 'swearbox' - whereby families would pay every time they did something 'naughty'. The box would achieve comparative 'good' with all the money raised. Here, too, time was a factor although the workings of this scheme seemed a little circuitous, and slightly dubious. It associated giving with guilt and made donating a form of moral atonement.

The only agency to propose a campaign based on visual imagery suggested a tactic that was judged so outrageous that it was quickly incorporated into SCF's organisational mythology. According to the Director of Public Affairs, the advertising agency in question had prefaced their proposal with a long speech about how they realised that Save the Children did not want to use stereotypical images. They added that they supported this because they knew that these types of images made people 'turn the page'. What they were suggesting would be compelling and explosive precisely because it would prevent the public from doing this. They then presented SCF with a poster containing a visual representation of a plate, a knife, a fork and a 'flattened child' with the message 'In parts of Africa, Children are eating themselves'. This referred to the fact that in conditions of extreme starvation the human body is forced to break down and consume its own cells for nourishment. The visual in this instance was a 'mock up', but the advertising agency suggested that the eventual representation would be drawn from a photograph of an emaciated baby.

The Director of Public Affairs said that she was appalled and that her anger and frustration had almost moved her to tears. It confirmed her worst suspicions concerning the insensitivity of advertising agencies and their supposed audiences towards the plight of

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19 The agency in question was Abbott, Mead, Vickers SMS, the advertising agency which had already achieved notoriety for the 'dead dogs' and 'hanging horses' representations they used for their RSPCA press advertisements (Campaign 23.11.90, 30.11.90).
others and the dignity of their struggle. Clearly no significant inroads had been made by the image guidelines. What kind of messages would this proposal disseminate about the people of Africa and black people in this country? How could the advertising agency consider this to be acceptable?

The Fundraisers were more pragmatic in their objections. They claimed that they could see the logic, but were uncertain as to the advantages of 'slapping the reader round the face'. Some thought that as a one-off fundraiser this could be the best ticket because of the shock content. Others felt that such a campaign might, on the contrary, impart such 'an overwhelming sense of hopelessness' that it would provoke disgust rather than compassion and alienate the reader. It clearly contravened the guidelines because it demeaned the subject, resorted to stereotypes and reinforced the image of 'Africa-as-basket-case'. Fundraising and Public Affairs were also of the opinion that this brutish confrontational approach might be a slippery slope. It was already at odds with the identity and image of the Fund, so where would it lead in the long-term?

The proposal was eventually eliminated by the Focus on Images guidelines. Many commented that, in general, the pitching had been instructive, and that some of the techniques could be used in the future.

The pitch that won was placed by Ogilvy and Mather Advertising (O & M Advertising).

The central theme of this proposal was 'Skip Lunch and give what you would have spent on lunch to Save the Children'. The reasons given for O & M Advertising's success varied not only according to the loyalties of the respondents, but also on the timing of the interview.

Initially SCF's Head of Publications categorised the decision as Hobson's choice.

I don't think anyone was totally thrilled with it, nobody came rushing into my office saying 'wow! you should see this great campaign we're going to do.' It was like 'Well, it's the best of a bad bunch'.

The fundraisers, post-facto, put the choice down to the fact that O & M Advertising's 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' campaign was highly participative. It could guarantee income while highlighting the development issues surrounding the famine.
The campaign was going to be a geographically focussed, emergency, one-off appeal, staged during SCF Week. It was, therefore, unprecedented in a number of respects. First, it was prompted by 'unprecedented need': the impending famine in several African countries. SCF predicted that the number of people afflicted would be unusually high. Second, the campaign had to be prepared in record time, which is why SCF required the assistance of specialists. Third, it was the first time ever that Save the Children had endeavoured to orchestrate a major 'campaign' or 'appeal' with the aim of raising a specific amount of money. An SCF fundraiser contextualised this by remarking: 'very rarely do you hear "Save the Children Wants to raise x-number of pounds, please join our year long appeal", this is ... the first time'. Furthermore the appeal hoped to unite SCF as an organisation. It had to be an integrated campaign, rather than a press campaign which was part of the integrated marketing strategy. Several SCF Departments were directly involved as were several arms of Ogilvy and Mather. The campaign hoped to maximise the 'informational spaces' in order to compensate for the lack of money or time, but also to force the issue on to the public agenda. This was an important part of the pitch. The rationale was the need in Africa. At the time of pitching it was estimated that 20 million would face starvation in five African countries. By April 1991 the estimates had risen to 27 million in seven African countries. SCF wanted to raise money and public awareness, in particular through the media. To catch the media's attention, SCF had to create a very 'big splash'.

ii Ogilvy and Mather's 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign proposal.

For Ogilvy and Mather Advertising finding the appropriate advertising campaign had been quite a challenge because of the limited time and money at their disposal. But the dilemmas were also creative ones. One of O & M Advertising's initial ideas had revolved around representations of British toys in mourning, using a central theme which asked the reader to 'imagine what it would be like with no children'. They felt this would have conveyed the scale of the problem, since the number of children facing starvation in Africa equated approximately to every
child in Britain. It was a way of 'bringing the issue home' in an exciting and a non-stereotypical manner. They conceived of powerful visuals; for instance Barbie dolls in black (mourning) and teddies next to coffins. Sensibly, O & M Advertising thought that this might be a little convoluted, not to mention kitsch, although it certainly would have been within the image guidelines. Their main objection was that the concept itself was too restrictive. It was 'very much ... within itself, it was very much an advertising idea'. They felt that SCF needed a simple but 'total concept', something which could seduce a significant cross-section of people, thereby guaranteeing significant income and, most importantly of all because of the meagre budget, good media coverage.

Ogilvy and Mather Advertising represented the task in the following way. They were going to be working for a charity with a good brand identity. SCF had a good profile, it inspired trust and sympathy. SCF was perceived as an effective, active and committed 'facilitator' of development and it had the infrastructure in place to deal with the situation. O & M Advertising could justifiably portray them as the charity that were 'standing by'.

There were, however, some barriers. Finance was one. There were also 'mental barriers': 'famine fatigue', racist stereotypes (corrupt governments, laziness, over-population), the recession (and the preference for home-based charities) and the media agenda (revolving round the Middle East).

O & M Advertising recognised that people's negative 'kneejerk' response to any African famine appeal was:

Oh no not again! of course, I care about the children in Africa but I thought we'd dealt with that last time, and in any case it's too big a problem for my contribution to have any impact. I prefer to support my local hospital/the Romanian orphanage where I can see the effect of my support on real lives. (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a)

Their aim was to transform it into a more positive and considered reaction:

This is such an appalling situation that I can't stand by and let it happen. If my support can make the difference between life and death for one child in a million, then it has to be worth trying. I believe that Save the Children will use my money effectively and wisely. (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a)

The famine had to be 'repackaged' and 'sold' differently. It had to be contextualised, made accessible and poignant for the average 'punter'. Advertising alone could not do this. There were insufficient resources to develop a powerful idea. Furthermore there was a
tangible lack of media interest in the issue. What O & M Advertising needed was an idea that would galvanise the general public into action. SCF had to launch a 'crusade' rather than an 'appeal'; something which, like Comic Relief, would captivate people's attention, promote widespread participation, and, as a consequence, would revitalise the public's 'dented' enthusiasm (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a). Such a 'campaign' could avoid stereotypes and would not need to resort to frightening people into giving money by 'showing them something really horrible'. So it would not transgress SCF's image guidelines.

O & M Advertising believed that bringing people on board necessitated using the 'stock technique' of identification. If the problem was made relevant and comprehensible it would incite greater participation. In the initial creative brief SCF had supplied a 'price list' detailing the purchasing power of various sums of money in the aid market: 50p buys a clinical thermometer and plastic case, or 5 packets of oral rehydration salts, and so forth (SCF 1991g: Appendix C). O & M Advertising felt that these direct equivalences could prove very useful. Their beliefs were outlined in their creative brief.

Our advertising and concept must work to wake people out of their inertia by presenting a familiar situation in a surprising way, helping them to identify with the problem and forcing them to reassess their own role in working to improve the situation. We cannot afford to have them turn over the page or switch off their minds. (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a)

According to O & M Advertising, the appeal could not afford to restrict itself to the 'blue rinses from Ealing'. The appeal had to draw a much wider audience because of the amount of money that the appeal hoped to raise. In particular it had to include the well-disposed, but frequently ignored readers of The Sun and The Daily Mirror - in market research terms 'The Big Hearted Sun Reader' (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a). Logically enough then, the tabloid press was the chosen vehicle for this direct, low-cost appeal20. The issue of famine had to be made unsophisticated and catchy. It had to appeal to that proportion of the British public who

view everything through jingoistic headlines ... [who] can't read more than seven words in a row without comments or sub-clauses, [who]... have to have things very simple and concise.

20 Previous to this Save the Children very rarely featured in the tabloids. They were featured mostly in The Independent, The Guardian, The Telegraph and The Times, though less in The Financial Times.
There was no scope for the explanation of famine that SCF had originally desired nor for a careful analysis of the causes behind its slow emergence: migration, civil war, disease, environmental factors, fall in commodity prices and Third World debt. In order to be understandable to the majority, famine had to be about food. Ogilvy and Mather Advertising suggest that the campaign should challenge the donor to:

Try going without food for one meal and you'll see how much the cost of that meal can help the people in Africa. (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a)

They admitted it was not an original concept. Indeed it drew on the age old motherly ploy 'eat up, think of the starving in Africa'. According to O & M Advertising, however, it was 'relevant' to the punters. The small sacrifice involved would allow them an insight into what going without food really meant. Their mental and physical aches would mirror the sufferings of countless Africans, it would give them a 'glimpse of ... the real suffering out in Africa' (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991b).

Public Affairs staff were sceptical as to whether this rather glib empathy was either possible or desirable. Nevertheless, they recognised that the campaign message 'Skip Lunch. Save A Life' had a certain, albeit populist, universalism about it. Everyone eats lunch, therefore everyone could take part.

For O & M Advertising it had other advantages. Everyone could contribute but at no great financial sacrifice, the donation would simply replace people's normal daily expenditure. The appeal would not prescribe a size of donation, but by suggesting that it could replace a proposed lunch cost, it would automatically raise the average level of donation. For O & M Advertising, it also offered hope. The individual would be making a valuable contribution, and be offered a role in the optimistic conclusion - the 'happy ending' of saving the life of an African child. They equally claimed that this did not suggest itself as a magic solution. It showed the limits of that help (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991b).

The campaign cleverly circumvented the main thrust of SCF's image guidelines: it was designed to achieve its impact through typography rather than visual images. There would be no need for the documentary type visual images. The advertising would draw from

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21 Even O & M Advertising admitted this (much more freely before the campaign, afterwards they liked to view it as particularly inspired).
people's memory of famine images instead. The key message was food. People had to be convinced to 'skip lunch'. Explanations or illustrations of the famine would be marginal. O & M Advertising wanted its target audience to register one message only: that in skipping one lunch they could mean the difference between life and death for someone in Africa.

It says there are people dying and rather than just give money, you know, this is ... not really like giving money. It's just giving up something which you don't really need - a lunch. It is actually putting it into physical terms, which people can really understand and comprehend.

The campaign would not adopt a high moral tone, cajole or blame the audience. It would state clearly and quickly what the problem was and then identify the manner in which the individual could help. All the advertising would present an 'aid' price list, delineating what each individual donation could tangibly and 'truthfully' achieve.

According to O & M Advertising, even if the conceptual framework was not novel in itself it was a new departure for SCF. SCF was asking its supporters and others 'to give in a different way to the way that they would have given before'. It was hoped that the familiarity of the idea - foregoing food for a good cause - combined with its relative freshness for SCF, would ensure the appeal's success.

As indicated above O & M Advertising asserted that the campaign could not rely on advertising alone. They felt that the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' appeal required a number of communication techniques in order to gain widespread support. O & M Advertising's creative brief outlined the elements to be included.

- A name for the appeal (which encapsulates the idea)
- A visual logo and slogan (which can work for badges, pamphlets etc.)
- A press campaign
- Possibly a very cheap TV/Cinema commercial
- Ideas for PR

Basically the flexibility is there to use any media imaginatively, but there must be a clear simple reason why it is being used. (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991a)

Advertising, direct mail and, most particularly, public relations would combine to generate that which in advertising jargon is called a 'synergistic' effect, whereby each communication technique would build on and reinforce the other. The whole appeal would be characterised by the visual logo and slogan: 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life'. This would be
transposed onto all communication materials produced for the 'Skip Lunch' campaign. As a logo its only problem was that it signified the campaign rather more than who was orchestrating it, ie: Save the Children.

Ogilvy & Mather's pitch was designed in consultation with not only O & M Direct but also with Ogilvy & Mather Public Relations (O & M PR). Ogilvy & Mather (in general) asserted that, in this instance, they did not view themselves simply as the contracted advertising agency. They were signed up as business 'partners'. They would make their expertise available to SCF in a number of arenas (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991b).

The strategy would have three prongs: advertising (television, radio, press), public relations and media exposure through editorial channels. Due to limited time and space the advertising could only convey a very simple message. It would function as the 'seed-corn'. Public relations had to answer the more difficult questions, balancing the simplistic messages of the advertising with a more detailed consideration of the issues at hand. The Account Planner at O & M Advertising explained the overall strategy.

Advertising ... was ... the seed-corn, it was supposed to be just there to sow seeds, get people thinking about it and then the big ... PR machine gets into action and drives everything forward. ... I don't think you can look at this ... advertising campaign in isolation.

All being well, people would pick up on the idea through advertising and would start orchestrating events, 'skipping lunch'. Celebrities and politicians would be co-opted, generating publicity for the campaign, for SCF and for the famine issue. In turn, this publicity would feed the editorial coverage. By giving space to the issue of famine this would reinforce and vindicate SCF's advertising message. The ultimate goal was to create a 'context of awareness' for the fundraising mechanisms to strengthen their impact. The advertising would not be a shot in the dark - a lone and simplistic message - but one surrounded and supported by substantial editorial coverage and publicity.

To ensure this dynamic took effect, a member of staff from O & M PR was seconded to the 'Skip Lunch' campaign office situated at SCF Headquarters six weeks before the appeal launch. It was argued that seconding a professional member of O & M PR made good sense financially. His fees were roughly equivalent to one *Daily Telegraph* press advertisement, and much could be achieved by him in terms of publicity and spin offs.
Members from O & M Ltd and O & M Direct also staffed the campaign office, as did members of SCF's Fundraising Department (from corporate fundraising) and some SCF administrative staff (some seconded quite late on). The Senior Press Officer and the Overseas Information Officer were charged with maintaining maximum press coverage though they stayed in their respective offices. The campaign office was brought into existence to co-ordinate all the publicity activities (celebrities, photo-opportunities) and to pare down the bureaucracy so that the 'campaign' and all its strands could work as smoothly as possible. This was another unprecedented move for the Fund, though the office was not operational as soon as it should have been.

iii The proposed 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' advertising.

O & M Advertising suggested using three types of advertising techniques: press, radio and television. O & M Advertising had clear ideas about each technique, in terms of what could be communicated, what format should be adopted and what could be achieved.

The press advertising would be consistent with traditional SCF national press advertising. It would lay out the central proposition 'Skip Lunch', or 'Have you skipped lunch?' and incorporate a direct response mechanism. This striking headline would be followed by a thumb-nail sketch delineating the nature of the problem, identifying the numbers at risk, maybe comparing it to the 1984 famine. Essentially press advertising would focus the reader on what s/he could do, directing her/him to a means of responding and, therefore, partaking in the final resolution. It would work on the basis of comparison showing, by example, what could be done with the money spent on different types of lunch. Press advertisements would state, for instance, 'the cost of a cheeseburger buys seven days food supply for one person', 'The bill for a business lunch would feed someone for more than six months' or 'a mere cheese roll (50p) provides a child with vital food and vitamins for one day', down to the equivalences behind a packet of crisps (17p) (Figs. 5.10-12). These 'technical truths' were believed to be gratifying for the donor since they encouraged her/him to envisage the direct consequences of his/her philanthropic actions. For O & M
Advertising these were classic direct response techniques, triggering a response and motivating the punter to action.

This is all just direct marketing techniques. ... It's getting people to trade up, it's quantifying how much you need to give help. This is the problem, this is the solution.

The press advertising would avoid hectoring, lecturing, or coercing the respondent. It would simply enumerate equivalences and thereby encapsulate how the donor could - should s/he wish to - contribute to a worthwhile cause. It was believed that these advertisements would engender a feeling of 'well being' in the donor because s/he would know that they were actually effecting beneficial changes in people's lives.

O & M Advertising were convinced that by transforming the problem of famine into an issue about food and relief, they had succeeded in 'consumerising' the issue, a requirement if the target audience was going to be reached. These press advertisements would sit comfortably in the qualities but equally well in the tabloids. O & M Advertising did not feel apologetic. Indeed they believed that they had overcome the major flaw of SCF's original creative brief, namely its desire to raise large amounts of money on the basis of rational messages about long-term development and its commitment to the poor of the developing world.

The press advertisement would have for a 'visual' illustration a 'plate device': a rather rudimentary and two dimensional drawing (in grey and white) of a paper plate ('paperness' being signified by the indentations on its rim), with a knife and fork crossed in front of it. On glossy items, the cutlery would be coloured in red, the colour of Save the Children's logo (Fig. 5.23, 5.24). Unfortunately the cutlery partially eclipsed - they seemed to cross out - the slogan 'Skip lunch. Save a Life' which was written in capitals (black on white).

In retrospect most felt that the production side of this visual was less than perfect.

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22 The advertisers claimed that the public realised that their actual money didn't go directly towards providing such facilities. According to them, the public did not actually believe that their £10 will actually feed 'x' for three months - they did not think 'it was lying shiny in a box in Africa waiting to be used'. They just preferred to respond to something that imputed that this was the case.

23 In fact in the repeat in 1992 the plate looked ceramic and the knife and fork were metallic, though they still crossed out the slogan.
Although messy the visual was not judged to be disastrous, since it was subsidiary to the proposition of skipping lunch. It was designed to represent in diagrammatic form a snack, one often eaten off a paper plate. For O & M Advertising the limited visuals had another advantage, it did not embroil them in discussions over imagery. They considered that if enough press coverage was obtained there would be plenty of negative images to fuel people's imaginations. So although O & M Advertising did not use stereotyped or negative images they worked on the assumption that these would be available in some form or another. Indeed, to some extent they counted on this, because they relied on media coverage.

O & M Advertising planned to initiate SCF Week (29 April - 5 May 1991) with two full page press advertisements. These would be inserted into all the daily nationals on Monday (to coincide with the launch) and also the day before in some Sunday papers (The Independent on Sunday, The Observer, The Sunday Mirror/Mail, and The Sunday People)\(^24\). This blanket of full page advertising would have the maximum impact, setting a precedent for the rest of the week. It would simultaneously raise funds and generate publicity (O & M Advertising 1991b).

Two executions were finally selected for use in the nationals, with a third appearing as a 'one off' in the advertisers' trade journal Campaign. One stated in big letters (white on black with the 'plate device' underneath) 'It Won't Kill You To Go Without Lunch For A Day. (But It Could Save A Life In Africa)' (Figs. 5.10, 5.10a). In similar fashion, the other proclaimed 'If People In Africa Are Going Without Food For Weeks, You Can Skip Lunch Today' (Figs. 5.11, 5.11a). The copy utilised for each advertisement was slightly different but deployed the same technique. Both enunciated the problem - '27 million people in Africa facing starvation' - stressed the power of the donor to effect change - 'you can help' 'this lunchtime' - and then enumerated a series of equivalences between life saving material aid and food consumption - 'Go without a cheeseburger (£1) and we can supply one person with food for more than a week' (Figs. 5.10, 5.10a, 5.11, 5.11a). The

\(^{24}\) Page dominance was acquired in the broadsheets but not the tabloids because the latter were simply too expensive.
full page, 'knowing' advertisement placed in *Campaign* announced 'We Musn't Have Lunch' and started by giving a 'who's who' of who wasn't lunching (Fig. 5.12) (*Campaign* 26.04.91). O & M Advertising explained the logic behind having two different executions as 'a change is as good as a rest'; moreover, the flexibility of having a choice did not involve extra effort or cost.

These 'big splash' advertisements would be followed up during the week with two types of smaller advertisements. Some would resemble SCF’s more traditional format, the twenty double. These would state 'It Won't Kill You To Skip Lunch Today' and would carry a coupon, the plate device and the SCF logo (Fig. 5.13). These would constitute the mainstay of advertising in the regional press and would be used on a one-off basis in selected 'Ethnic publications' ie: *The Asian Times* and *The Voice*. In addition O & M Advertising proposed to place tiny niggle advertisements in the dailies. These would simple exclaim 'Have You Skipped Lunch yet?', or 'If You Can't Skip Lunch Pay Double', or use celebrity endorsement to comment 'If x Can Skip Lunch, Anyone Can' (Fig. 5.14).

In designing this type of onslaught in the press O & M Advertising hoped to capture a figure of 80% of the national adult audience (1991c). The little niggle advertisements would make sure that the campaign and SCF remained salient throughout the rest of the week, but it was equally a question of pragmatics since this type of advertising was as much as could be afforded within the budget.

For the radio advertising the same formula of comparison and association (famine equals food) was used. Three executions were suggested to coincide with mealtimes (breakfast, lunch and supper). These were basically vocal reminders of the immediacy of the need, and how listeners could contribute. The breakfast time advertising would entice the listener to have a hearty breakfast so that s/he could miss lunch (though there was a certain predictable division of labour)25. The lunchtime execution would remind the listener that

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25 It depicted a scenario where the 'woman of the household' cooks her husband a large cooked breakfast despite his objections so that he is forced to miss lunch (Fig 5.15).
now was his/her chance to miss lunch, and to give the money saved to SCF. The suppertime advertisement would congratulate those who had missed lunch, while reminding those who had not seized the chance to 'skip lunch' that tomorrow was another opportunity to do so (see Figs. 5.15-17)

O & M Advertising felt that radio advertising was cost effective (there were 30-40% discounts). It would also enable wider dissemination of the message among the target audience, since many people listen to the radio while working including mechanics, cab drivers, labourers, shop workers, and so forth. However, this advertising was only planned on a regional basis. It focussed on those areas where SCF had raised the most money in previous years. Some sort of arbitrary decision had to be made because of budgetary constraints, so O & M Advertising chose fifteen of the most successful regions to play three spots per day Monday to Friday during SCF Week (covering 20-30% audience by area) (Ogilvy & Mather Advertising 1991b, 1991c)

Hopefully radio coverage of the appeal would be accompanied by fuller radio coverage. One means of pre-empting this was to send out syndicated radio tapes. The responsibility for this was left to the O & M PR consultant and SCF Press Officer. These syndicated radio tapes were pre-recorded press releases. The 'Skip Lunch' appeal tape was recorded with Andrew Timpson, the Programme Officer for East Africa. It offered a five minute analysis of the situation asking all the apposite questions about the roots of famine, and also tackled other topical issues such as 'famine fatigue'. It was issued, with additional information on the appeal, to 25 regional radio stations. The tape offered a greater contextualisation of the problem of famine and some free journalism to the regional radio stations. If the campaign gained momentum, it would be an ideal way of capitalising on the public's and the press interest. It would also be good publicity for SCF.

O & M Advertising suggested producing a television advertisement, even though this contradicted SCF's original creative brief. O & M Advertising believed television coverage to be essential to their advertising strategy, especially if it could be made cheaply (the final

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26 It features two office friends trying to decide what to do for lunch and opt instead to save millions from starving in Africa (Fig 5.16).

27 It featured two people ordering 'aid' articles for dinner in a restaurant (Fig 5.17).
cost was a very modest £10,000). The creative idea behind the thirty second television advertisement was consistent with the general tone and the message of the other advertising. It resonated in particular with the 'breakfast' radio advertisement (Fig. 5.15). Its short hand name was 'Greasy' or 'Fatty Bacon' and the visuals quite simply depicted the gradual 'frying up' of a cooked breakfast: sausages, bacon, tomatoes, mushrooms, egg and chips (Figs. 5.18-22). The voice-over was delivered by a well known 'sit-com' star - Paul Nicholas. He began grimly 'This will keep someone healthy for a whole year, but only if you don't eat it' (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991c) (Fig. 5.22a).

After the television advertisement was produced, a decision had to made about how to air it. Television advertising could potentially attract publicity, since it was an infrequent event. So O & M Advertising were hoping that once the 'campaign' was up and running, some exposure might be achieved within a news or documentary feature on the famine, or by covering SCF's work or the 'campaign'. However they also felt that they needed to make other plans. O & M Advertising opted for the 'repeat opportunity to see', in other words reaching a smaller audience (1.5 million) more frequently rather than a large audience infrequently. They selected BSkyB which offered SCF forty slots at a reduced price. BSkyB's profile accorded with the 'consumerist' approach of the whole campaign (the other option had been slotting the advertisement into TV AM) and it targeted the Big Hearted Sun Reader.

O & M Advertising also recommended producing spin-off products, for instance T-shirts (saying 'I Skipped Lunch'), stickers (carrying the visual logo) (Fig. 5.23), car stickers as well as ad-shell posters28 and smaller posters for Branches (Fig. 5.24). These would all contribute to the branding of the campaign because they all featured the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' logo. Corporate donors would be supplied with canteen collecting tins and spoof menus (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991c).

According to SCF the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign was born out of necessity, SCF was responding to a major emergency and the appeal would be a 'one off'. The aim

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28 4,000 bus shelter posters were produced. Before SCF Week started it was known that 1,000 sites would be donated.
was to raise £2.5 million in the fastest, most cost efficient and effective way possible, within the constraints laid down by the image guidelines. According to Ogilvy and Mather generating widespread coverage and co-opting the Big Hearted Sun Reader necessitated certain techniques and compromises. The famine and the appeal had to be 'consumerised'. The advertising they suggested was rationalised within this framework.

Although Public Affairs staff agreed that the appeal had to maximise its impact, they had reservations. They believed that they had to be vigilant, they had to ensure that the images and messages being promoted did not undermine or contradict the organisation's principles and practices, specifically the image guidelines. Clearly both the tone of the advertising and the campaign theme were treading a very fine line. The 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' campaign rested on an arresting 'technical truth' namely that skipping lunch could-not would-save a life. This implied that the problem of famine could be resolved by short-term relief, it also emphasised how gratifying giving could be for the donor. These associations with relief and charity elicited a certain amount of unease because they were very crude and somewhat misleading. The crucial issue was one of balance: Public Affairs needed to generate alternative materials on the situation and on Africa which could mollify the simplistic and jingoistic slogans of the fundraising materials.

iv Contextualising and reinforcing the advertising message of the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign.

Some quarters within SCF felt that to enact balance they had to produce alternative more thoughtful and detailed pieces of documentation. The Branches, for instance, were supplied with action packs containing information and recommendations about what could be done and how to raise money. These pack included an information leaflet. This attempted to contextualise the campaign for those on SCF's front line.

More significant documents were produced by Public Affairs to be launched to the press and to coincide with the appeal.

The first document would be presented by Jonathan Dimbleby to an invited audience composed of the press the Friday before the appeal (26 April 1991). It would follow the
airing of his documentary *Anatomy of a Famine*, part of BBC 2's *Assignment* series on Tuesday 23 April⁵⁹. This document was called *Famine Myths. Setting the Record Straight* (SCF 1991h, Document 5.1). It would attack the following myths:

i  Famine could be solved if Third World Governments spend less on the military.
ii  Famine is caused by over-population.
iii  There is no point giving money because nothing is ever done to do deal with the root causes.
iv  We are always hearing about famine.
v  Africa seems to be facing famine every year.
vi  There's nothing you can do to avoid famines. They are inevitable.

It would not deconstruct the 'myth' that famine was about food, this would be done implicitly. The document would entreat the reader not to be distracted by simplistic explanations of famine and its reoccurrence in Africa - the myths delineated in the text. It would encourage her/him to actively seek to interrogate these myths more closely and to investigate why famine had arisen and what could be done to prevent such crises happening in the future. It would also outline what SCF was doing and what the individual could do to change the situation.

*Famine Myths* was designed to act as a preliminary 'think piece' familiarising the British public with the issue before SCF Week. It was targeted towards the media and sought to expose the misconceptions surrounding the issue of famine. If coverage was obtained it could undermine the power of the simplistic messages of the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' advertising before the campaign even started.

The other booklet *Africa. The Reality of Famine* (SCF 1991i, Document 5.2) would be launched at the inauguration of SCF Week, to be held on Monday 29 April with Princess Anne in attendance. The booklet would contain case studies of the countries struck by famine. It would detail a 'count-down to famine', showing how frequently, and for how long, SCF had been warning of the impending disaster and how little notice had been taken on the part of the public or the Government. It would incorporate moving personal histories and underline SCF's steadfastness and ability to respond while highlighting how such situations could be avoided in the future.

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⁵⁹ In the event the documentary was followed by a studio discussion featuring the 'great and the good'. The Minister of Overseas Development - Lynda Chalker sat on the panel as did members from SCF and a studio audience was also invited.
The distinct tone of these documents would be exemplified in their visual illustrations which would emphasise the gritty reality of life in the developing world.

In the *Famine Myths* document only one illustration would be used: a photograph of a woman terracing on barren ground - a very popular photograph at SCF (Documents 5.1, 5.2, Fig. 5.25). According to The Head of Publications, although this photograph was somewhat exhausted, it was far better than a passive and negative photograph of 'just someone sitting around'. In contrast, this effectively conveyed the starkness of life in the developing world and of women's lives in particular. The barrenness of the land clearly highlighted the impact of environmental factors. This was a representation of a human subject striving in the face of adversity, terracing and bunding against all the odds. The image resonated with the text of the document (ie: famine was not 'their' fault), and its austere design. For the Photo-Librarian it was an arresting photograph because the viewer's eyes swept over it in line with the movement of the subject.

So appropriate was this image that it would also used for the *Africa: The Reality of Famine* document. This booklet would be more plentifully illustrated. The images would include those of displacement (on the front cover), children holding oral rehydration packets and health record cards (the Head of Publications was unsure about this photograph since it depicted passive and unhappy children and it also looked 'posed') as well as 'aid' photographs, lorries arriving at the scene (connoting 'battling through with the food') and food aid being dispensed (connoting 'stuff does get through').

According to the Head of Publications these illustrations were not completely satisfactory since they were mostly representative of the potential rather than the actual contemporary 'reality'. In other words, they were old and the subjects mostly unidentified.

Both these documents were written by Public Affairs in conjunction with the Press Office and therefore reflected their perspective on the famine, one inscribed with the new NGO discourse. The Head of Publications stated their purpose.

*What we're trying to do through publishing things like *Famine Myths* and *The Reality of Famine* is to say there's lots of... myths that are thrown up every time that these things are mentioned by people who... would rather not give, who just want to sort of get on with their lives and they're not interested in what's happening to other people and they throw these excuses. And actually they're invalid... We've certainly been keen*
to say why those things ... don't have any validity and to really explain what the causes 
of famine are, why people find themselves in this position, [and] what needs to happen 
for them to be helped.

Public Affairs were, in the main, content with their efforts, although the circulation was 
expected to be restricted to those who attended the launch events (journalists) or to those 
involved with the Fund. Branches were supplied with a copy of both documents. The 
motive behind producing these two documents was to contextualise the main message of 
the campaign. It was a means of anticipating press interest. The documents would 
hopefully ensure that a more balanced message permeated at some level.

Other principal players in building the 'context of awareness' were the O & M PR 
consultant and the SCF Press Officer. Their timescale was exceedingly tight. By the time 
everything was agreed they had only six weeks to coordinate all the publicity. This 
automatically excluded most women's magazines, all colour supplements and monthlies, 
although they were mentioned in *The Lady* (14.05.91) and *Hello* (11.05.91) after the 
event. The press work had the twin aims of maximising coverage of the appeal and the 
issues underlying it, ie the famine now underway in seven countries.

Save the Children's Press Officer had three 'givens'. The Princess Royal had consented to 
launch the appeal in her capacity as President of the Fund. The Press Officer cast the 
Princess as the Fund's 'major player, SCF's major hook', who would ensure some 
major editorial coverage in the qualities. SCF had to maximise her impact on the first day of the 
appeal to give the Week a large initial push. To sustain the momentum throughout the day, 
and the Week, SCF would then stagger the news flow. It would issue different press 
releases and 'stories' to cater to a range of news programmes and audiences from *Breakfast 
TV* to *Newsnight*.

The Princess Royal would ensure that coverage was sustained. SCF had applied to the 
Palace for one broadcast and one print interview during SCF Week. The print interview 
would be published in *The Daily Telegraph*, partly because the profile of the paper was 
appropriate to traditional supporters (it was also said to be most widely read newspaper in 
Britain). On the *Friday* of SCF Week the Princess would be interviewed on BBC 1's 
*Wogan*. This was an obvious attempt at populism. *Wogan* was a light entertainment
programme, so the serious issue of famine would be mediated in that vein. SCF's Press Officer felt that this would be incredibly good publicity for the appeal, the issue of famine and the Fund, because The Princess Royal's appearance on Wogan ensured a large audience. The avid Royalists and the casually curious would probably both tune in. It would also seduce the Big Hearted Sun Reader since s/he was, above all, a Royalist and a patriot. Furthermore s/he admired the get up and go attitude of The Princess Royal. This single slot would guarantee great consumer interest. Some SCF staff claimed, with a touch of malice, that the Princess's willingness to do the Wogan interview showed that she was really prepared to suffer to popularise the appeal.

Another technique which would favour accessibility over information and would tune into the 'television Junk Culture' was celebrity endorsement. This was the O & M PR consultant's area of expertise. According to him celebrities, by lending their name to 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' would reaffirm its credibility and desirability. They would simultaneously raise SCF and the 'Skip Lunch' appeal's profile while initiating a bandwagon effect.

To make celebrity endorsement consistent with the train of thought underlying the campaign, ie: famine equals food, and its populist tone, the Public Relations consultant set about finding 'fat celebrities' who would endorse 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life'. He claimed that since time was tight, he had not had the opportunity to think up anything more 'subtle'. Suggestions that using 'fat celebrities' could be construed as bad taste were rejected by both SCF fundraisers and O & M staff. They insisted that it simply highlighted the idea, since those who really enjoyed their food were also prepared to make sacrifices. If they could miss a meal, we all could. Moreover 'Fat-celebrities-fasting' would generate humorous editorial coverage or photo-opportunities creating publicity for the cause and SCF. In particular, this type of counterposition would appeal to the tabloids. 'Fat celebrities' had extra mileage for the fundraisers because they would reinforce the light-heartedness of the appeal (thereby confirming another stereotype: fat people are jolly?).

30 He recruited Sir Harry Secombe, Cyril Smith and Robbie Coltrane.
The O & M PR consultant also wanted to use soap celebrities - especially those who were identified with eating establishments (cafes) - for photo-stories and photo-opportunities. These would endorse and 'consumerise' the appeal, since they would be familiar to the target audience.

There are fifteen million who watch Eastenders a week, probably ... most of them ... read the tabloids, so if you can make that connection between these people that they watch three times a week and whose lives and whose life stories they're ... sufficiently interested in three times a week, if you can make the connection that in real life they are supporting your campaign that again is a winner.

Actors from Eastenders (Adam Woodyatt, Gillian Tayforth) and Coronation Street (Helen Worth) were photographed posing outside cafes wearing 'I Skipped Lunch' T-Shirts. These images were made available to picture editors during the Week in case they wished to use them31. Furthermore it was hoped that the appeal would be mentioned within these Soaps when they were broadcast.

Other celebrities were also enticed to endorse the campaign: Jason Donovan (for his Neighbours connection), Jeffrey Barnard, Russell Grant, Frank Bruno and Max Boyce. The profile of these celebrities was predominantly 'middle of the road' and 'populist'. They would be recognised by the middle-aged ladies in the shops and the Big Hearted Sun Readers - the young 'ravers' of Comic Relief and Band Aid were not among the target audience.

Hopefully, armed with all these tricks, the 'Skip Lunch. Save A Life' campaign would be assured some form of coverage in the tabloids, and by dint of that, so would SCF and the famine in Africa. The O & M PR consultant explained the rationale behind his tactics

As I said before we knew we were going to get coverage in the quality nationals but The Sun and The Mirror and The People and all the rest of it for some reason do not think that famine, ... let's be honest Foreign Affairs, does The Sun have a Foreign Affairs page? of any note? They do not touch on these issues, they're not interested in them you know. ... So we had to find a way of consumerising the whole issue. (my emphasis)

The tabloids were targeted in another manner, through their sports' editors. A photosession was set up with the England Football Team dressed in 'I Skipped Lunch' T-Shirts, holding a banner saying 'But We'll be Stuffing Turkey Tonight' a pun referring to the fact

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31 Eastenders characters were offered on an exclusive basis to The Daily Mirror, Coronation Street characters were taken by The Daily Mail and The Manchester Evening News (Ogilvy and Mather Public Relations 1991b)
that they were playing Turkey - and hoped to win - during SCF Week. Again, this equated famine with food and would be a golden opportunity for a Sun picture editor to enjoy a joke with 'our boys'.

In the regional press the issue would be 'consumerised' through 'advertorial' features, ie: features which joined advertising and editorial space. This would work in the following manner. SCF would guarantee a certain amount of advertising - a quarter page advertisement, for instance. The paper would endeavour to match this space with editorial coverage. This would be primarily derived from information and photographs provided by the Fund - in the shape of the two Public Affairs documents, *FAMINE MYTHS. Setting the Record Straight*, and *AFRICA. The Reality of Famine* which would be supplied beforehand (but embargoed until their respective launches) (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991b). In addition to this the paper could agree that if a local company would advertise their support of SCF in the paper, the paper would then match that advertising space with more editorial coverage. So before SCF Week, SCF and the Newspaper Society attempted to encourage local companies to advertise in their local paper. This arrangement would satisfy a number of agendas. It would mean that both the fundraising and 'informational' profile of the campaign soared while affording a certain amount of publicity and goodwill to the company while simultaneously increasing the income of the paper (through greater amounts of advertising). Moreover it could, potentially, result in several pages of powerful editorial on the famine, concentrating specifically on the 'myths' and the 'realities'. O & M Advertising and SCF expected the combination of advertising and editorial to strike the reader very forcefully. They were counting on the fact that the regional press rarely had anything of interest to report and were always eager to accept free reportage on news items of note.

Clearly in its use of communication techniques, this campaign was unprecedented. SCF had decided to optimise on strategy in all arenas, simultaneously producing and launching a number of very different messages reunited around one issue: the impending famine in seven African countries. According to all parties involved the trick was to generate enough publicity to create an overwhelming 'context of awareness' that would permit all the
different messages to permeate the consciousness of the public. The omnipresence of a plurality of messages, and therefore of 'truths' and 'realities' was SCF's ultimate goal.

v Balancing the messages of the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign.

O & M Advertising had clearly foregrounded raising awareness as well as funds in its original proposal and this is what won them the pitch. They had designed a light-hearted 'campaign', one that sought to provoke popular participation on the basis of a simplistic proposition 'skip lunch and you can save the life of someone in Africa'. The 'campaign' in general was modelled on Comic Relief and its purpose was to engender a bandwagon effect whereby people would club together and participate in groups. Each act of generosity would be celebrated and encouraged prompting other similar, or more outrageous, demonstrations of philanthropic zeal. This would have two advantages. First, it would create a dynamic whereby people would want to be part of the 'Skip Lunch' phenomenon and would feel excluded - 'ostracised' - it they weren't. This 'groundswell of support', in turn, would draw publicity. Secondly it would enhance SCF's brand identity. Each act would be connected with the 'Skip Lunch' campaign, itself intertwined with the identity of SCF. The appeal would 'covertly' brand SCF.

'Skipping lunch' was a democratic and populist entreaty, everyone could do it. It was also flexible. 'Skipping Lunch' could be adapted for those not advised to 'Skip Lunch'. For the elderly or children it could be transformed into demands to 'pay double' or to 'Skip Sweets'. It had few strictures and could be developed by the individual or group according to their particular preferences, unlike a two day Oxfam fast. So an important message was that giving did not have to involve a great sacrifice or be painful; it could be done in a group, it could be communal 'fun'. According to the SCF and O & M fundraisers it would encourage people to give because they would 'get a buzz' out of supporting the work of the Fund.

For SCF Public Affairs staff there was a serious side to all this activity and it was necessary that this, in the end, came through equally loud and clear. For them, the
principal goal was getting people 'mobilised against the background of why this is happening'. Some of them were very concerned that the carnivalesque quality of the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' would give a false impression because it would allow British donors to believe that they had it within their grasp to save African lives. Moreover the fundraising message would mislead donors into thinking that their acts of generosity and deprivation would be guaranteed to do so (although the exact phrasing of the advertisements always stressed that skipping lunch could save lives in Africa, it offered no certainties). Some Public Affairs staff considered that the 'campaign' empowered the wrong subjects, the donors rather than the beneficiaries. They were uncertain what the long-terms effects of such an appeal would be.

Public Affairs staff did approve of O & M Advertising's strategic and multilateral approach and accepted that such fundraising messages were necessary to elicit large donations. They were, however, unsure as to the penetrative power of the more balanced and detailed messages. Would the supporters of 'Skip Lunch' really maintain their interest and seek to understand the root causes of Africa's problem after the event? They had little doubt the Branches would favour and promote the fundraising message over the more educational one. Furthermore they viewed the messages behind the celebrity endorsement and the television advertising as crude - hugely 'fat donors versus very emaciated beneficiaries - and confusing - since high cholesterol breakfasts were not in the main advised. How appropriate was the message to send your unhealthy food to the starving?

The Head of Publications stated that she appreciated that this appeal would allow the less informed and unmotivated donors a 'way-in' to the issues and would involve them in a manner over and above simply chucking money at an appeal. The public would be drawn into making some sort of sacrifice and into a more intimate relationship with SCF. She added that she recognised the need to move with the times, her assigned role as 'purist' and 'gatekeeper' was a slightly sterile position born out of a 'cocooned existence'. She had to learn to live with the contradictions of her role and investigate new ways to communicate with a broader cross-section of the public. The differential permeation of the various
messages could not be decisively resolved until the 'campaign' was over, when everything had been fully worked through.

Public Affairs staff were, however, as keen to experiment with possibilities as the fundraisers and Ogilvy and Mather. They were not going to be complacent, this was as much an opportunity for them. The documents enumerating the 'myths' and the 'realities' of famine would attempt to get some coverage and they would also try to make a 'bigger splash' than usual. They were clearly telling the same story as the fundraising material, but in a different voice. The voice was one of reason and compassion, one which upheld the dignity of the subjects of development and respected their struggle for survival.

The Public Affairs staff, the Press Office and the O & M PR consultant did agree 'ground rules' before SCF Week started. They wanted coverage but not at any price. There were semantic qualifications. For instance, they undertook to ensure, whenever possible, that editorial coverage - be it in national or regional press or advertorial feature - should stress that the famine was affecting seven African countries. Reportage had to avoid representing the whole of Africa as a lost cause, or 'basket case'. The Head of Publications stressed that she was trying to prevent people using the expression 'famine hit people', whenever possible, because it gave a peculiar and cataclysmic interpretation to the events. These attempts at balance were widely believed to be weak strokes swimming against the jingoistic tide. The Head of Publications blamed the 'Great British Public' for this. She remarked that they were intellectually lazy and would only respond to that which gave them quick gratification. More subtle messages simply passed them by. She and others, nevertheless felt that it was crucial to temper the fundraisers' desire to give the public what they wanted. It was necessary to police the extremes of 'technical truths' and jingoism by establishing pragmatic guidelines on representational practice.

Sometimes, it was hard indeed to reconcile the more progressive and rational messages of the Public Affairs Department with those proposed by O & M Advertising. A glowing example of this was O & M Advertising's suggestion, in one of their early documents, for cornering fast food customers. They proposed putting collection boxes in fast food chains
with the message 'spend £ 1 on a Big Mac and buy one for an African child too' (Ogilvy
and Mather Advertising 1991b)!

The Director of Public Affairs wryly commented that Save the Children Fund still had a
long way to go as far as a coordinated communications strategy was concerned.

Despite the tensions concerning the 'glibness' of the advertising message and the
negotiation that preceded the appeal, it was ordained that the organisation as a whole should
stand in support of the appeal. SCF wanted to make sure that the public, its own staff, and
that of Ogilvy and Mather were equally enthusiastic about 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' and
responded to the urgency of 'the need'. A staff meeting was held at Headquarters to
courage all to join in. Relevant enticing documentation was posted round the
Headquarters building in Camberwell, and the entrance hall had a large banner proclaiming
the campaign. For SCF it was important that all those that coordinated the campaign were
seen to believe in it and mobilise behind it.

vi Inaugurating the 'Skip Lunch' campaign.

O & M Advertising planned to set the campaign in motion in three successive phases
named, 'Awareness', 'Action' and 'Achievement' (1991b). According to them, this would
ensure SCF's high and constant profile in the press.

The first stage 'Awareness' would pre-date the launch, encompassing all the activities
which would prepare the way including alerting the Branches and corporate sponsors of
their role within the Week. This 'Awareness' stage was, however, complicated by issues
beyond the Fund's control, most notably the Kurdish crisis (a fuller examination of this
will be presented in Chapter 6). The media and world politicians clambered over each
other in an attempt to delineate and experience the 'real plight' of the Kurds. This faintly
squalid competition meant that the rest of the world faded into obscurity. As the launch
drew close, campaign staff at SCF began to worry that they would not be able to shift the
the press's agenda away from the Kurds.
O & M Advertising and SCF agreed that the only way they could ensure awareness of SCF before the launch of the appeal on 29 April 1991, was by being visibly proactive during the Kurdish crisis. Although I am not arguing that the publicity spin-offs for the 'Skip Lunch' were the sole motivation for SCF's involvement in the Kurdish crisis, its beneficial impact did not pass SCF by. Indeed it lost no time in putting itself to the forefront once it had secured itself a role and operational position. SCF launched a Kurdish appeal in the press in conjunction with its corporate sponsor *The Observer*. The fundraising target was set at the modest sum of £30,000, but £320,000 was raised in two weeks. The Fund also produced a television advertisement, again with the help of O & M Advertising (they took the credit for suggesting the idea) (*Campaign* 26.04.91). For O & M Advertising the advantage of all this Kurdish exposure was clear. It effected some 'brand building' for SCF and acted as a suitable prelude for 'Skip Lunch' because it confirmed that SCF were always 'standing by'. It was important not to ignore the Kurdish crisis, but to assert that the African need was relatively greater and the crisis more pressing.

SCF hoped that the media would tire of the Kurdish issue by 29 of April, because it would be the ideal moment for turning its attention towards Africa. The Princess Royal's impact would be crucial, so her speech had to be drafted very carefully. The SCF Press Officer was aware that some newspapers would not cover 'royal stories' if they seemed too much like publicity stunts (especially *The Independent*), or if they were not 'royal' enough. Equally, the launch would be a disaster if the Court reporters rather than serious journalists were dispatched to hear her.

The SCF Press Officer decided to market the Princess Royal's 'Skip Lunch' speech as a 'scoop'. She made it known that the Princess would be making some fairly trenchant remarks about the hypocrisy of the media, in particular their part in creating the myth of 'compassion fatigue'. Her speech was purposefully written in a bullish fashion. She would chide the media into recognising that there was huge crisis going on in Africa. There would be a deliberate linking of the Kurdish and African crises. It was no longer

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32 The Princess Royal's SCF Week speech was preceded by an article in *The Observer* on 28 April (the day before the launch). The article was extracted from a speech that The Princess Royal had given to the Africa Society, previewing the forthcoming appeal and asserting the relevance of the African continent to our 'common future' (the newspaper also carried a full page advertisement) (*The Observer* 28.04.91).
simply a question of raising the issue of 'famine in Africa'; it had to be connected to the media's myopic obsession with the Kurds. The speech was drafted with the specific aim of including several 'sound bites'. The Princess Royal would say that the press were claiming that the British public 'couldn't stomach' any more disaster appeals (thereby playing with the campaign theme, and addressing 'compassion fatigue'). It was also hoped that she would end on a little self-referential joke: 'one must always skip lunch', which could then be turned into an press advertisement. Ironically The Princess Royal very rarely eats lunch. SCF felt that her contribution needed to be well managed to avoid seeming misleading.

O & M Advertising's second phase ('Action') referred to the mobilisation during the Week starting first and foremost with the Princess's speech, but also to the diversity of techniques that would be brought into play to galvanise the public. The third stage 'Achievement' would be put into operation if everything went well. It would consolidate the campaign using the President to thank every one (in another speech) for their participation, and to announce, perhaps, the date of the next 'Skip Lunch' (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991b).

vii The impact of the 'Skip Lunch. Save A Life' campaign.

So what were the results of all this planning?

The Kurdish issue peaked two weeks before the launch. There was talk of settlements and safe havens by the British Government and the British Red Cross were launching a massive appeal, so the issue was said to be tiring (Chapter 6). The Friday before the launch, the day that Jonathan Dimbleby spoke for SCF, the media, including the newly prominent American cable television channel CNN, had begun to show an interest in Africa. The Head of Publications said it was as if the press were looking for the next big disaster story. She remarked 'these crises are starting to sound like commodities aren't they?'. The atmosphere was tense within and between development charities, as they were all battling for news coverage. During the lead up to SCF Week, the organisers received

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33 She did, in the event, refuse to do this, but this also generated media coverage in the tabloids!
34 This was picked up with some cynicism by Terry Wogan on the Wogan show.
news that Frank Judd (of Oxfam) was hoping to bring Africa to peoples' attention. He had decided to travel to Mozambique (chosen because it didn't have famine associations). SCF was unsure as to how to respond. Senior members did not want their exclusive rights over 'Skip Lunch', and by association the issue of the famine, to be dissipated to the other development NGOs. So SCF decided not join forces with Oxfam.

The suspicion that the media was searching for another big story was confirmed on the day of the launch. Coverage was phenomenal. CNN and Canadian television attended, in addition to journalists from most of the national newspapers, radio and television news programmes (including BSkyB).

The event was very well organised. Journalists had been warned in an embargoed press release about the Princess's speech. They were also supplied on arrival at Church House, in Westminster, with information packs containing a copy of the speech, a press release and a copy of AFRICA. The reality of Famine. There were captioned photographs available for copying and the room also had stands with information on the famine.

The Princess spoke with authority and reserve. Her speech stressed the urgency of the situation in each of the seven African countries and used case histories. She explained the importance of Africa to the world community and to global democracy. She warned of the dangers of dismissing it as a 'lost' continent. She indicated that SCF was a witness to its distress but, more importantly, a vehicle of hope. She also stressed the 'traditional' generosity of the British public.

There will be those who will say that the British public have had their fill of disasters of, perhaps we can put it another way, that people won't stomach being asked to give again. I don't really believe this to be the case and so today I am asking everyone who can to 

skip lunch and save a life and to send the money saved and the money raised to Save the Children.

The Princess Royal effectively stated that everyone could contribute, that even a small sacrifice was sufficient to enable others, but predominantly children, to live. She articulated convincingly the emotive but 'technical' truths devised by O & M Advertising.

35 By the time Frank Judd returned the Charity Commission Report on Oxfam had come to light, and he was interviewed in connection with this. SCF had, in fact, made sure it received the publicity for Africa by securing a pre-emptive strike with the media the day before his return. According to the O & M PR consultant, there were no doubts concerning the competitive motives behind this particular act. SCF wanted to make sure 'no one stole its thunder', particularly Oxfam.
I don't think is is an exaggeration to say that your contribution during this campaign means the difference between life and death for an African child and that is why I am asking everybody today this week and for longer to skip lunch and save a life. Anyone can play his or her part in helping to secure a future for 27 million African people. 27 million, 2.5 million to help that number is not a lot, I think we can do it. (my emphasis)

The message was twofold: (i) the British public were generous enough to weather the succession of crises calling on their financial resources and (ii) even minimal individual contributions could avert the loss of life. The Princess Royal asserted that each sacrificial act could make the 'difference to the life of an African child'. She reinforced this message by giving the 'rate of exchange' between life in the UK and life in Africa, by working through the 'shopping list' of equivalences between food and material aid originally drawn up by SCF. She did also mention the potential long term effects of such donations.

During the press conference O & M Advertising held up the mock ups of the press advertisements and photographs of the celebrities endorsing the campaign. They showed the television advertisement and the Princess pinned a 'Skip Lunch. Save A Life.' rosette on her dress which provided an excellent photo-opportunity. Following questions, the Princess Royal made an unscripted remark. She announced that it would have been easier and more profitable to auction 'Gazza' (the footballer Paul Gascoigne) to raise the money for Africa (he had just received a huge transfer fee from Lazio), but that had not been an option.

According to the O & M PR consultant the press conference could not have been more successful, it gave the appeal 'an almighty kick start'. By dint of the President's presence The Fund had a news story: 'We had the Princess Royal telling the world about the severity of the situation in Africa and ... it hadn't had a lot of coverage ... it gave journalists a peg to hang a news story on to'. The launch provided good television footage. News stations could point their cameras at the Princess so they did not need to obtain contemporary African footage. The media had been primed before the event; both the BBC1 Six O' clock News and Newsround, in the wake of the Jonathan Dimbleby press release, had shown the SCF television advertisement. The regional press featured SCF Week events, and The Sun on 25 April had forecast the Princess Royal's interview with Terry Wogan. Moreover the magazine Woman published on 29 April appositely presented a shopping list
under the title of 'Amazing' listing what the average philanthropist could expect to do or get for £ 10: 'four weeks support for a granny', or 'hot soup for the Homeless', or 'Freedom for a dolphin' or, of course, giving it to SCF.

On 29 April SCF and its campaign hit every broadcast news programme in the country and was the longest feature on most television news programmes (Fig. 5.26). Only TV Am failed to cover it till the next day (30 April). The television and radio news carried the sound bites about the public 'not being able to stomach' another appeal and news footage featuring the Princess pinning on her rosette. CNN broadcast to every country apart from Vietnam and Greenland, so SCF UK was in the odd situation of receiving enquiries about the campaign from sister organisations in Australia and America. Enquiries were made from Field Directors in Hong Kong and Nairobi who had heard of the campaign on the radio. So 'Skip Lunch' not only achieved unprecedented domestic coverage but for the first time ever a Save the Children campaign achieved global reach.

For SCF, the good news did not stop there. One of the major coups was the press conference screening of the television advertisement. This was relayed on the Nine O'clock News and News at Ten. For O & M Advertising this was the ultimate in free coverage. It was more than they had planned or hoped for. They assessed it as 'priceless'; the new programmes had used the advertisement as a editorial piece on famine and broadcast it to millions of viewers. This created a bandwagon. Once one television news channel showed the 'Greasy Bacon' advertisement others followed suit. The BBC showed it repeatedly and the American media that covered the launch (ABC, CBS and CNN) also requested copies (Ogilvy & Mather Public Relations 1991b).

On Tuesday 30 April, every newspaper, tabloid and quality, carried a story on the appeal and the famine. The coverage ranged in size and content. The Times covered it with a long article, starting on the front page, with the headline 'Crusading Princess skips meal'. It quoted the Princess saying 'I would be quite happy to forego lunch if it meant saving a life' while giving details of exactly what the price of lunch could obtain in aid equivalents. It stressed the difference in scale between the Kurdish and the African crisis and the short-sightedness of the media in the way it had masked the African crisis. The Sun, on the other
hand, chose to concentrate on Princess’s quip about Gazza ‘Anne Bids for Gazza’ (the article was needless to say short on analysis). *The Daily Mirror* in their article ‘You are One, Anne’ reported on the President’s refusal to say ‘one must skip lunch’\(^{36}\). The regional press featured the story in the following way: ‘Caring Anne says don’t feed me, feed them’ (*The Echo* - Sunderland), ‘Princess Royal’s Gazza Aid idea’ (*Express and Star* Wolverhampton - front page), ‘Stop all my big lunches says Anne’ (*Evening Standard* - West End Final), or again ‘Skip Excuses, Save a Life’ (*Evening Echo* - Bournemouth).

According to both SCF and O & M Advertising 29 April 1991 had been Save the Children’s day and from then on the media’s attention was turned towards Africa. The task was not to let the story become a ‘flash-in-the-pan’. The media’s coverage had to be sustained. The interview with the Princess Royal in *The Daily Telegraph* on the 1 May helped. Although the article was more gossipy than SCF would have liked (there were snipes about green bathrooms) it was judged to be valuable because it mainly concentrated on the ‘Skip Lunch’ appeal. According the SCF’s Press Officer its slightly scandalous tone was an advantage because it made it more interesting than a ‘boring treatise’ on development issues. In the regional press the ‘advertorial’ features were used to maximum effect. The Branches had used their information/media packs and generated sustained coverage throughout the week. According to the O & M PR consultant it was a quintessential example of the bandwagon effect, the ‘success breeds success thing’. The local papers followed the national media agenda and celebrities were busily fuelling the whole process.

In the celebrity arena SCF managed two major coups: one planned and one spontaneous. The planned event involved Sir Cyril Smith. A photo-story had been organised which charted his struggle to fit into the one-size ‘I Skipped Lunch’ T-Shirts printed for the appeal. This story bridged the tabloids, the qualities and the regional press. *The Independent* carried a large photo of him on 2 May thrusting out his huge belly encased by

\(^{36}\) *The Independent* carried a short article with the headline ‘Princess urges lunch aid’. Other headlines included ‘Anne plea for Africa’ (*The Daily Express*), ‘Skip Lunch and Save an African Life, says Princess’ (*The Daily Telegraph*), ‘Anne’s Food for Thought’ (*The Daily Mail*), ‘Anne appeals for lunch money to feed the starving’ (*The Guardian*), ‘Sell Gazza to feed the starving says Anne’ (*Today*).
the T-Shirt (Fig. 5.27). *The Daily Mirror* ran a full page photo story (on page three) on the 2 May. It was a sequence of action shots with Sir Cyril wrestling to squeeze himself into the T-Shirt. It was accompanied by the huge headline playing off the T-Shirt slogan with 'Oh! Yeah Cyril. Well, somebody will believe you, Cyril' (Fig. 5.28). The photographs and headline were complimented by slight editorial and comment which focussed on how the reader could help. The regional papers also made much of Sir Cyril’s battle.

The unexpected publicity spin off involved 'Gazza' - the football star Paul Gascoigne. The Princess's comment at the press conference caught the tabloids' imagination, and no sooner had it been made than he had signed and was proposing to put up several of his shirts for auction (reported in *The Daily Mail* 30.04.91). Then *The News of the World* (05.05.91) showed initiative and carried a front page story highlighting how Gazza (pictured holding an armful of Mars bars) was going to give up his 'Mars a day' for SCF. The headline read 'Okay Princess I'm all Yours' (Fig. 5.29). *The News of the World* also proposed to auction Gazza ('read on p 7'). Readers were encouraged to phone up an 0898 number to pledge a certain amount and leave their name and address. 'Winners' would be picked at random to play football with Gazza at a later date37. On the 7 May 1991, *The News of the World* also launched 'Skip Sweets, Save a Life'.

The momentum was astonishing. Both national and regional papers were replete with news of who had sacrificed what for the 'campaign' and how they were progressing in their endeavours. Nationals and regionals reported regularly on Royal abstinence. The Princess's identification with the appeal was reinforced during her appearance on *Wogan*. Although a light-hearted interview, it attempted to provide a more detailed comment on events in order to give a final 'boost' to the 'Skip Lunch' appeal at the end of SCF week. This, again, attracted the interest of the regional press, although by this time attention was turning away from Africa to the flood in Bangladesh and to events in the rest of the world (Chapter 6).

37 Later when Paul Gascoigne could no longer play because of injury he also auctioned his boots for SCF. This was reported in *The Sun* (17.05.91).
The Fund tried to maintain a profile throughout the following months by publishing articles and running some low level advertising ('Children are dying in Africa') in May. Indeed the disasters and the appeals later on in the month (The British Red Cross and Christian Aid Week) enabled issues pertaining to aid and development to maintain their relevance. On the 12 May Nicholas Hinton (SCF 's Director) was featured in *The Observer* \(^{38}\) in the 'Experts' Expert' series. He was nominated the number one Charity Director (one suspects this was not exactly an even competition given that *The Observer* was one of SCF's corporate sponsors) (Fig. 5.30). On 6 June the Fund organised another press conference entitled 'Compassion fatigue, what compassion fatigue?'. This referred to the fact that the Fund were, financially, well on target. This conference was not well reported. SCF and Ogilvy and Mather were pleased. They argued that through a combination of astute public relations and good fortune they had managed for a brief moment to shift the national and the international media's agenda onto the issue of Africa and famine.

**viii 'Skip Lunch': understanding and evaluating the achievement.**

By putting Africa on the map, albeit briefly, SCF succeeded in attaining one of its major 'campaign' goals. It did so on the basis of the 'technical truth': that skipping lunch *could* save someone's life. The campaign was undoubtedly popular and populist. SCF had fostered, and effectively endorsed the use of simplistic and negative images by other agencies - most particularly the media. The press, especially the tabloids, represented the situation in overwhelmingly stereotyped terms: highlighting the deeds of the generous 'Brits' and counterposing them against pictures of African misery and starvation. One member of SCF remarked that although the media coverage of the famine was better than it had been during the Ethiopian Famine of 1983-4, it was still the case that Africa seemed voiceless. The Kurds had spoken for themselves, but the Africans were still being spoken for. Nevertheless, people had responded to the urgency of the plea and had been prepared to do something to make a difference.

\(^{38}\) In the Colour Supplement on 12 May 1991.
Public Affairs staff had misgivings about the messages and the images deployed by the campaign but had responded by acting to pre-empt them. They had produced documents that contextualised the advertising message. The Head of Publications even said that she believed that in the final analysis 'Skip lunch' had not set up a chain of equivalences between food and lives. There was however little evidence to substantiate this statement. She maintained that SCF had been successful in establishing a greater context of awareness. The SCF documents had referred to the seven devastated countries and had very deliberately explained the 'myths' and 'realities' of famine and this information was included in the press reports, both nationally and regionally. So donors had, ultimately, been prevented from simply expecting that the price of lunch would safeguard a child's life. For fundraising staff, it was 'horses for courses' and bringing the issue to bear on the lives of The Sun/Mirror readers necessarily involved a degree of compromise. The broad educational work was not their 'problem', it was the Branches' responsibility in the aftermath of the campaign.

All parties concluded that despite the fact that SCF had not been able to regulate the type of coverage it received, nevertheless it had managed to get across a broadly 'accurate' and 'balanced' message. Measures had been taken to stem the worst excesses. Some other NGOs were not so complimentary. For them, the message was neither very inspirational nor path-breaking. Fundraisers from other NGOs were quite disparaging, pronouncing the campaign 'very SCF' ie: predictable, simplistic, and middle of the road, an appeal befitting its 'charity' approach.

But no-one could deny that the coverage 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.', SCF and Africa received was monumental. SCF's Press Officer stated that previous SCF Weeks had attained a maximum of twenty five articles in the press (national and regional). In 1991 the Fund managed four hundred and six pieces of editorial coverage (Fig. 5.31). This was an extraordinary achievement and far surpassed all expectations. For the actual running of the Fund's work such coverage was a mixed blessing, and for project staff who had the relevant information and contacts it was a very disruptive period.
So what was the key to success? O & M Advertising explained it in the following manner:

The Key to Success
The Key to the campaign's success is the overall simplicity of the idea. It offered the public a way of giving that was:
- new and different
- had popular appeal
- identified the donor with the problem
- crossed age and class barriers
- simple to understand
- worthy yet fun
It did this by not focussing on the complex issues that bring about famine:
- Migration
- Disease
- Third World debt
- Civil war
All of which slow down the communication of the message.
(Ogilvy & Mather Advertising 1991d).

According to O & M Advertising the key to success was the 'slogan', the simplistic and jingoistic message which exhorted people to have fun and 'starve for Africa' in order to raise money. The appeal struck a chord with the public because it was neither judgemental nor pedagogic. It allowed, indeed it prescribed participation and a 'feel-good' factor. It set out the win the 'hearts' and 'minds' of the public by convincing them of the enormity of the problem and of the simple way in which they could make a difference.

By providing a set of equivalences which people could work by, rather than believe absolutely, the 'campaign' had recast the issue in physical and personal terms. It had allowed the public to glimpse the "rate of exchange" between life in the UK and life in Africa (Campaign 20.11.92). SCF had asked them quite simply to 'trade up' and by doing so, made the 'problem' and the appeal accessible to the majority. This had put the relationship between donors and SCF on a different footing. Supporters were now more personally involved, and it was hoped this would be productive for the Fund in the long term.

'Skip Lunch' was designed as a populist crusade, which was flexible and had 'PR ability'. The advertising was defined less in terms of its direct role and more in terms of its marketable potential, it had to 'buy' the media's attention (Campaign 20.11.92). This was what differentiated 'Skip Lunch' from other populist appeals, such as Band Aid. Public relations work had sought to dictate the climate of awareness and create a broad front.

Different audiences were targeted with different kinds of information and messages. The
use of celebrities and of local information spaces had created a level of awareness that had never previously been achieved. It provided greater access than could have been secured by advertising alone at a fraction of cost and had been accompanied by serious consideration of the issue. SCF and O & M Advertising/PR had tried to influence, and work alongside, the media. They attempted to control the type of coverage 'Skip Lunch, Save a Life' and the famine received, by setting down guidelines and producing reference documents. They had acted strategically to influence the media and captivate an audience (Ogilvy & Mather Advertising 1991d). Initially Public Affairs staff had feared that 'Skip Lunch' empowered the audience too much (they were, by implication, responsible for Africa's development and future). After the event, Public Affairs staff claimed that because the public had not been made to feel helpless in the wake of this impending disaster, this had augmented their allegiance to SCF as a development organisation.

But there was no doubt that luck had a significant role. The timing of the campaign had been extremely opportune because the Kurdish issue had faded. SCF had an opportunity to influence the media and turn its attention towards Africa. For the O & M Account Planner, the synergistic strategy had worked.

I mean [SCF] was the right charity, at the right time, with the right appeal and the right slogan. ... There are so many factors which were right and I think you can't really ... take them apart in terms of analysing the individual bits.

This was all aided by the Fund's warm, solid, practical and trustworthy image.

A note of scepticism must be inserted here. No research was conducted after the appeal to substantiate these rationales for success or investigate how the public felt about the appeal, the famine or Africa. So the question of which message was received, and what the punters finally derived in terms of image or message by virtue of the appeal, was never resolved and the conclusions were to some extent conjectural. There was no evidence for the Head of Publication's assertion that the message was finally balanced in the minds of the public. Indeed O & M Advertising's (1991d) conclusions seemed to suggest that this was positively not the case.

Clearly the appeal had been internally popular. Most Headquarters staff supported the appeal but it was the Branches who were most enthusiastic. They voted it 'the most
exciting thing of 1991' at the Annual Public Meeting (APM) and it achieved a rapprochement between Headquarters and the regions. Branches and shops perceived it as a very welcome boost to their activities during SCF Week which had, hitherto, been rather uneventful and dull. They liked the slogan and stated that Headquarters had, finally, provided them with an appeal they could work with and enjoy.

Other aspects of the appeal were judged by SCF to be less than satisfactory and this came out in an evaluation report. Most of the quibbles revolved around its administration (the number of staff seconded, the pre-emptive winding up of activities connected with 'Skip Lunch'). There were also public relations difficulties...Some of the celebrities were washouts (Jason Donovan for one) and some of the exclusives negotiated with the tabloids never came off (Ogilvy and Mather PR 1991b). The O & M PR consultant also had some criticisms. He felt the slogan had been diluted too much (into demands to 'pay double', 'skip sweets'). He thought some of the branding techniques had been ineffectual, that the T-Shirts were too expensive and badly designed and the badges, catastrophically, did not carry the SCF logo. Furthermore the ad-shell posters and the 'niggle ads' had failed to incorporate clear means of response. He also recommended better management of the media in future campaigns (Ogilvy and Mather PR 1991b).

But these reservations were aimed at the planning not the 'idea'. The conceptual framework of the appeal was reinvented, in retrospect, as a stunningly original idea which was destined for success. O & M Advertising in particular had forgotten their vocal initial misgivings. Indeed the appeal won the Marketing Award for Innovation for its confidence to 'recognise, and concentrate its efforts behind, a powerful fund-raising idea.' (Campaign 20.11.92).

All these evaluations were important because when SCF began to realise the potential success of 'Skip Lunch' they started contemplating a follow up 'Skip Lunch II' for SCF Week 1992. It was crucial therefore to minimise luck and maximise strategy.
Sustaining the Momentum: SCF after 'Skip Lunch'.

'Skip Lunch' was in some arenas an unqualified success. By July 1991 it had raised £5 million, double its target. Furthermore it had managed to redirect the public's attention to Africa as a focal point for discussion and news for a period of two weeks. In so doing the Fund had attained widespread recognition for its work. The O & M PR consultant said he noticed that the profile of SCF quite quickly became a significant concern within the campaigns office. SCF realised how much good will it could accumulate. For him it had given 'fresh grease' to SCF's profile. Post facto the challenge facing the Fund faced was how to sustain the momentum and public enthusiasm.

The Fund set about securing its profile in two ways: by planning 'Skip Lunch II' for 1992 and by initiating an Autumn appeal to coincide with their Annual Public Meeting in October 1991. Negotiations for both these events happened soon after the close of the SCF Week 1991.

SCF reaffirmed that their motive for 'Skip Lunch II' was one of responding to need, though this time they did not claim the appeal would be 'unprecedented'. In 1992, they claimed, the need in Africa would still be there and there was still so much to be done. The potential for extensive planning was welcomed by Public Affairs. For the Head of Publications 'Skip Lunch II' was an opportunity to demonstrate the success of SCF's work and the 'Skip Lunch' appeal and to create more of a balance in the messages. She wanted it to follow up the 1991 work. For her the 'Skip Lunch II' would present a longer term view focussing on partners' work, deconstructing more myths and showing that emergency aid was a last resort. 'Skip Lunch II' would have more illustrated success stories, though the core message would not change, ie: famine equals food. For O & M Advertising the appeal slogan was general enough to adapt itself to other disasters in the future and it did not have

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39 SCF's agenda in this respect was perhaps demonstrated by their hijacking of Oxfam's attempt at press coverage after Frank Judd's return from Africa in 1991. SCF also decided not to participate in a development organisation venture called 'Wings over Africa', which had the specific aim of reintroducing Africa into the media in June. SCF pulled out at the last minute because it claimed that the Princess Royal's endorsement was too valuable to be thinly spread. This surely conflicted with their rhetoric of attempting to bring Africa back on the agenda. The O & M PR consultant said he was astonished at the degree of competition between development charities.
to be restricted to Africa (or seven African countries). They recommended that SCF consider it as an annual appeal, like Poppy Day. It was very advisable for SCF to capitalise on the good feeling that was the outcome of the appeal. Public support could not be allowed to drain away (Ogilvy and Mather Advertising 1991d).

The Autumn 1991 appeal focussed on refugees. The campaign was called 'Children on the Move'. Those within SCF claimed, again, that it arose out of need and that it was an issue on which SCF were particularly able to comment because of their historical links with the problem. This rational summary conflicted somewhat with O & M Advertising's version of events. It had again been asked to coordinate the campaign. O & M Advertising's Account Planner claimed that SCF's initial brief was almost non-existent and that the Fund had no strong opinion that it wanted to put across. It had also failed to supply a strategy and a budget. He concluded that SCF just wanted to make a noise and to put themselves in direct competition with other more proactive development agencies. It was first and foremost an exercise in self-promotion - 'covert branding'. SCF's hidden agenda was 'hey! aren't we great?'. The formula that O & M Advertising proposed for this campaign was similar to the one devised for 'Skip Lunch'. There was one notable inclusion in the creative brief, objective number three.

**Campaign Objectives**
1. Identify an issue relating to the world's refugee crisis and publicise the role of SCF in tackling that issue
2. Fundraising on the back of that publicity
3. Promote SCF the brand
   - long-term strategic goals
   - Short-term aid work
Opens the debate on the refugee crisis with *SCF firmly in the chair.*
(Ogilvy & Mather Advertising 1991e) (my emphasis)

O & M Advertising designed a bold campaign incorporating large press advertisements which targeted International Law. SCF would not be convinced to undertake such a proactive appeal, saying that it would burden and alienate the Branches. In the event 'Children on the Move' was launched as a direct marketing campaign at the 1991 APM.
At the same event the Head of Fundraising summarised the importance of the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' appeal. He argued that its success had reaffirmed the significance of three key aspects of the Fund's work: (i) Innovation, (ii) Communication and (iii) Partnership.

One of the key lesson of 'Skip Lunch' is that our profile and the power of our message is crucial to our success in raising funds. And all of us ... are communicators for the Fund, ambassadors in our own community. ... Communicating our mission with authority and varied impact, is, I believe, a major critical task of the Fund in the 1990s.

In this section of chapter six I looked behind the scenes at the negotiations that preceded the launch of the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' campaign by Save the Children in 1991. I argued that the decision to inaugurate this high profile appeal was justified in reference to the 'need' in five, and then seven, African countries. But I also implied that the existence of this crisis provided only a partial explanation of why Save the Children chose to have a campaign at that particular moment. The 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' fulfilled a number of institutional needs: the need to enthuse Branches, to communicate to a wider cross section of the population, to be 'virile' as an agency and to maintain income. 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' was ultimately an experiment, testing the extent to which all these obligations could be simultaneously satisfied and the degree to which SCF could rally round an issue as an institution. Most particularly, 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' investigated the usefulness of the Focus on Images guidelines. Not only did these exclude certain advertising proposals at the pitching stage, but they determined the limits of acceptability during the course of the production of the campaign.

By giving voice to the various practitioners involved, I showed how representations of the developing world were historically contingent discursive practices. In this section I implicitly vindicated the narrative set up in chapter three which argued that British development charities in the 1990s recognised that communication had to be a multilateral strategy, one which reconciled populism with ethics, and which embraced and used the power of the media.

Conclusion
In this chapter I mapped out and described the compromises and negotiations that gave rise to the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign. My purpose in so doing was to locate 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' discursively, institutionally and historically. By bringing to light the internal world of a development charity, I argued that the decisions and negotiations affecting representations could not be reduced to a conflict between two professional groups, nor could representations be perceived as the simple translation of development or charitable discourses. This case study showed that a number of agendas and needs had to be reconciled. An interpretation that posited that the fundraisers had ruled the day or that simplistic messages had predominated might on the surface appear correct, yet such an analysis would not do justice to the discussions and decisions that staff at SCF and Ogilvy and Mather were forced to make. It would obscure the 'hidden history' of the campaign. Clearly the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' campaign promoted a 'technical truth' that skipping lunch could save a life in certain African countries. Yet part of its distinction as an emergency campaign was that it produced concurrently alternative and more complex messages.

So in this chapter I explored the variety of agendas that came into play during the organisation of a campaign, to show that the production of imagery was regulated and regimented by several discourses operating simultaneously. For example, the campaign was orchestrated within the overarching framework of the image guidelines which posited a direct connection between development, charity and representation. These guidelines determined the tone and the content of the campaign, because they effectively selected it, and informed the way certain Departments of Save the Children sought to temper the popular representations of Africa promoted by the fundraisers. I portrayed the guidelines as a tool that could be used to censor or to give voice and which could be interpreted and used by a number of different practitioners as a point of reference. I positioned the campaign historically by showing that before and during 1991, Save the Children was seriously reevaluating its position as a charitable and development organisation. I argued that SCF's desire to appear more proactive and influential affected its decision to orchestrate the appeal while its decision to select a primarily populist and
media-led campaign was historically contingent. I asserted that on this point this empirical chapter confirmed the conclusion of chapter three, by showing the extent to which SCF were prepared to work with, rather than against, the media. I demonstrated how various - supposedly conflictual - groups within Save the Children were prepared to consider, endorse and unite behind a populist approach to raising funds. I also explained the 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' campaign in terms of a struggle over truth. I found that each set of practitioners within SCF was assigned the task of producing its own version of the truth, in the hope that the final result would be a populist, pluralist, balanced and essentially 'accurate' message which encapsulated - for different audiences - the unfolding events in seven African countries. Finally, I indicated that representations produced by Save the Children were the product of negotiation and compromise between practitioners in the North: reference was not made to Southern opinion. I emphasised that these images and messages were selected and fashioned by those who had to power to disseminate them. These representations of the developing world were calculated and instrumental, they reconciled pragmatics with ethics. They were the product of political decisions.

In chapter six I will consider the questions of truth and power more overtly. Whereas this chapter has resonated, in particular, with chapter three due to its focus on the compromises and tensions within Save the Children Fund, chapter six will resonate more with chapter four. In particular I will consider how power is inscribed in representation by documenting how a British development charity such as Christian Aid sought purposefully to etch its development and social justice discourse on the representations it produced.
Chapter six

Christian Aid Case Study: Constructing An Appropriate Image.
Introduction

In this last chapter of the thesis I consider how the British development charity Christian Aid designed and orchestrated its Christian Aid Week in 1991.

Some aspects of this chapter will be similar to chapter five. Clearly the method used to explain representational practice is the same and seeks to situate representations discursively, historically and institutionally. But there are also significant differences between these two case studies. This is due to two factors: (i) the character of the institution, and (ii) the nature of the campaign under examination. First, Christian Aid was both a smaller and less bureaucratic organisation than SCF, but it also had a reputation for being one of the most proactive development charities in Britain. In contradistinction to SCF, the tone and the content of Christian Aid advertising was often acclaimed as exemplary. Second, Christian Aid Week was the major fundraising event in Christian Aid's yearly calendar; to change it meant a radical reevaluation of previous methods.

The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, as in chapter five, I aim to set the scene. I consider the changes occurring within Christian Aid before and during 1991. In particular I focus on how Christian Aid was reviewing its communication strategy in order to produce advertising and fundraising materials that reflected the identity of the institution. I show that in order to do this, Christian Aid engaged a new advertising agency and experimented with a new communication style. In section two I examine how this new style was incorporated into extant views on the ethics of imaging. I concentrate on a photographic expedition to Bolivia. This section resonates with chapter four by showing that the content of images reveals little about their process of production. The expedition was largely unregulated and resulted in flagrant transgressions of Christian Aid's codes on representational practices. By highlighting how Christian Aid reacted to these breaches of trust, I explore the extent to which development charities are willing to be pragmatic about ethical dilemmas. In the third section I survey how the Bolivian incident and the planning that had preceded it impacted on the design of Christian Aid Week 1991.
I examine in detail how the Christian Aid Week messages and images were designed, produced and refined. I further explore how Christian Aid reconciled its need to popularise and personalise the issue of development with the need to reflect the 'gritty reality' of the developing world and the dignity of its people. Finally I locate the campaign historically by considering how contingency affected its success.

**Section 1. Continuity and Change - Christian Aid in the 1990s.**

i The constitution of Christian Aid.

The 'roots' of Christian Aid lay in European 'reconstruction' in the aftermath of World War II. Initially constituted in 1952 as the Christian Aid Division of the British Ecumenical instrument, the British Council of Churches, in the nineteen sixties it acquired a separate name and identity. In 1991 it had outgrown its mother institution which had itself been transformed into Council of Churches of Britain and Ireland (CCBI) (*Christian Aid News* 1990; Christian Aid 1992). In the past forty years there had been another important change, in the definition of the organisation's aims. Christian Aid's Constitution, redrafted in 1992, defined its purposes in the following manner:

(a) The primary object of Christian Aid shall be the furtherance of charitable purposes which relieve or combat malnutrition, hunger, disease, sickness or distress throughout the world.

(b) The secondary object of Christian Aid shall be the furtherance of charitable purposes which advance or assist such other charitable work as may be carried on by or with the support or approval of the Sponsoring Churches. (*Christian Aid* 1992)

This did not convey the geographical specificity of this work. Although Christian Aid still funded projects in Europe, most especially in disasters and refugee situations and held several small funding commitments in previously 'poor' European countries (Greece, Spain and Italy as well as Eastern Europe) until 1989, these commitments were marginal compared to its work in the developing world.

Christian Aid was both a large and small organisation. It had occupied the position of third largest development agency in the UK for a number of years (behind Oxfam and Save the Children Fund) while maintaining comparatively few staff (because it was non
operational). In 1991, its staff numbered two hundred and fifty, with one hundred and seventy employed at headquarters and eighty employed in the regions (the Area Staff).

Christian Aid was organised according to a matrix system, brought into operation during the nineteen eighties to ensure harmonisation of potentially conflictual organisational agendas (most notably between fundraising and the overseas/education staff). It was divided into Sectors (Fundraising, Communications, Aid, Finance) and Groups (Latin America/Caribbean, Asia/Pacific, Africa/Middle East and UK/Ireland) with General Services, Area Staff and the Directorate falling outside of the matrix. In the early 1990s there was a concerted effort to implement the matrix. This was most noticeable in the arena of fundraising, since 1990 most Groups and Sectors had some form of fundraising input: most commonly as a fundraiser in situ.

Christian Aid, as its name implied, was a religious organisation. The ostensible control of the organisation rested with the Board of Trustees, which consisted of sixteen lay members who were nominated and appointed by the sponsoring Churches for a period of five years. Four church members were nominated - one each - by the national ecumenical movements of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, in addition to a representative of the CCBI and a Chair. The Board appointed and could remove the Director of Christian Aid. Moreover all members of the Board sat on Committees which were held quarterly for Groups and Sectors. Below these Committees lay the Staff Management Team composed of the direct line managers of all Groups and Sectors (these managers had to accept preaching commitments as part of their jobs).

ii Christian Aid: planning for the 1990s.

In 1991, Christian Aid outlined its future agenda in the form of a five year Corporate Plan.

Christian Aid remains fundamentally committed
- to adding to the strength of the poor overseas and
- to challenging and enabling the people of these islands to stand by them
In doing so we shall be guided above all by:
- the communities of the poor
- the British and Irish Churches
- our Christian faith
- development studies
(Christian Aid 1991a)

The report continued by saying that during the course of the next five years Christian Aid hoped to build on its present work and 'open' itself up to fresh insights without fundamentally changing direction. The report stressed the importance of cooperation with 'sister' agencies in Britain (especially CAFOD), in Europe and especially overseas. It also emphasised the need to foster stronger and more 'personal' communication between donors and beneficiaries. It included a more vigorous commitment to 'campaigning', suggesting potential issues, such as Debt, Trade and the Environment. On reading this report I was struck not by the goals themselves but by the geographical location of this building process. The seven 'outstanding features' of the five year plan concerned work to do at home, eg: the needs of advocacy, of education, of contact between supporters and recipients and of widening Christian Aid's impact and support. The quality of Christian Aid's development work was not challenged; its future role was to convey its worth to the British public, and thereby to secure its place, and that of development, in the minds and the hearts of the nation. The prediction and expectation was of growth, with an increase in staffing and a solid rise in expenditure on education and campaigning (10%). The task was to keep down overhead costs in line with the publicly acceptable percentage (15%) (see Chapter 3). The report, therefore, implicitly addressed the necessity for a steeply rising income.

Each Sector and Group contributed to this five year Corporate Plan. Here I am concerned with the Fundraising and Communications Sector submissions.

Christian Aid felt itself to be unusual in the possession of a Communications Sector in addition to a Fundraising Sector. The Communications Sector was responsible for what could broadly be termed 'profile': projecting the organisation, the work that it did and the distinctive way in which it did it. The Communications Sector oversaw all printing and buying of materials, and incorporated the Library, the Photo-Library and the Audio-Visual
Unit. The Communications Sector undertook all media and related information work. It retained Christian Aid's overall advertising brief leaving the more specialised aspects of fundraising (covenanting, Pay-roll giving, specific appeals) to the Fundraising Sector. The Communications Sector perceived its role and message, in the 1990s, as deriving from Christian Aid's Statement of Commitment *To Strengthen the Poor* (Taylor 1987b). It sought to represent, and therefore to engender, 'empowerment'. In other words, the messages and material it produced had to avoid both demeaning the subject of charity and undermining the donor's intelligence and trust. This commitment was confirmed by the Head of Fundraising.

> We would actually see all the work that we do ... as being about projecting Christian Aid in its fullest sense which means trying to project it in a way that is consistent with the aims and policies we would stand for vis-a-vis the developing world and how we project people and how we support people and I think also a sensitivity to how we talk to people at home. ... It is very easy to under-estimate the person you're addressing, ... they shouldn't be seen as fodder for whatever you want from them.

From 1990 onwards the intensity of this commitment to development issues was tempered by a recognition that materials and messages had to be made more accessible to the general public. Public education could not afford to alienate; it had to be *less* 'preachy' and 'lecture based'. Christian Aid wanted to recruit a greater cross-section of the public (not only the mostly converted *Guardian* Readers) and to cater to their needs while not compromising the necessity to raise awareness or convey the seriousness of the issues of the day. To facilitate this change of tone and attitude, the Communications Sector was keen to engage in more rigorous and regular market surveys and to buy the relevant expertise, while advocating greater in-house training in communication and media skills for its staff. So for the Communications Sector the nineties necessitated a move towards a more authoritative and influential role for Christian Aid as well as including a 'fun' dimension in Christian Aid activities.

The Fundraising Sector role and agenda was more tightly focused and more challenging. It was required to secure a permanent and steeply rising income for Christian Aid. This meant both new schemes, such as project-centred fundraising methods, and new initiatives in old areas.
The new dynamism in the Fundraising Sector was partly attributable to the new Head, previously the Marketing Director of ActionAid, one of the most successful fundraising charities in Britain. His previous successes in producing some of ActionAid’s major fundraising press advertisements was a recommendation in itself (Fig. 4.4). His conviction was that Christian Aid was not ‘tapping into’ the resources that were available, especially among its natural constituency of the churches. For some years Christian Aid income had achieved a slow but steady rate of growth. Christian Aid Week, its major fundraising drive in May, maintained an even increase of 2% (nett).

There had also been shifts in attitudes towards fundraising in the late 1980s (Chapter 3). In the aftermath of the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5, fundraising was temporarily perceived as ‘consorting with the devil’, especially within some quarters of NGOs like Christian Aid and Oxfam which espoused quite censorious views concerning the use of denigrating images. Since then, there had been a notable change of attitude, amounting to a gradual acceptance of the intrinsic worth of fundraising. In Christian Aid, initiatives that had previously been solely educational started to incorporate a fundraising element (such as the transformed educational project ‘project focus’ which was moved into the fundraising sector). More significantly perhaps, at the beginning of the 1990s, all letterheaded paper was transformed into a potential covenant form.

To consult official documentation and to highlight these changes is not simply a digression, but a crucial precursor to the descriptive work to follow. It signals the manner in which Christian Aid perceived its role in the 1990s.

We will seek to raise profile both nationally and locally. We will develop opportunities to reach new audiences as a result of expected changes in the funding, scale and content of broadcasting. This will be based on our own experience of what works. But it will also involve inputs from other specialist contacts ... We will put more resources into public education, seeking to win greater support for Christian Aid in ways that will have an impact on world poverty ... including relating to mass audiences in more popular ways. It will be based on building awareness of Christian Aid and the key poverty issues which concern us. (Christian Aid 1991b)

So in 1991 Christian Aid viewed its representational role as carrying out at a practical and domestic level, the commitment that it espoused at a theoretical/theological level in relation to its overseas work. Representation and intervention were overtly linked.
Christian Aid's mission was 'empowerment' and 'social justice' and the practices that were involved in communicating this were said to validate the integrity of this organisational message. The functions of different Sectors and Groups had to serve the greater good, so it was important to integrate them. Fundraising and educational messages were not viewed as mutually exclusive components in communicational practices. All good educational material could raise money, and good fundraising material could promote a wider perspective. Christian Aid's five year plan explicitly stated that there should be a fundraising component to almost every venture and that a closer working relationship should be held between all sections of the organisation. Projects overseas were no longer simply useful for 'awareness building', but in the same way as other NGOs (ActionAid, for instance) they were to be valued as major assets, examples which vindicated and helped to promote Christian Aid's work. Fundraising, like communication and education, was an ethical and political activity. People had to be encouraged to give 'as an expression of good stewardship, to show the rightness of generosity and compassion'.

Christian Aid ushered in the nineties determined to popularise and anchor its brand image and thereby popularise its development discourse:

We will build on Christian Aid's distinctiveness as an agency. This will involve consistency in what we say and the authority which which we say it, but its will go wider to include how we present ourselves (image, advertising, theology), how we win new support in response to world poverty (public education), how we create platforms for our cause (from decision-makers to local events) and how we present the "Third World" (challenging preconceptions). (Christian Aid 1991b)

Fundraising and Communications, in the 1990s, would work towards securing a distinctive image of Christian Aid: assembling a coherent and consistent package that would be instantly recognisable and would overtly, or covertly, be inscribed with the development and social justice discourses of the organisation.

The move away from 'negative imagery' and the uncertainty of mass income in the charitable sector in the 1990s transformed the necessary conduct of fundraising into a 'technology' which not only relied on the collection and computation of figures and quantities, but also on the creative management of sentiment according to selected criteria defined along ethical lines. This was a productive process, one dynamically involved in
'making up' people not only as beneficiaries but as consumers. Maximisation of income was constructed not as a short-term, 'smash and grab', assault on the donor, but a broadly educational process involving careful coaxing and a gradual introduction of the donor through easily accessible materials, to the development discourse of the organisation. For Christian Aid communication/fundraising strategies were only successful if 'people want to respond and want to take action on your behalf', not if they were coerced or made to feel guilty. Christian Aid was looking for donors who were productive and faithful to the organisation; not donors, therefore, but converts. New Christian Aid fundraising drives concentrated on the area of long-term committed giving - in the form of project sponsorship or covenants - and the highly profitable (no strings attached) area of legacies\(^1\) as well as more church specific denominational appeals. Before the 1990s these were not very successful areas for Christian Aid. Despite the potentially advantageous theological overtones of 'covenanting' and 'the Biblical resonance ..., about promise and commitment and keeping' this was, according to the new Head of Fundraising, a particularly feeble area\(^2\). Christian Aid mailed twenty thousand churches, yet it only received eleven thousand covenancers: a sixth as many as both ActionAid (much smaller) and Oxfam (which has twice its income).

Looking towards the 1990s meant projecting an increase in income; Christian Aid hoped to double its income over five years in contrast to the relatively sluggish growth that occurred between 1985-90\(^3\). However the issue of growth was accompanied by ethical dilemmas (see Chapters 2 & 3), most notably in the popular area of corporate sponsorship.

Christian Aid was considering this area in the early 1990s, but was unsure as to their position.

Essentially, corporate sponsorship is mutually beneficial to the parties involved. The company enjoys an enhanced reputation by virtue of association in exchange for large and consistent contributions towards the NGO. But providing beneficial publicity for private

\(^{1}\) Christian Aid was not in this sense unique. Legacies are a significant area of competition in charities. It has long been known to be a highly profitable area: the incomes of Action Aid and Help the Aged (secured through long term sponsorship) testify to this.

\(^{2}\) This issue was investigated as a marginal concern during research conducted by Christian Aid in the 1990s.

\(^{3}\) From 1985-90 income rose about 30%, the Head of Fundraising wanted future increases to behalf that (15%) per year over a period of five years.
companies is perceived to have 'integrity effects'. Their connections or investments may tarnish the standing of a particular NGO and undermine their neutrality and powers of advocacy. In 1991 the choice was a difficult one for Christian Aid especially since the economic growth of certain very successful British NGOs (Save the Children and Comic Relief) had been specifically engendered by capitalising on corporate sponsorship.

So both the Fundraising and the Communications Sectors at Christian Aid were engaged in complex and soul searching discussions revolving around maximisation of income and profile. The task was to create distinction. Christian Aid had to engender recognition and trust, but also present a quality that was genuinely 'theirs' - not simply a 'ripped off or contrived property of which could apply equally well to another agency. Christian Aid had to stand out, it had to be more than simply 'an Oxfam with hymns'.

It was against this background that Christian Aid hired a new advertising agency in 1990 to orchestrate and implement an invigorated Christian Aid Week.

iii Christian Aid Week Pragmatics.

Before 1991 Christian Aid Week (hereafter CAW, the Week), traditionally held in May, was the most prominent of Christian Aid's three major appeals. It aimed to combine raising the profile of the organisation with a monumental fundraising drive.

The activity around the Week separated neatly into two: the fundraising component which was mostly focussed at the local level organised by Christian Aid Committees and Area Secretaries, and the 'communication' strand which was more 'corporate' and centralised, using publicity stunts, press releases and heavy national advertising to achieve press coverage and generate interest.

The success of Christian Aid Week (CAW) depended primarily on two factors, (i) the efficacy of the advertising which 'warmed' up the donors and (ii) the organisation of the volunteers who undertook the relatively thankless task of house-to-house collecting. The house-to-house formed the largest single part of the Christian Aid Week income (other initiatives included sponsored events, 'hunger lunches', street collections, and so forth).
Up to 250,000 volunteers were recruited to march round the country in any given year. CAW, consequently, needed extensive organisation. The Christian Aid house-to-house was the first house-to-house to be implemented (in 1957) and in 1991 was still the largest\textsuperscript{4}. The duties of organising it were devolved to Christian Aid Committees, most commonly church based and ecumenical, by way of enthusiastic Area Secretaries (numbering forty seven in 1991) who set them up.

Planning Packs helped these committees to organise and coordinate the Week\textsuperscript{5}. The task involved securing that there was enough manpower (the 'collectors') and materials (stickers, poster, leaflets, devotional material and the magazine produced for collectors) to ensure that the message of CAW and the fundraising covered as wide an area as was possible.

In theory, CAW should have provided a wonderful opportunity for Christian Aid to engage in a consciousness raising exercise, allowing it to broadcast its message far and wide. The common consensus was, however, that it lapsed into the formulaic. A senior member of staff remarked that people entered mechanically into the event, more through a sense of duty (and gentle coercion on the part of the churches) than through a depth of conviction about the issues, or a heartfelt willingness to participate. CAW was thought to be a double edged sword. Ostensibly cheap (by relying on voluntary labour) it required a huge effort to coordinate the elaborate and decentralised preparations to get it underway. As many as sixteen million envelopes had to be printed and delivered each year in sufficient quantities and on time to be supplied to hundred of thousands of volunteers in order to guarantee efficient fundraising. The cost of voluntary effort and good will, though not directly registered in the financial returns, was, nevertheless, significant.

A senior fundraiser reflecting on the £ 3.5 million (at that time known to be) raised by Save the Children 'Skip Lunch Save a Life' Africa appeal in 1991 (see Chapter 5) compared the two endeavours:

\[\text{[L]ast year [1990] we only raised seven [million] for Christian Aid Week ... and that's with thousands and thousands of people trampling along streets putting envelopes through doors. Less than twice that amount, you know, I find that extraordinary. That the effort that we go to, or that people go to for us, compared with the return ... I mean I can moan}\]

\textsuperscript{4} Its success meant it was copied by other agencies, latterly by Oxfam.
\textsuperscript{5} In 1992 it contained advise about how to deal with the media and generate media interest.
about the collectors, our collectors, raising only an average of about £12 door-to-door. Why couldn't they all write out a cheque for £25? Then we'd all be very happy and they wouldn't have to go door-to-door.

By 1990 The Head of Fundraising had come to feel that it ought to be possible to achieve greater returns for this huge investment of staff and volunteer effort. The revamped 1991 Christian Aid Week addressed the problem of apathy and institutionalisation among collectors and CAW's slow income growth (2% increase p.a.) without lapsing into formulaic or stereotyped messages and images.

By 1990 television advertising because of its intrusiveness, pervasiveness and persuasiveness was considered to have the potential for easing the job of collectors by 'priming' potential donors more effectively. Habitually, the CAW envelope was dropped two or three days before being picked up. It was thought that television advertising could trigger an 'instant response' (people would put money in after seeing the advertisement) and provide 'acceptability' (the charity would become familiar through national advertising). It would have the added advantage of boosting and enthusing the collectors by more overtly valuing their work, thereby ensuring the double coup of more widespread communication of Christian Aid's message and a growth in income. There was substance behind this argument, and the minor venture into television in 1990 confirmed that it could upgrade donations and interest.

Prior to 1990 Christian Aid Week had been conducted along fairly established lines by Christian Aid's advertising agency of long-standing, Cohen and Company.

The advertising year (from September to September) was planned thematically and organisationally in the light of the coming 'Week'. The year started with the September 'campaign' an opportunity to build up support, raise awareness and uphold the 'key feeling' contained in the year's theme. Fundraising was a lesser goal at this stage - though money was always welcomed.

Other lesser appeals also occurred at Christmas and Harvest, the latter being specifically a church based appeal. The Christmas appeal traditionally attempted to make a comparison between a secular celebration Christmas and the religious basis and message of Christmas (Fig. 4.3). It intertwined a fundraising message with a more overtly theological
humanitarian one. Advertising at this period was possibly different for church and national press, unlike that of Christian Aid Week, although only the Church press featured a 'Thank You' advertisement after Christian Aid Week (Fig 6.16). Research conducted in 1991 suggested that the Christmas Appeal could also do with a review. Although these appeals took most prominent form through the medium of national and/or church press advertising, the actual work was done by the communicational (eg: information packs) or fundraising materials (eg: door-drops) that supported them.

The period running up to Christian Aid Week was a time when the maximum amount of coverage was attempted. The advertising budget was weighted towards the 'run up' in April (nearly three quarters of the yearly budget). This advertising was used to build awareness (normally over a period of eight weeks, reduced to six in 1990 and a couple of days in 1991) and to facilitate the final push during CAW which worked on the basis of press and poster advertising, street and house-to-house collections. The aim was to 'prime' the public - to impart an understanding of Christian Aid's ideals and work - before they were asked to part with their money. Prior to 1991 this exposure was implemented through the 'lead medium' of posters (huge, 48 sheet, billboard posters) accompanied by national/church press advertising, though in 1990 a television advert was produced in-house for three trial regions. Charities were allowed to advertise on television from 1989.

The transformation that occurred in 1991 did not affect the type of yearly planning: the changes were strategic rather than structural.

iv Christian Aid Week: imagery and advertising before 1991.

During the eighties Christian Aid acquired a reputation for its bold and innovative style of advertising and communication. This was ostensibly the product of unwritten, but functioning, guidelines on imagery. These will be considered in detail later.

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6 Income had remained at £400,000 for seven or eight years and consequently had decreased (because of inflation).
7 In 1990, 1097 posters were put up round the country. This was less than in previous years as three regions had television advertising.
Before and during the 1980s, Christian Aid favoured depictions of single, and mostly inanimate objects in its press and poster work. Strong messages accompanied iconographic and symbolic, black and white representations of woks, bread, ploughs, rocks, arms and feet but also the ubiquitous Christian Aid Week envelope, red with the logo 'slim jim' in a diagramatic 'world' (Figs. 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4). This was partly a practical move since it did not require specific overseas trips or large expenditure, but also an ethical one since these images were 'neutral' and, therefore, did not necessitate the acute regulation that photographs of human subjects would have.

Despite Christian Aid's endeavours to sidestep a debate about its use of images by iconographic means, some criticisms were, nevertheless, forthcoming. Poster and press work depicting 'Ethiopian feet' in 1988 offended some who accused Christian Aid of representing feet that were overly 'dirty', 'knobbly' and 'gnarled'. Christian Aid impressed on its critics that they were 'authentic feet' from Ethiopia, and therefore and accurate depiction of 'reality' (Fig. 6.4). There was also a well known incident when Christian Aid hired a British postman to 'pose' his 'Indian' legs for a 1980 poster (in Olympic year - the advertising message was 'Help those left behind in the Human Race') (Burnett 1986:111) (Fig. 6.5). This provoked criticism since they were clearly not 'ethnic' or 'authentic' enough, and therefore testified to Christian Aid's willingness to deceive.

By 1988/9 the worth of the iconographic advertising was being questioned. The theme of the 1989 CAW was constituted of a more personal message and image which used a 'splash' of colour on the posters (Fig. 6.6). The 1988/9 Christian Aid Week theme was 'Rights' and 'Wrongs', reliant on a 'Before' and 'After' execution. The first image was an overtly 'negative' image; a 'strong', 'difficult' black and white portraying a burdened and unidentified Ethiopian woman (carrying firewood, bent double). The subsequent image, used for CAW, was more positive. It showed the same woman smiling, and working (winowing). Both visuals on the posters were interrupted by a burst of colour (it was white on the press work), in the form of first a big red 'cross', for the negative image (Fig.

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8 The photographer who shot this photograph said that this was very much a 'set up' image since he and the advertising agency orchestrated a 'fashion parade' in order to select the 'best feet'.
6.7) - in April, then a big red tick, for the positive image - in May (Fig. 6.8). This was clearly a didactic message impressed with Christian Aid's discourse of development. A **double entendre** was woven into the terms 'rights' and 'wrongs': it outlined the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of development and representation to the knowing 'reader' and led to a mouthful of a slogan; 'it's time to right the wrongs'. The proper path to development and empowerment was visibly constituted in the image and this was related specifically to women (see Chapter 4).

Before and during the 1980s, the trademark of Christian Aid Week had been its bold messages (Fig. 6.9). These elaborated a discourse of development and justice in the form of religious metaphor/allusions and word play. This enabled Christian Aid to develop 'political' but non-confrontational messages. These messages were based on the yearly 'theme' (Figs. 4.3, 6.6, 6.10). 1986/1987's theme was 'Power to the Poor' which yielded messages such as: 'flour power' (a national message with a representation of a bundle of wheat as illustration), 'more power to the poor' (the Christian Aid Week theme with a representation of a straining ox) (Fig. 6.10). 1987/88 used a combination of illustrations and pictorial representation along the theme of fair 'shares' with messages such as 'The real share issue' (with a representation of a wok) and 'who needs shares' (showing bread) (Figs. 6.1, 6.2). For Christian Aid this was a mischievous allusion to a privatising Government. However by drawing comparisons between rich and poor in order to advocate a tempering of British individualism and greed, it was equally scored with a discourse of 'active citizenship' (see Chapter 1).

In 1989/90 the tone of advertising shifted, to become more 'upbeat' and more personal. This change was judged to be timely by the Head of Communications and preceded the radical changes in advertising that were to have effect in 1990/1.

We used to use illustrations all the time ... on the posters in particular ... We had the wok, ... the arm, ... the loaf of bread ... but actually I think they became fairly anonymous at some point. The wok I thought worked very well. ... [S]o you don't have to put ... people in your pictures all the time.
But I actually feel from the research that we've done ... whatever we feel about it, actually people relate to people and that's where they start from and you can actually ... represent them ... it doesn't have to be the whole person but somehow there is that, that human relationship. I think if you're trying to communicate it's very difficult to always do it in another way. Sometimes it works so you don't have to have a person, but [then] you just have these sort of rather dead and lifeless ... images.

According to the Head of Communications, the 1990 CAW theme was no less serious or 'political' than previous years, indeed all the posters and the press work carried a cryptic reference to events that were happening in Britain. The verbal messages were serious and demonstrated a willingness to engage with pertinent issues of the day, albeit in punning form. The privatisation of water ('Make Water Public' - in September) and the health service ('Keep the Health Service Going' - in April), as well as the Community Charge (in the Christian Aid Week message 'The World is Our Community this is Our Charge') were all tackled (Fig. 4.3). In contrast, these images were resplendently positive and in colour (though this only showed up on the posters). These were 'softer', 'easier', more personal images (the subject was even named in the CAW advertising) and were popular throughout the organisation. They were perceived to be in harmony with Christian Aid's development discourse and ethical stance on representation. The Head of Communications explained:

I wanted to go into colour last year [1990], particularly on posters. ... Too many images of development are automatically fairly black and dour ... and it doesn't always have to be seen that way. ... I don't think we always have to be predictable and we have to be more and more imaginative in how we depict ... I think 1989/90 was quite a positive campaign and part of the positive campaign was to show it in colour.

The visual images were taken in a 'social documentary' mode; they were images that reflected the 'reality' overseas, but they did so without compromising the dignity of the beneficiaries. Consequently the advertising had 'changed pace' but in the context of acquiring a 'celebratory feel'.

Christian Aid congratulated itself and was congratulated on the quality and content of the 1989/90 advertising work, that is all except the Christian Aid Week poster, which was said to be more confusing than engaging (containing a fuzzy colour photograph of the consequently no longer distinctive envelope) (Fig. 6.11; Chapter 4). Some, however, were less enthusiastic, notably the Head of Fundraising. He felt that the 1989/90 advertising typified Christian Aid's preference for 'clever, witty, intellectual, objective,
preachy' advertising which ignored the needs of its donors, addressing only a select community 'in the know'.

More accessible for him was Christian Aid's television advertisement (at least visually). 1990 marked Christian Aid's television debut. In a bid to evaluate the potential impact of television, Christian Aid quickly put together a commercial which it piloted in three regions\(^9\) (the cheapest ones).

**Christian Aid Week 1990: venturing into television.**

The 1990 CAW television advertisement was an ambiguous achievement. It had been produced 'in house' at great speed, on the back of the 1989/90 photographic assignment. Staff from the Audio-Visual Unit\(^10\) accompanied the photographer and advertising agency to Bangladesh with the hope of filming real Bangladeshi childbirth (to exemplify the duties of the health worker featured in the 'Keep the Health Service Going' poster). Needless to say this was a somewhat unrealistic aim and the final footage featured an actress. The television advertisement picked up on the images of both the 'health service' and the 'community charge' poster. Childbirth was not filmed, only hinted at, with shots of 'mother' crying (silently) then smiling, a smiling (spotlessly clean and relaxed) health worker and baby, smiling villagers (including a male, presumably 'father'), healthy mother and baby bonding, with a final shot of the health worker riding off with hope and determination. The message was played out against 'village sounds' (of people, cockerels and later on baby sounds) and was interrupted by humming and a sentimental song intoning 'when a child is born'. It finished off by using both the April and May slogan (Fig. 6.12).

In retrospect this effort was not that well regarded. Christian Aid's subsequent advertising agency, Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney, claimed that it 'just didn't ring true', that it was too constructed and seemed 'unreal'. Neither was the television advertisement popular with Christian Aid staff who judged it to be too 'weepy' and therefore uncharacteristic of

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\(^9\) They chose the areas covered by Tyne Tees and Central for showing the television advertisement without posters. but in Granada they used both television and poster advertising.

\(^10\) The advertising agency, Cohen and Company, dealt with the distribution.
their development discourse. It was also perceived to contrast too sharply in tone with the other materials put out during the week.

The Head of Communications was not so harsh. Although she admitted that it wasn't 'brilliant' she felt that it did successfully convey a message of hope. People were represented as actively building lives for themselves: 'helping themselves'. It had 'vitality' and 'life' imparted by its colourfulness. Colour also meant that it obeyed the format and style of more usual television representations of the developing world, but provided a contrasting message, subverting people's expectations.

TV can actually be very positive ... because it gets people, very strong people, ably doing for themselves and being seen to be doing for themselves, so that was good and it was consistent with television actually to have colour on the poster. (sic)

Television advertising not only provided space in which to present a 'cheery' alternative view of the developing world, but allowed people a glimpse at the work of Christian Aid. This in itself was deemed to be a positive and novel event. Christian Aid could actively and, hopefully, easily convey something 'real' and 'positive' by virtue of the immediacy and familiarity of television, adding credence and connection to their work in the minds of millions.

Christian Aid was serious about its desire to evaluate the power of television advertising and acted in order so to do. It engaged a market research company to document the impact and effectiveness of different means of advertising (poster only vs poster/TV vs TV only) in different regions. The research showed that the 'advertising awareness' and the 'spontaneous recall' of Christian Aid had significantly increased as a consequence of their television advertising. Income was up 8.8% on the previous year in regions using television. In regions using posters (only) income increased at the lesser rate of 2.9%. Additionally, in those areas where television advertising had been piloted the overall message of aid/charity/help was more familiar to the public, though the specifics of Christian Aid's development discourse were not. The double entendre of the 'Community charge' theme was only effectively conveyed through posters.\(^{11}\)

\(^{11}\) The television advertisement had the unfortunate side effect of popularising the British Red Cross because of the 'red/green cross' on the health workers bicycle.
In terms of criticism, the public reflected Christian Aid's views. A high percentage of the public (as tested) in all areas felt that Christian Aid's advertisements were different. In the poster areas a higher percentage proclaimed that the advertising work 'made you think' and 'were interesting', whereas in the television areas (most especially where posters were combined with television) a higher percentage felt that they were unimaginative.

The surveying agency concluded that although both posters and television did raise awareness of Christian Aid and its work, they did so in different ways. Television advertising had more impact, though the 'community charge' poster was best at raising awareness and conveying the 'brand' of Christian Aid (Survey Research Associates Ltd. 1990). This experimentation with television clearly convinced the staff involved in communication at Christian Aid that television was a more workable and effective medium than posters for their purposes. Although apparently expensive and unfamiliar, it could engender improved results without necessarily leading to a large increase in budget.

vi The winds of change.

1990 was a year of change. Although the style of advertising in 1989/90 was significantly different and very popular, Christian Aid nevertheless decided to opt for a review of its entire advertising strategy. This review did not stop there but also involved a reappraisal of the long and productive relationship between Christian Aid and their advertising agency Cohen and Company. Christian Aid staff were fairly circumspect about the motives for reviewing this working relationship. Clearly this was a bid to 'relaunch' Christian Aid and staff may have felt that to revitalise the communication practices required a fresh approach. Some insiders mentioned that Cohen and Company had become too narrowly focussed to embrace new ideas, and that this sometimes led to heated exchanges between them and their clients. It is interesting that the changes coincided with 'new blood' within the relevant Sectors at Christian Aid. Both the Head of Communications and the Head of Fundraising were relatively new appointments at this point and they were both young, fairly determined and full of ideas and aspirations for Christian Aid.

12 The income jumped from a 2% rise to a 7% rise in the regions where the television advertisement was piloted (Survey Research Associates Ltd. 1990).
In 1990 Christian Aid discreetly asked Cohen and Company, as well as other advertising agencies, to pitch for their account. By March 1990, Christian Aid had engaged a new advertising agency Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney (BDDH). Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney was a fairly 'young' advertising agency on the move (Campaign 31.07.92). They had designed their pitch so that it would not be 'topical' but visionary, proposing a theme which would attempt to forge a 'personality' of Christian Aid by encapsulating its discursive 'essence'. BDDH's pre-pitch research had convinced them that Christian Aid was in need of differentiating qualities. Their point of reference in this endeavour was the statement of commitment - *To Strengthen the Poor* - a relatively complex document replete with theological allusions (Taylor 1987b). BDDH 'softened' it up and distilled its main ideas in a language that could be accessible to those outside the organisation whom they felt were not 'ready for the grittier side of Christian Aid's discourse.

Reportedly BDDH was selected because it was 'both exciting and strong on corporate image' and was keen to get across the distinctiveness of Christian Aid (Marketing 01.03.90). The criteria of selection were plainly stated in internal documents of the time; 'coherent branding', 'distinctiveness' and 'creativity' were crucial aspects to be researched and developed for the future.

Christian Aid realised that it was necessary to preserve the positive assets of its old advertising strategy. But it also strongly believed that there was a need to investigate ways in which it could impress on its public the discursive roots of its messages and images by packaging them more comprehensibly, cohesively and corporately. For the Head of Communications there were a number of issues to be tackled.

Christian Aid is ... something of a contradiction in terms of brand. For those not familiar with the agency, 'Christian' may represent 'charity', 'paternalism', 'worthiness', 'old fashioned'. For those who are familiar with it (including many in the field) Christian Aid is highly respected for the integrity and professionalism it brings to all aspect of its work. It seeks through its advertising to develop a broader understanding of the issues and of Christian Aid itself. It is not afraid to speak out on behalf of the powerless and seeks to be bold, honest and challenging - maintaining a cutting edge in all it does. In terms of policy and understanding it is among the most progressive charities in Britain. Yet it is not prepared to gain publicity by using exploitative or overtly emotional images which demean the victims of poverty.

Christian Aid wanted to anchor its identity in the minds of the public, an identity that would convey its difference but also present a challenge, without alienating those likely resist its
NGO discourse or its cerebral messages. It was partly a question of 'tone'. The Head of Communications is remembered by BDDH for asserting, in a preliminary meeting, her personal vision of the role of Christian Aid's advertising. For her it had to convey both 'righteous anger' and the 'gritty reality' of Christian Aid's development role in the future. It had to raise awareness in neither a sentimental nor a strident fashion. Christian Aid desired a broader appeal, but equally wished to avoid blandness: there was no question of 'becoming all things to all people'. Moreover, any distinction had to resonate with the Churches.

For the Head of Communications this radical review needed a firm base, namely a grounding in market research. BDDH was prepared to do this.

One reason we switched, I think was because we wanted to look ... quite seriously into .. what makes advertising work and how effectively it communicates to people. ... Of course one way of testing effectiveness is to see how much money you get back, but actually if your main aims from the advertising is not a direct money response then you have very little way of testing its effectiveness and how it communicates. So one of the reasons ... that we switched to the new agency is that they're very good on planning and research and ... pre and post-test[ing] all stages of advertising, which may seem expensive. I think it's well worth it.

The first phase of BDDH's research was conducted in May during and after the 1990 Christian Aid Week. It fulfilled several functions. In addition to raising specific fundraising issues (covenanting, general 'giving' habits) it evaluated Christian Aid's effectiveness in communicating its 'philosophy, goals and activities'. It also ascertained how more sensitive and complicated development issues could be convincingly put across to a less informed audience.

The research was qualitative and used extended group discussion. It was conducted in two stages. Pre-selected respondents were bombarded with a variety of themes and executions (press/poster advertising mock ups) in order to ascertain their (the 'public's') opinion of Christian Aid, what they were prepared to accept and what they would like to see in advertising terms. The research additionally wrestled with what Christian Aid staff thought were the 'demotivating' aspects of the NGO's image: its 'political' reputation, its

13 The research was qualitative, using eight extended group discussions spread over two weeks and comprising two stages. The different categories were selected according to age, religious commitment (regular/occasional/non-church goers) and commitment to giving (committed and non-committed givers)
religious associations and confusion concerning its methods of working overseas. Creative solutions were being sought to all these problems. The Head of Communications felt that the last of these, especially, could be addressed by television

The positives we feel for TV, even when nobody is rushing into it ... is that for us it's very difficult to put across how we work, in the sense that we're not a white face overseas and we're not visible when people go overseas because we use local partners. ... So actually to be able to show even a glimpse of Christian Aid at work is, is quite a positive thing. You know rather like the health worker on her bicycle, you can actually be communicating quite a real and positive thing.

BDDH piloted several themes, two drawn from their original pitch ('Community' and 'A fair world by 2000') and two new key ideas/themes: 'Christian Aid Works' (which held similarities with a 1984 theme (see Fig. 6.9)), which reflected the practical, solid and unpretentious dimension of Christian Aid and 'We believe in life before death' which was a more qualitative, unusual, challenging and visionary message.

The results of Stage One of the research indicated that although the type of involvement of Christian Aid's work was understood, most, except regular church goers, were ignorant as to the specifics of the organisation or its goals. Word associating with respondents indicated that Christian Aid was rarely thought of as 'influential' (unlike SCF and Oxfam), 'disaster' orientated (unlike like SCF and Oxfam), 'Left wing' (unlike WOW), 'political' (unlike WOW and Oxfam) or as having 'large staff' (unlike SCF and Oxfam). Christian Aid was instead linked with the terms such as 'big' (but so were all the other NGOs), 'religious' and 'missionary', though the connotations of this latter expression were very different depending on who responded (church or non-church goers). There was confusion as to the method and location of Christian Aid's work (home and abroad, or in Eastern Europe), and its goal. Was Christian Aid simply interested in conversion, or did it have a wider development 'mission'? On the positive side Christian Aid was judged to be 'moral', 'concerned', and more 'personal'.

14 Featured in the 1990 April poster and press advertisement, and the 1990 CAW television advertisement (Fig 4.1, 4.2, 6.12).
15 War on Want and Oxfam were in the news at this point having been 'called to order' by the Charity Commissioners and this was an obvious (because frequently mentioned) factor in labelling.
16 Rumanian Babies were a particularly popular association.
Stage One results signalled that more work was necessary and that any theme would have to make Christian Aid stand out more prominently. The theme of 'Christian Aid Works' was too bland and respondents assigned to it the negative connotations of 'self-righteousness' and 'smugness'. In contrast, 'We believe in life before death' enjoyed a favourable reception (although some found it 'ambiguous', 'too clever'). It was assessed as 'thought-provoking', with a 'passionate' and 'visionary' tone but most importantly, for BDDH, it was widely understood.

It communicated the importance of "Quality of Life" beyond mere existence, tapping into the bond of common humanity. (Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1990)

BDDH wanted to consolidate this success before adopting 'We Believe in Life Before Death' as a theme for 1990/1. Stage Two, therefore, added a new series of themes which were more 'galvanising' in tone to see how they would fare in comparison. These themes were again inspired by To Strengthen the Poor. They included:

- 'To Strengthen the poor'
- 'Helping the poor to help themselves'
- 'Strengthen the poor and you strengthen the world'
- 'Without power, the poor stay poor'
- 'The rich shouldn't have all the power'
- 'Free the poor'
- 'Partnering the poor'
- 'For the poor'
- 'Right the World'
- 'Changing the Face of the world'

For Christian Aid, the research proved exceedingly instructive. It showed that Christian Aid was employing a discourse of social justice and development encapsulated within a language not equally shared, nor necessarily appreciated, by the people it was hoping to reach.

Unexpectedly problematic was the term 'poor'. It was felt to be essentialist and demeaning, potentially encompassing people in this country and stigmatising those who had no choice. Moreover its meaning, like 'rich', was perceived to be relative and its use potentially abusive. Respondents clearly knew themselves to be wealthy in comparison to inhabitants of developing countries but they thoroughly objected to being made to feel guilty because of it, or to be threatened as a consequence.
Following from this, 'Strengthening the poor' - almost a direct copy of Christian Aid's Statement of Commitment - provoked profound ambivalence. One respondent claimed - vindicating Christian Aid's pitting of 'charity' against 'social justice' - that 'you don't give charity to give people strength or power'. Others felt that it implied a conflictual or violent resolution: 'the poor become threatening if they're strong, don't they?'. Respondents were confused as to whether they were being asked to help foster moral or physical strength. Though they were quite prepared to encourage the former, they were not keen to develop the latter. They were uncertain what the implications for them, as citizens of the 'developed' world, might ultimately be.

Semantics were surprisingly important. The meaning of terms such as strengthen ('you don't strengthen the poor - you richen poorness and strengthen weakness', 'aid poor rather than strengthen'\textsuperscript{17}), free ('free them from what?'), poor ('makes them into a subspecies', 'needy rather than poor'), power ('a bit political'?, 'power and politics go together', 'if you give power, they'll start...') and partnering ('condescending', 'obscure', 'the Mother Theresa touch') were simply too imprecise, usually leading to negative attributions. Respondents were not conversant with the new NGO discourse and this often led to confused associations on their part. It made them suspicious about what they were being asked to get involved in. They were highly critical: the idea of Christian Aid 'Righting the World' was judged both unbelievable ('over optimistic') and pompous ('it's very bold isn't it?'). It suggested that Christian Aid spent time imposing on people particular political or religious constructs rather than helping or feeding them. 'Helping the poor to help themselves', on the other hand, was so well understood and familiar it was pronounced a cliche. It was also conceptually linked to 'partnering'. This produced in some respondents a complete and inexplicable misinterpretation and dislike of Christian Aid's intentions: 'helping the poor to help themselves brings them up to our level, partnering the poor, brings us down to their level'.

\textsuperscript{17} These quote marks indicate that these are respondents' verbatim statements taken from the exhaustive market research transcripts and/or the final report prepared by BDDH.
According to BDDH the most unanimously 'negative' themes were:

- 'Without the power the poor stay poor'
- 'Strengthen the poor and you strengthen the world'
- 'The rich shouldn't have all the power'

They were both alienating and over-zealously 'preachy'. Respondents were adamant:
Christian Aid's role was not telling others - be they the public or the British Government - what to think and do. These overtly 'empowering' and 'political' themes connoted conflict, riots and uprisings in respondent's minds and effectively suggested that Christian Aid encouraged and condoned social upheaval. BDDH strongly advised Christian Aid against framing its approach in such an explicit manner.

Expressions of 'empowerment' are too radical for the consumer in this context.
(Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1990)

BDDH believed that Christian Aid had to avoid themes that imputed undesirable qualities such as self-righteousness, over-ambition or excessive politicisation, because these made respondents very uneasy. Themes that mixed the concepts of empowerment, poverty and injustice were instantaneously alienating, being both too political and too threatening. What was needed was a simple and non-confrontational theme that went beyond a description such as: 'Helping the poor to help themselves'. Although this was popular, it was uninspiring. The chosen theme had to leave respondents feeling comfortable with Christian Aid, and what it was aiming to achieve without it appearing too familiar.

In conclusion BDDH recommended 'Do you believe in Life before Death'. This was not unanimously liked. A few respondents appraised it as a 'bit clever' and felt that its priorities were in the wrong place: placing quality of life before survival and 'feeding people'. According to BDDH, it was obvious that people enjoyed its level of challenge ('it makes you think twice'). Moreover it did not seem to cause offence. It had positive associations: 'choice', 'contentment', 'happiness' and 'spirituality'. Respondents understood that it was about achieving a 'quality of life': 'life in all its fullness, rather than mere existence'. Furthermore they generally assented that it was a desirable goal, if not a human right, 'to live free of poverty, free of hunger, to live like we do'. BDDH were convinced that this was the theme for 1991. It
[i]ntroduce[d] a moral issue - "the right to a proper life" - without raising political negatives. (Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1990)

These conclusions were reinforced by the objections and responses to the press mock ups that were piloted.

Respondents were found to be far more receptive to 'positive images'¹⁸ and admitted to wanting something that was 'joyful' and 'rewarding', showing that the developing world was not a bottomless pit but a place where long-term and constructive work was being successfully carried out. It was again noticeable that respondents held strong views as to what charities were and were not supposed to criticise. Messages which overtly criticised the pillars of British society, be it banks or government, were simply not acceptable.

Summing up all the research the advertising agency concluded that the theme 'Do you believe in life before death' was the most appropriate, and that the issue of Debt (to be used for the September campaign) could be tackled within this overall conceptual perspective.

8. It is possible to tackle issues such as the Debt Crisis in a motivating way by tapping into a common bond of humanity...
10. It is important that all advertising should present a dignified picture of the Third World. Where relevant, a celebratory tone was found to motivating.

(Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1990)

BDDH warned that 'issue' advertising could only cater to a restricted audience though most respondents would be motivated by a 'humanitarian' message. The research made Christian Aid Communications staff reevaluate the means through which they could communicate to their audience, and brought them down to earth with a bump. It revealed the limitations of certain forms of advertising and ostensibly selected the most persuasive means to communicate in the future. The Head of Communications welcomed these proposals; these more 'populist' themes and executions were not a 'cop out' but justifiable, they were in keeping with Christian Aid's development discourse and representational prescriptions.

¹⁸ An advertisement which read "We've made the water walk five miles' and showing two girls smiling and almost jumping on a well, raised smiles. Interestingly this was one of the few 'executions' that, at testing stage, actually used photographic illustration - others used messages, an illustration and a layout made up of 'pig latin'. This 'positive' poster was the only one with a 'success story' which seemed to directly derive from a real situation. It is interesting to speculate how 'positively' respondents would have felt if it had been graphically illustrated.
You know if we're actually going to be influential we have to make more people concerned and not just talk in our own language to people who we feel already understand. Our advertising has a certain edge to it. We try to keep an edge to it ... so it's not just very tame and soft. There's usually a child or something in it which is quite tough to take on, that's what we try to do. I mean we try to keep that even in our Christian Aid Week advertising and that's part of this thing ... if you don't feel something in your guts, you actually aren't going to do anything about it. ... And it's actually how you make people feel something in their guts without exploiting either the reader or the person involved at the other end. ... It's a very delicate balance. But I think we try, we are trying to get a sort of edge to our advertising. ... I don't know the extent to which we succeed.

BDDH had fairly clear ideas about what they wanted to achieve. The year 1990/1 had to 'stand together as a campaign'. It had to encapsulate the big issues in September (1990) and May (1991) by representing them as small and comprehensible units, locating them in 'personal stories'. The reader could not be overwhelmed by the scale of the problems of the developing world. For BDDH Creative the images and messages had to avoid being 'schmalzy' or 'weepy', they had to allow the facts to speak for themselves.

I personally do not have a lot of time for lots of weepy advertising ... I don't think it works and it can turn people off ... I also don't think it's fair to the individuals in the Third World that they're talking about. I don't think it's honest ... to put words into their mouth, to put ... all these weeping pictures, I don't think it's right, I think we have to ... give people dignity.

BDDH's revamp of Christian Aid did not stop at theme and content, it included presentation.

vii Re-presenting Christian Aid's advertising.

The September campaign had to launch Christian Aid's new image. It had to be distinctive, but this new style could not subvert the old traditions completely. Positioning in the press would remain approximately the same. Christian Aid selected its press space fairly carefully; it would not advertise in colour magazines, nor use inserts nor rely on distressed space. It felt that its press advertisements were most suited to the (foreign or home) news sections of the quality papers since the tone and the style of argument reflected the newspaper's content. The 'copy' was designed to challenge and engage the reader. A new recognisable style had to be within these limits, the novelty was to 'do it best and do it bigger'. The new advertising style had to be more flexible and simpler, but also establish a standard format which people could recognise as being Christian Aid's by simply glancing at it.
For BDDH the purpose of the new style's purpose was to convey a feeling of space and distinction. The advertisement had to stand out from the cluttered space of the newspaper and contrast with its fellow charity advertisements - typically 'dark', 'rather gloomy', 'cluttered' 'with sort of big coupons'. The new 'corporate' advertisements would have different proportions, larger, with bolder print, and would be significantly shorter on information. Information would be conveyed through a few well displayed and well thought out lines, with an almost poetic repetition. This 'coupling' would draw the reader through a simple but effective story, 'without losing them'. The photographic image had a specific place away from the text, not in the midst of it.

The redesigning of 'house style' required parallel changes in images. The BDDH Creative felt that in the 1990s stronger and more 'personal' images would be more appropriate. Since 1990, the images used have frequently been fairly intimate portraits.

Portraits are something that in the West we understand. We have a solitary picture, or a picture of a couple,...you see it as something personal and real, I think...It's very hard to give people a picture of a well at times.

For BDDH there were clear reasons for these shifts. Photographs of individuals contributed a physical presence ('stillness') to the images that could more effectively hail the reader's gaze, even if there was no direct eye contact.

The keys to the new style were recognition and communication, not numbing people by bombarding them with information (which they were unlikely to read). The new press advertisement had to make a maximum impact with minimum, though stylized, rhetoric (which they were more likely to read) and simple, but arresting, images. The desire was not to weigh down the audience nor to threaten them, but to give them a feeling of 'light at the end of the tunnel', to make them want to give.

In this section I sought to delineate the institutional, discursive and historical context in which the Christian Aid Week campaign was orchestrated in 1991. I suggested that before and during 1990 Christian Aid was engaged in a process of reevaluation. This concerned its communication strategy in particular. I showed that Christian Aid was searching for new ways of rendering its development and social justice discourse more accessible.
Although there had been moves away from familiar styles in 1989/90, I argued that in 1990 Christian Aid decided that it was time to break previous advertising habits and to consider adopting a more 'personal' and 'populist' approach. I argued that Christian Aid engaged a new advertising agency Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney (BDDH) who could formulate this more effective strategy. I showed that both Christian Aid and BDDH were keen to assess Christian Aid's profile and set about researching a number of issues, including the possibility of launching a more proactive September campaign. The research hoped to isolate an arresting theme for Christian Aid Week 1991.

As a consequence of the 1990 research Christian Aid felt confident enough to tackle the complicated and 'thorny' issue of Debt. The research had indicated that people would respond to the issue if it was put into 'human terms', ie: if it represented the way in which it affected the lives of ordinary people. BDDH's research also revealed that two press advertisement proposals could be popular: 'Third World Debt has already cost them two goat, a pig and a child' and 'This community owes you money. Should you demand your pound of flesh?'. These deliberately attempted to recreate the money market in personal terms. So encouraged by the research of 1990, Christian Aid set out to launch a Debt campaign which would be 'a bit about our responsibility, a bit about people'. This is the focus of section two.

Section 2. The 1990 Debt Campaign.

i The Debt Campaign in context.

The September Debt campaign of 1990 is referred to here for a number of reasons. It was BDDH's and Christian Aid's first common endeavour, and reflected the changes taking place during 1990/1. The trip to Bolivia it necessitated provides a practical instance of how Christian Aid carried through their unwritten guidelines on representation, even though Christian Aid would argue that it was a transgressive not representative example. Here I present it as significant rather than representative, because it ruptures, definitively, the chain of equivalence constructed by NGOs like Christian Aid between the process and the
content of representation (see Chapter 4). It will show that an 'empowering' image may be the product of coercive circumstances, and that therefore the representational effects have little to do with the conditions of production. The trip was also important because as a 'rite of passage' for both Christian Aid and BDDH it influenced subsequent representations, most particularly those used during Christian Aid Week 1991.

The Debt campaign of 1990 replaced the September initiatives of old. Again 1989 was a transitional period. In that year the Africa/Middle East Group of Christian Aid decided to launch a Southern Africa campaign 'Apartheid Makes People Poor' in addition to the major advertising focus on 'water'. The Southern African campaign was limited to London and represented the first foray into concerted campaigning.

The Debt campaign of 1990 signalled a change in direction for Christian Aid and denoted a new commitment to single-issue public campaigning consistent with its adherence to the new orthodoxy of development and its vision of NGOs' responsibilities (Chapters 2 & 3). The Head of Communications saw the problem thus.

Christian Aid has ... come much more prominently into campaigning: ... A few years ago we used to argue about whether we should be doing campaigning or not, whereas now I think it's actually taken for granted which is easier. Which means that we can actually say that we must have one public campaign a year ... and I would be quite unhappy, actually, if we went through any year now where we weren't doing some national advertising linked to a campaign.

As mentioned in part one of this thesis, campaigning is increasingly judged as *de rigueur* throughout the NGO sector. It is judged to be both desirable and acceptable and the measure of NGO integrity and commitment towards its beneficiaries.

In 1990 research indicated that the dynamics of Third World Debt could be explained to respondents and that if presented in a certain way, they would agree that moves should be made to attempt to stop it. Respondents were also liable to assent that it was within NGOs' remit to speak out about such issues - although they, like the Charity Commissioners, were not absolutely clear as to when campaigning was/was not acceptable. The acceptability of

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19 It was also new in that it did not involve any 48 sheet poster advertising: the advertisements were blown up to be small posters, but nothing more. The advertisements went in quality dailies, the middle weights (*The Daily Express, The Daily Mail*) but also in specialist journals (such as *The Economist* and *The Financial Times*) because of the issue involved. There was also an information pack, partly because there was such a large response.
the Debt issue seemed to be as much a matter of presentation and terminology as of content. The 1990 Debt and the 1989 Southern Africa 'campaigns' left no doubt as to what they were saying but presented the issues in a manner that was broadly acceptable. 

To provide 'appropriate' imagery for the Debt campaign, a photographic trip to Bolivia was arranged for August 1990. The assumption was that the facts and images collected could be included in most of the communicational materials for 1990/1, as a testimony of the 'reality' that the Bolivian people were experiencing. The trip was organised to include a member of Christian Aid's staff (the Translator), two BDDH staff and a trusted photographer who had taken the previous years' photographs. Such trips were usually only planned after extensive consultations with the photographic staff, the overseas groups, partners and the relevant Sectors which ensured the appointment of a suitable photographer, and the selection of appropriate locations.

This trip was planned more hastily, through unusual channels, for a shorter duration than was normally the case (twelve days), and with a specific purpose mainly dictated by BDDH's needs. It had to fulfil mainly advertising and fundraising purposes, providing images not only for the September campaign, but also for the press advertising in May, and the Christian Aid Week (CAW) promotional and fundraising materials. The photographer was also expected to get some extra 'project' shots. There were no plans to collect video footage for CAW (unlike 1990), only photographic stills were required from the trip.

Bolivia was chosen by Christian Aid for several reasons. It wanted to avoid 'African images' which it felt were too stereotyped. Debt had an axiomatic association with Latin America which could be capitalised upon (though Bolivia was one of the less burdened countries). Bolivia was also selected because Christian Aid had an extensive network of 'good' projects there which it felt could reflect the sort of problems that were being portrayed.

20 Christian Aid's Debt and Southern Africa campaigns were both investigated by the Charity Commissioners, the Debt one most specifically because it invited people to write to their MPs which is not strictly allowed (indeed this was more an 'idea' of the advertising agency than it was Christian Aid's). These were not strictly 'calls to order', just enquiries.
Christian Aid and the ethics of 'imaging'.

The necessity for this trip surprised some BDDH staff who did not realise the lengths to which NGOs, such as Christian Aid, were willing to go to make sure that the 'truth' was told. Both themes and executions were drawn up with little consideration of exactly how they would be illustrated or of the ethical considerations that some NGOs consider crucial. The BDDH Creative remarked:

I was surprised ... when I did the ad. that actually ... that's what I had to do. ... [W]e are used to sort of 'mocking things up' really. ...Whatever you want go down to Soho, ... I was surprised when someone told our producer Finlay you've actually got to go out and do this. You've got to find these people because ... if you're going to say this ... it's got to be true. .... I mean actually it just hadn't really quite crossed my mind ... you sort of write something and you think ... it's right. You don't sort of think 'Oh! I'm actually going to have to go ... halfway across the world, to get pictures'.

Christian Aid took representation very seriously. Its images were 'felt commentaries' on situations in the developing world, representations that only sometimes descended, for the purposes of advertising, into illustration. More usually, its images aspired to 'move people on'; in the dual sense of 'moving' people and of enlarging their awareness of situations in the developing world. For the Photo-Librarian, each picture performed a variety of roles.

If it's a one image publication or advert then that image has to carry as much information, or more information than just get people to pay money, it's got to teach them, it's got to do something ... to convey some sort of 'feel' of what we want them to know about the Third World, which is what we're involved with.

The intrusive and invasive properties of photography were recognised within the organisation and attempts were made to minimise the artificiality of the image and to foster an equitable relationship between those taking the picture and those who are being caught by the camera. This was obviously aided by the fact that most photographs were of Christian Aid sponsored projects. Photographers were vetted (by lengthy interviews and small commissions) to ascertain their suitability, ie: whether their representational practice and the quality of their work was consistent with Christian Aid's ideals. The taking of photograph was discursively produced as a relationship between 'partners'. The Photo-Librarian explained Christian Aid's beliefs.

You can't separate the photograph from the way in which it's used, neither can you separate a photograph from the way in which it is taken ... it's a partnership all the way down the line. There's is no photographer that I know of who concentrates only on taking photos and doesn't think about how it's ... going to be used, there may be ..[but]..
not in the world that we live in and that we operate in. So it's partnership all the way. So in some way they have got in the back of their minds ... the brief that we give them, the sorts of things that Christian Aid is interested in for this trip. ... If they've worked with us before, they already know that we don't like certain sorts of images. We don't like poses, we don't like just people looking straight at the camera [in] not a relevant way, as part of the picture. Little things within an image itself. But overall overlying all of those mechanical things underneath ... why we would believe a picture works and another one doesn't is because ... it's a 'felt comment' ... something which tries to convey, or does convey, a feel of what is going in the image in the place where the picture was taken. .... It's so easy to just have yet another series of photos of people ploughing ... people pulling water from a well because it is the thing that Christian Aid is supposed to be about, but in fact it doesn't move people on, and we've got so many already. There are times when we will be needing those pictures, but we want pictures of more things, we want to show the sweat of the person ploughing, ... or whether they are ploughing hopefully or despairingly.

So representation was produced in an equivalent manner to development, inscribed with a discourse of 'partnership'. The ethical framework was one in which subjects had to consent to have their images taken. There was, therefore, an implicit reference to power in representation, at the level of something which was visible in certain practices. So Christian Aid's prescriptions concerning the process of photography revolved around levelling the relationship between represented and representer. A chain of equivalences was constituted between that which was contained within the frame of the photograph and the process that produced it. So the content and the quality of the image were the measure of the worth of the relationship enacted in photographic practice (between photographers and subject). They reflected and were symbolic of the relationship of power in development. So the quality of the image reflected the intrinsic worth of the relationship between representer and represented, as well as NGO and 'subject'. But the needs of Christian Aid went beyond simple content. An appropriate image was not solely evaluated in terms of its ability to 'capture' reality, since this produced bland images under the auspices of 'truth'. Photographs, according to the Photo-Librarian (who maintained Christian Aid's photographic archive and hired its photographers) had to demonstrate some artistic merit and sensitivity to that which they portrayed in order to stand out.

Christian Aid favoured the 'social documentary' mode because, in its view it translated reality into the frame of the photograph. Yet it was precisely this adherence to an ethics based on realism that was deeply problematic. It denies, for instance, that power or fashioning were inscribed into representational practice, and that the processes of retrieval,
selection and reproduction involve both choice and power. Specifically such faith in realism resulted in a failure to investigate the practices used to obtain images. Indeed it was precisely the etching of power in the process of obtaining and selecting to reproduce images that was brought to the fore during and after the Bolivia expedition. Christian Aid and BDDH had to confront the ambiguities and evasions implicit in the notion of 'negativity' because its definition applied to the resulting image rather than the practice that lead to its emergence.

When interviewed Christian Aid staff were adamant that they would not consider using 'negative' imagery: images that denied the humanity and integrity of other human beings. The Head of Fundraising stated firmly that effective images were those that had 'compassion for somebody because of their situation while still respecting who they are'. Negative and 'out-of-date' images were reputedly exorcised from Christian Aid's archives, images had to represent a story about something 'that is happening and happening now'. Images were vetted by several groups including the Staff Management Team (SMT), the overseas project officers, the Working Group on Racism and the Women's Forum, for their suitability (the latter three groups had little effective power in comparison to SMT). The Head of Communications explained the reasons for the 1990 Bolivia trip in terms of this ethical framework.

All our colour work was based on what we knew that we wanted from different situations, we weren't just taking a picture out of the library. And I think the theory is important actually, because certainly in the press work we want to unpack the story [behind] those pictures. We don't want just a picture and then we write any piece of text underneath. But we want to start unpacking those pictures or [the] reality of Bolivia, or whatever, behind those pictures.

The 'social documentary' images would impart an sense of immediacy, a truth value clearly important to those producing development charity advertisements. Yet whether this 'capturing' of 'reality' was an ethical necessity is a moot point. Many advertising agency staff claimed that the addressed audience preferred the 'reality effect' of a social documentary image but were not too concerned about the pragmatics of how those images are obtained. One BDDH staff member went so far as to remark that the punters would be surprised by, and might actually object to, the cost involved in bringing this
reality' home. She did qualify this by reasserting that 'authenticity' was the most 'appropriate mode' for charity advertising.

For those working in NGO advertising, then, the most cogent reason for the use of the social documentary mode was its reality effect. Reality was used to impart a truth value to the image, reliant on and reinforcing the relationship of trust between donor and NGOs - the event did happen, those people do exist. Furthermore it connoted organisational integrity; Christian Aid have accurately and faithfully portrayed the situations/subjects that were there. Christian Aid did not see 'reality' and 'truth' in a detached fashion, despite their intellectual qualifications. Staff members stuck to their ethics of imagery and used them as a internal moral yardstick which measured commitment to justice and development. To transgress these unwritten rules on imagery was a form of abuse in two respects. It insulted the subjects of the photographs, whose dignity Christian Aid sought to uphold, and it wilfully misled the British public, by imputing a chain of events that did not happen.

iii The 1990 trip to Bolivia and the search for images.

The Bolivia trip was planned to yield images for a number of purposes, primarily for the 1990 Debt campaign and the 1991 CAW. BDDH launched itself into the trip with very definite ideas, having worked out the framing and the content of the images it wanted to collect. The creative team had decided, before the trip, that the most important advert - 'The Third World debt has already cost them two goats, a pig and a child' - would encompass a story whereby the debt had systematically devastated a family (a 'couple'), reducing it to poverty and depriving it of health care so that livestock and then children were sacrificed.

BDDH had certain ideas about how the couple should be portrayed. The picture, preferably a head shot, should convey 'stoic determination' rather than abject misery. It would illustrate the narrative, which itself had to rest on the 'truth'. It was, therefore, crucial that the subjects portrayed should be willing to have their story 'told'.
The secondary press advertisement - 'This community owes you money. Should you demand your pound of flesh?' - would ideally feature a community hard at work. The Christian Aid Week image would aim to be simple, ideally of a 'mother or child'. The story would highlight the dignity of this struggle for existence while communicating that a quality of life was not being enjoyed.

BDDH staff admitted retrospectively that they had not learnt as much as they should have about the country or the projects (from the partners for instance) either before or during the trip. The trip convinced them that their methods were at fault.

I think we went out there with slightly strange, maybe false expectations. I wanted a picture of a couple that had lost two goats, a pig and a child. ... In advertising you're used to saying alright fine, we will find you the picture ... You go out and shoot a car, ... or you shoot this or ... that. ... So I think I went out there ... feeling ... 'Oh! fine I'll go find ... someone ... [who's] ... lost two goats and so on'. And obviously you meet enormous problems.

BDDH staff claimed they had been profoundly influenced by the reality in Bolivia, but others on the trip maintained that this was not so. In their view, the BDDH staff, particular the BDDH Creative had never significantly deviated from their pre-determined agenda. BDDH staff did admit that they had not been sufficiently 'open' to other influences and ideas, and that this had finally resulted in their transgressing certain codes. According to the BDDH Creative these transgressions were 'cultural' not 'ethical'.

You have all these sort of very Western ideas about what you're allowed to talk about, and ... not allowed to talk about and that was quite difficult adapting to.

For the Christian Aid Translator and the Photographer this was not the issue. They perceived the problem as disgraceful ignorance of the situation in Bolivia on BDDH's part. BDDH's stereotyped view was compounded by insensitivity. They had firm ideas of what they wanted and what might be useful, and this meant searching, ruthlessly, day and night for specific sorts of images.

One sought-after image was of a burdened street child. The key line in the prospective advertisement was that the child had 'never' been to school. This was at odds with the

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21 BDDH initially thought this should depict lithe, fit workers. It was pointed out to them during the course of the trip that this would impossible since the projects were situated at a high altitude and necessitated heavy clothing.

22 This is surprisingly widespread in NGO depictions of the developing world.
Latin American experience, where a sizeable percentage of children undergo some form of 'schooling'. This was additional to the fact that BDDH could not find a child doing 'what looked like heavy enough work to make it look as though he was really kind of having a tough time in the photo'. In the event a series of pictures was taken of a child putting rocks out of a wheelbarrow and of cigarette sellers (the cigarette seller was featured in the 1991 National Christmas press advert) (Fig. 6.13). Another desired image was a night shot of children or women working (a prospective CAW 'theme' shot), which would again demonstrate life without quality or equality. For the Christian Aid Translator, this search generated one of the most disturbing incidents of the trip.

I was talking to two little girls, again at night on the street of La Paz, two little girls who were selling drinks outside a cinema. There was just a sort of metal tub and one glass ... So we're sitting there drinking this horrible drink and talking to them and they agreed to have their photo taken ... I also found out that they were quite hungry, so I sent X and Y to get some food for them, and meanwhile Z was setting up his tripod because it was night ... and this man came up and he started ... really having a go at us about taking a picture ... and [said] 'you've got to pay them in dollars' ... and the kids were getting more and more frightened by ... this. ... In the end the photos were awful because they ... [were] ... so nervous that the older [child] just ... put a cloth over her head and refused.

The Christian Aid Translator, functioning as a mediator between BDDH, Christian Aid, its partners and the local population, held an unenviable position. The trip was particularly traumatic for her because she was consistently forced to put her convictions concerning the ethics of partnership and representation to the practical test. Usually staff maintain these lofty 'ideals' at the point of image selection, not production, and this proves hard enough. Her role was central; it fell to her to ascertain whether the subjects were appropriate, ie: whether 'their story' could be used. She claimed that she used this position to prevent certain photographs from being taken.

In one such instance both the Photographer and BDDH staff were keen to procure an image of people scavenging on rubbish dumps in La Paz, as they felt this would be a compelling illustration of the theme 'We Believe in Life Before Death'. The Translator's role was that of assuring verisimilitude and she claimed that she was expected to engage in a dialogue with those scavenging for a living, ultimately obtaining their consent. This she simply refused to do, judging the photograph to be too demeaning and voyeuristic. Consequently, it was not taken.
Her outrage was compounded by the fact that some subjects were paid. The Photographer reputedly considered this standard practice and a fair exchange for taking up valuable time (those paid were not involved in Christian Aid projects). The Translator disagreed with this interpretation, considering this was not an equitable exchange but a means of coercion. Subjects who had previously refused would often acquiesce if subsequently offered money.

These were extreme examples, partly engendered by the conflict between BDDH's desire for 'urban' images and the rural location of Christian Aid projects. But the representational practices that involved the partners were equally unsatisfactory.

One difficulty lay with the primary Debt image. The proposal was prohibitively restrictive. As the Photographer admitted, odds against finding a couple who had lost 'Two goats, a pig and a child' as a consequence of the pre-ordained sequence of events, set in motion by Third World Debt, were unbelievably high.

First the creative concept was inappropriate because the livestock featured was not indigenous to the region but familiar to a British audience - 'two llamas and a sheep' would have been a more likely scenario, so BDDH had to abandon the need for 'truth' in relation to livestock. The vehicle of 'truth' then became the bereavement of the couple. The search for an appropriate couple became the most frustrating part of the trip. Partners had not been warned about the kind of subjects required and were, reportedly, taken aback when the hunt for the 'childless couple' seemed to subsume courtesy or interest in their work.

For the Christian Aid Translator, the urgency of the trip and the need for 'truth' and 'accuracy' eroded even the veneer of interest or politeness.

For example, CDA (a Christian Aid funded project) was taking us round the communities that they were working with. ... So they were showing us this alfalfa growing thing and they had these bicycles where they squeezed the juice out of the alfalfa and all ... I mean ... but we weren't actually taking [it] in, really. At the same time, there was a sort of air of ... tolerance. We must, you know, show some interest in it. But, we've got to get them on as quickly as possible to the task of finding this couple who've lost a child.
Truth required that the couple photographed should admit verbally to loss as well as giving their assent to their story being told. The Translator had to extract as much information as possible (often through another interpreter who spoke the local language, Quetchua) in as short a time as possible making sure the key question was popped. There was no opportunity to talk to the subjects apart from this invasive and direct questioning. BDDH were so desperate at one point that they started to question couples on their way to projects, taking pictures of anonymous couples by the side of the road. The couple eventually chosen had really lost a child, and lived near a Christian Aid project. They were, however, by no means the poorest of the village. They still had both livestock and surviving children.

In defence of the advertising agency staff, it should be acknowledged that they were working in difficult and unfamiliar circumstances with deadlines to meet. The pragmatics of searching for these slices of reality were not easy. When the party interviewed subjects in La Paz at night they often found that later, on reflection, the details about the lives and 'work' of the subjects were nonsensical and inconsistent, and so were unusable. Mishaps plagued the trip even when the party forewarned partners in rural areas about exactly what type of shots they expected. A major barrier was timing; the trip coincided with the least active part of the agricultural year, fiesta time. Rural projects and villages were frequently deserted. It was on one such abortive village expedition that the Photographer shot the other Debt image.

We travelled for five hours or something to get there, looked around, nobody's there. You know they'd all buggered off to another village to get pissed. ... You know, the working pictures were not work. We just dragged them out and they offered to kind of go and do some work for us because we'd come all that way. So the people hoeing were, I mean ... that's no a problem for me because they were hoeing and they were doing what they ... normally do, you know. So I don't feel any sort of disjunction there between the photograph and reality.

Paradoxically the trip to Bolivia was transgressive because of its quest for 'authenticity' and 'truth'. This was by no means an extraordinary motivation since Christian Aid's authority was dependent on this authenticity and the capturing of reality in the raw testified to the good work and integrity of the organisation. The problem was that although 'the grittier reality ... drawn from the experience of these people's lives' was supposed to
inform the imagery procured in Bolivia, the reverse was true. Authenticity was effectively produced to validate certain pre-ordained, supposedly empowering, truths.

iv Reappraising the 1990 Bolivia trip.

There was profound disquiet within Christian Aid when news of the Bolivia trip emerged. The staging of the 'community' photograph only disturbed some staff, since posing has been done before (Fig. 6.14). Additionally it contained a technical truth (Chapter 4) in the sense that it was representative of the type of work which would have been done, had the fiesta not been in full swing. The 'couple' image, however, contained only a very small grain of 'truth'. Although their child had died, the scenario had been modified, and the death of the livestock was wholly fictional (Fig. 6.15). Again it could be defended as technically true. There was a possibility, however remote, that such a thing could happen. The advertisement could be viewed as a composite since the subjects were not actually identified.

This was not, in fact, an uncommon practice in charity representation, especially in direct mail packages. Truth claims were often made on the basis of many individual histories, since these composite narratives were often said to be more exciting and eventful. In this case, however, the advertisements played off message and image in a way that encouraged the viewer to assume that the subjects depicted were 'experiencing something they [we]ren't' (Figs. 6.14, 6.15). This involved Christian Aid in a 'dishonest practice', one which they stated that they could not condone.

Christian Aid was equally displeased about the 'smash' and 'grab' manner in which photographs were obtained. They pronounced it abusive and invasive of partners and insensitive to both partners and Bolivian subjects. It was the archetype of how not to conduct a photographic expedition. It brought to the fore the issues of power and 'consent', and the questioned value that the latter had if subjects were being coerced into acquiescing by virtue of rewards (payment) dispensed either directly - by paying them for the photograph - or indirectly - by virtue of belonging to a project). Moreover the quality of Christian Aid's relationship with overseas partners had been disregarded and put in
jeopardy. Their views were ignored and by-passed until after the event (though they registered their displeasure with the Translator). The trip engendered a furious exchange of memoranda between various Sectors and Groups within Christian Aid.

The construction of the event has more than a touch of the 'atrocity story' (Dingwall 1977), a story which separated one group from the other by virtue of shared moral values, a distancing process that effectively gives one party the moral high ground. Inevitably, this trip resurrected representations of advertisers as amoral functionalists. Yet BDDH claimed to uphold and condone Christian Aid's views on the practice of representation. Indeed they freely and convincingly reproduced them during interview.

For the Christian Aid Photo-Librarian the resultant photographs were disappointing: 'lousy', 'illustrative images' rather than 'felt comments', taken by a photographer 'who wish[ed] he was elsewhere ... or at least wish[ed] some of the people around him were'. Taking a more rational approach the Photo-Librarian blamed both parties equally. Christian Aid's hasty and insufficient planning had compounded BDDH's mechanistic and rigid approach.

I got the feeling ... that there were perhaps better pictures that were possible ... it's like he [the photographer] kept missing them by two or three frames ... my impression was that he was always struggling. ... Everyone was in straitjackets from the people who are in the picture, to he himself, to the situation in which they were in. The light ... and everything else was working against them. ... That's definitely a lesson that we should have ... learned.

[T]hey (BDDH) ... had an image in their mind but no concept. They know what they wanted to see and so, ... people and things were forced into the frame. ... That's why I get a feel of great uneasiness just looking through the contact sheets of that shoot. (my emphasis)

Consistent with the discourse of partnership, both the Translator and the Photo-Librarian gave the photographs a deeper reading based on knowledge about the trip, and attributed to them a sense of unease and a lesser artistic quality. The Translator felt that the photographs she had taken were qualitatively different because she was more sensitive to the practico-ethics of representation. It is worth noting that however appalled she was by what was going on, she nevertheless saw fit to take photographs herself.
The Photographer felt that truth and reality had been compromised and that in changing its advertising agency Christian Aid had lost its 'rootedness in the real' and adopted a 'patina of dishonesty' (though what he was explicitly attacking was the advertising's slickness). But it was precisely this rootedness that was problematic. Although the appearance of reality was supposed to substantiate the claims of 'authenticity' and 'truth' that were central to Christian Aid's communicational practice, this depended on powerful and largely unregulated representational practices. However creditable the Bolivia trip started out as being, it was planned to justify Christian Aid's discursive assertions and communicational needs. The compromises necessary to obtain photographs which reflected a 'consumable' reality, captured the 'spirit' of Christian Aid's work and rendered it arresting, were momentous. In this instance Christian Aid's ethical commitment to the poor had been outweighed by the pragmatics of orchestrating the Bolivia expedition and leaving it in the hands of those it did not yet know it could trust. The Photographer summed it up caustically.

That it had been untruthful for people who are really making an effort to try to show people what the truth is, seems to be ... the ultimate irony, and that they should end up paying a lot of money so that other people can lie for them is even more tragic.

Christian Aid made the pragmatic decision to use the images obtained in Bolivia for its Debt campaign. Ultimately, some within the Christian Aid felt strongly that the couple photograph (Fig. 6.15) depicted 'listless', 'staring' and 'blank' subjects against an overly bleak background. Both the chosen images were most frequently evaluated as 'positive' in the sense that they did 'move people on' and made a statement which connoted both a 'quality of life' and 'empowerment', and encouraged respondents to make a stand.

Christian Aid was widely complimented by other NGOs and development education bodies for its choice of words and images and these agencies felt that the necessary information had been conveyed without reducing the subjects to stereotypes. The framing rhetoric was bigger, bolder and more digestible, and according to common consensus did not present the subjects as powerless objects of pity. To the outside reader, therefore, the transgressions were not obvious. Dignity and trust may have been compromised during

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23 In fact Christian Aid received letters which complimented them on their treatment of the subject. The only complaint filed to the Advertising Standards Authority was one about anti-semitism.
the process of image production, but, contrary to Christian Aid's suspicions, they were not obviously 'absent' within the visual images themselves.

The question posed by these incidents that form the focus of this second section is not who was in the right and who was in the wrong. Indeed what actually happened is not wholly clear since the event itself acquired mythical status. These events threw into relief the assumption concerning the nature and value of 'truth' and the question of power. Clearly the relationship of power between the representers and the represented was weighted towards the former and this had resulted in Christian Aid and BDDH literally engendering the 'truth'. Subjects in Bolivia were encouraged to reenact reality in order to satisfy Christian Aid needs. This was possible because the practices that operate to represent the 'truth' of the developing world, be it positive or negative are inscribed with relationships of power.

In this section I suggested that the theoretical problems around the notion of positive images that I discussed in chapter three, but principally in chapter four, were shown by Christian Aid's and BDDH's conduct in Bolivia to have real consequences for representational practices. I argued that in this instance the final empowering images belied the powerful practices that produced them. I think it is also striking that, whatever disquiet was exposed within Christian Aid, the staff involved took a pragmatic decision not only to use the photograph, but also to return to the advertising agency. Clearly Christian Aid exercised its power to choose.


i Christian Aid and the question of identity.

The Bolivia trip achieved its primary purposes. It managed to produce usable images for the September Debt campaign, fundraising material for Christian Aid Week (mostly the church and collector information - though also for the Church poster and the 'Thank you'

24 Christian Aid staff transformed the incidents into a drama performed at the Annual Staff Conference in 1990.
press advert traditionally put in the Church press in June 1991) (Fig. 6.16) as well as providing material for Christmas appeals in both 1990\textsuperscript{25} and 1991\textsuperscript{26} (Figs. 6.13, 6.17). All things considered then, it had proved quite successful.

BDDH and Christian Aid emerged older and wiser: they had a better idea of what both could respectively expect and achieve. For BDDH the important thing was continuity, carrying through a 'holistic' approach to communicational practices which could strengthen Christian Aid Week. Christian Aid Week in 1991 had clear goals:

\begin{enumerate}
\item To raise general awareness of Christian Aid.
\item To predispose the general public to the aims and objectives of Christian Aid and to predispose them to give when approached by collectors.
\item To offer inspiration and support to Christian Aid's collectors.
\item To encapsulate the essence of the organisation and therefore the 'feel' of the organisation.
\end{enumerate}

The Debt campaign had strengthened the commitment of both agencies to a 'humanising' approach. Securing a large and attentive audience meant reducing the 'issues' to the smallest units: couples, women, children. According to the Head of Fundraising, personalising the 'big issues' did not mean reverting to stereotype or losing the edge.

You can't exactly ... presume that you're going to be given much of their time, you have to make it as easy as possible for them to get some feeling about the effects ... to make them familiar with the effects, the effects on the individual.

By December 1990, there was still debate as to how the 'big idea' - 'We believe in life before death' - would be communicated. This theme had been chosen because it managed to express sentiments very close to Christian Aid's statement of commitment, without using problematic terms, obtuse messages or alienating vocabulary. It spoke of 'life' and survival in a 'human' and 'personal' manner. According to BDDH it meant:

having a slogan which is interesting and quite thought provoking which doesn't raise barriers for people about difficult words like the 'poor', whoever they are, and about 'justice'. But it ... does evoke feelings about fairness and its helps them do their own work, rather than saying this what we must believe or this is what we have to do.

This 'highly original' theme addressed the problems that arose out of research. It wanted to communicate, not to moralise. It took seriously what the public were prepared to accept. It was eminently comprehensible; research had indicated that respondents understood it and

\textsuperscript{25} The child featured in this advertisement was the daughter of the couple in the Debt advertisement (Fig 6.15).

\textsuperscript{26} This featured one of the cigarette sellers.
were prepared to accept an argument concerning people's 'right' to a decent and full life if presented in this manner.

For the Head of Communications, the message was 'quite tough'. It confronted people with some very fundamental facts about poverty, most particularly how growing poverty in the South and increasingly affluence in the North were symbiotically linked. The theme also satisfied Christian Aid's need to be, simultaneously, 'inside' and 'outside' the church. It provided Christian resonances about 'choosing life' and 'life in all its fullness' and embraced the connotations of its name. It covertly tackled Christian Aid's identity.

Christian Aid had an ambiguous relationship with its name. Some viewed it as beneficial (the 'Christian' bit apparently helped with 'trust') but others saw it as a hindrance, so its precise virtues were unknown. Plainly, the precise discourse and commitment of Christian Aid were not well etched in the minds of the public and this was compounded by the undesirable missionary overtones of its name. Christian Aid felt that, in the highly competitive atmosphere of the charity world, it could significantly benefit from firming up an identity by developing a theme that would encapsulate the 'Christian thing', as well as the tone of its commitment to the poor, without alienating the 'natural' constituency of church-goers. The Head of Fundraising explained.

I don't think we have a problem, I think we have an opportunity, ... yes. ... Christian Aid can mean exclusive aid, or it can mean reliable aid, trustworthy aid and it can mean religiously exclusive missionary [aid], or it can mean caring. And we've tried ... to use the slogan to, rather than sort of shy away from the Christian thing, actually to take it by the horn and head it round and really give it a bit of a twist. So that there's something which is ... a bit religious about it.

But 'We believe in life before death' was not a slogan which clumsily and blatantly tried to unpack the organisation's name - such attempts were not only wasteful but unpopular. It was a subtle pun, potentially appealing to a wide public. The theme anchored Christian Aid's work in the 'here and now', in the reality of the developing world. It was hoped that its special references would encourage traditional Church supporters to feel especially

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27 BDDH claimed that to state overtly that Christian Aid was ecumenical and non-missionary amounted to 'digging around' an issue rather than constructing a new personality. It was a step in the wrong direction and counterproductive because tiresome for the respondent. Indeed research confirmed that respondents were able to detect blatant attempts to enunciate Christian Aid's non proselytising nature. They also felt it to be unpleasant.
addressed. The theme could single them out, make them special. The Churches and their supporters would be encouraged to evolve an almost proprietorial relationship towards the theme: they could 'own' it as a creed.

The bringing to prominence of a religious commitment anchored Christian Aid in the 'here and now' transforming the Christian resonance into a constructive and enduring asset. For the Head of Fundraising the Christian commitment was recast as 'a strength that gives the agency the courage to take the side of the poor to empower them to a better future'. It emphasized the personal and non-threatening aspect of Christian Aid's Christianity:

People would respond 'oh, you're a bit religious but, oh yes, you're about the 'here and now' aren't you?'. This was crucial.

What Christian Aid wanted to develop through this theme, was a 'personality': a jargonistic term for a catchy, sketchy, and emotive definition that summed up the organisation and its aims. For the BDDH Researcher this was the function of the 1991 Christian Aid Week theme.

I don't think Christian Aid has a real personality ... which people can latch on to. ... They can't tell you what makes it different. Some people at Christian Aid would say well 'the way to get this ... is to explain about project partners and how you work'. Now I think explaining about project partners and how you work still doesn't give you a personality. *I think what gives you a personality is something which suggests that you are warm, or caring, or angry, or concerned, or something, some emotional feeling. Not detailed knowledge about how you work.* (my emphasis)

Christian Aid had to choose the properties that it wished to impart to itself. What kind of 'picture' and 'qualities' did it want its name to evoke in the future? 1991 was cast as a year of experimentation and discovery, the results of which would have long term consequences; this was groundwork for the future. In this year of change the organisation hoped to secure its position as one of the most 'aware' and 'in tune' agencies working in the field. Christian Aid wanted to enter the next century in a powerful position and to do this it needed a coherent and persuasive 'personality'. What was Christian Aid's ideal 'personality': Thora Hird or Desmond Tutu? Hopefully a bit of both. Christian Aid was seeking a personality which neither conflicted with its mission - to strengthen the poor - nor
alienated its traditional support. The Head of Communications felt that Christian Aid should ideally appear as:

caring, humane, challenging, courageous, tenacious, controversial, angry (but not strident), and above all [with] a clear conviction that each individual and the dignity of that individual matters.

Any theme or advertising material had to play on these qualities. The public had to be enthused about, as well as understand, Christian Aid's messages. They should support Christian Aid's outspokenness. Christian Aid wanted to be respected as 'fearless' and unashamedly assertive, but equally as concerned, deeply caring and personal. 'Do you believe...' looked as though it could satisfy all these criteria. Research proved that it communicated well, but whether it could impart the 'feeling' or the 'personality' of the organisation would only be verified by the actual creative executions.

ii Christian Aid Week 1991: the question of method.

By December 1990 the lead medium was still a matter of some debate. Would it be television or posters? Two press advertisements were being suggested: one using an image of a woman miner (taken in Bolivia) (Fig 6.18), and the other a pure copy advertisement exhorting the reader to 'Spend a few minutes learning the facts of life' which would run prior to the main advertising of the Week. This latter execution would hail a fairly sophisticated audience and would work on a strict comparison basis, contrasting the plenitude in the North with the dearth in South, thereby questioning the 'fairness' and 'justice' of such a situation. Still under discussion were the 'best' facts to raise - secretly, BDDH were hoping to get some 'juicy' ones. They were being compiled by the research staff in Christian Aid's (overseas) Aid Sector.

BDDH and Christian Aid wanted the Week to generate a 'climate of facts'. Facts and 'tough problems' would characterise the appeal but would be packaged so that they did not overwhelm; gravity not doom would provide the tone, and act as a prelude to the final message of hope. The eventual positive message would argue that solutions were within Christian Aid's reach. The situation could not be depicted as bleak or insoluble, since to threaten or disempower the audience would undermine their willingness to give.
The question was, whether this positive role was better fulfilled by television or by posters. It was a choice between one or the other, between alternative ways of spending the same sum of money. BDDH strongly recommended the use of television advertising for a number of reasons. Television would be seen by greater numbers, it could engender improved awareness, it would give a 'seal of approval' to CAW which posters could not provide, and because so few other charities were advertising on television it would allow Christian Aid to stand out. It was also easier to evaluate the advertisements' performance since visibility could be more accurately predicted (by locating them within television programmes)\(^\text{28}\).

Christian Aid agreed with the principles, but there was a question of budgets since television advertising in London and for TV South was very expensive\(^\text{29}\). There was also a measure of insecurity among staff about abandoning the traditionally successful method of posters. Television advertising only offered one short slot of 30 seconds (or maybe even 10 seconds if 'reminder ads' were made) to understand the proposition. Posters allowed the audience to mull over the information.

For BDDH television had more creative potential: 'with television you can afford to go a lot wider'. For the Head of Fundraising the virtues of television lay more in its emotional power and in its capacity to generate a 'feeling'. Television advertising did not provide enough of an opportunity for presenting information or a detailed argument, this would have to be delegated to the press advertising. But the emotive aspects of television advertising were crucial because 'feelings' stayed with the respondent longer than the specifics of an intellectual argument: and were essential to the building up of a lasting 'personality' for Christian Aid.

Above all, the use of television afforded Christian Aid a unique opportunity, since the hallmark of the CAW, the house-to-house collection, provided the perfect 'direct response' mechanism. The Head of Fundraising was clear about Christian Aid's unusual position vis-a-vis television advertising:

\(^{28}\) Posters sites are evaluated on the number of people driving by.

\(^{29}\) There were two possible solutions: some regions would have to be excluded or the lead up to the week would have to be shorter. The eventual decision of television placing was made fairly close to CAW.
People haven't got the budgets. People that have tested it have found it not to work. Other people haven't got the response mechanism. If we didn't have the envelope in the door, we couldn't use television. ... We wanted the one thing to come through as being the envelope. That's the brand, that brands Christian Aid Week - 'Oh! the little red envelope'. Most people get one, and we wanted to concentrate on that as being the response device.

Television could make its impact because people could immediately respond by putting their money in an envelope, which if delivered on time would already have arrived.

Television could animate collectors and donors more effectively as it would guarantee greater recognition for Christian Aid work and that of its collectors. According to the Head of Fundraising, collectors would be somewhat enamoured. They would enthuse 'Oh! I'm going out collecting and we will see it in the paper', or even better 'it's on the telly'. It was decided that television should be the lead medium.

A decision to go into television raised the question of whether footage was needed from Bolivia to harmonise with the other Christian Aid Week material. BDDH felt this was unnecessary since there was plenty of footage available at Christian Aid if that was what was needed. At this stage BDDH was thinking of using a 'Mother and Child' image because women supposedly had 'grittier stories in some ways ... a lifetime of struggle, a lifetime of trying to look after your family'. In the event a Mother and Child still was only chosen for the Church poster and the Church 'Thank you' advertisement (Fig 6.16).

In late December, BDDH worked on several proposals for the television advertising. The goal was for a simple but 'hard hitting' advertisement. Some of these contrasted 'positive' images - of happy, working, people - with a tough commentary, but the proposal that won the day contained the image of an unborn child in the womb - the 'foetus' or 'embryo' advertisement. Apparently, the verdict was unanimous: this above all others had the potential to achieve what Christian Aid hoped for.

The initial proposal featured stills of a foetus (in the womb) at various stages of development; two, four, six and eight months with a final cut to a 'packshot' of the Christian Aid Week envelope against a black background fading to the final message 'We Believe in Life Before Death'. The commentary was spoken over the images, pausing a little before the final message:
For millions of people in the Third World, these are the best months of their lives. Later on there is little nourishment, less shelter and no comfort. We're working to give everyone the chance of a real life.
Please help us in Christian Aid Week.

Christian Aid had some queries, for instance, would the chosen stills (taken by Swedish photographer Lennart Nilsson) generate confusion with pro-life groups, who had used them previously? It was agreed that BDDH should pre-test the execution. In this case BDDH felt that research was particularly important, as they were dealing with a client who was as yet uninitiated in this area, and who had limited resources.

As the 'lead medium', television would carried a heavy burden. It had a series of goals which reflected those of the general advertising strategy:

i To be a supportive part of the week, to generate interest and predispose people to give.
ii To communicate something of the essence of Christian Aid: carried in the main by the slogan which concentrated on life and the quality of life, but additionally through symbols, mood and text.
iii To communicate in a way that respected people emotions: taking seriously that people respond to propositions in a very emotional way and not exploiting them.
iv To fire up collectors to go out and ask for money.

There was, therefore, a substantial investment in getting it right.

iii Researching and developing Christian Aid Week 1991.

BDDH tested the ideas for the new television advertisement at the end of January 1991. Three groups were selected: two groups of respondents (gender segregated though also different in terms of age range and commitment to giving), and a group of four Christian Aid collectors. These represented the two types of group that the television advertising hoped to target: namely the 'spectators' - future recruits to the cause who needed to be drawn in to increase income - and the 'supporters' - present recruits who needed to understand and feel proprietorial towards the theme and the advertisement.

The 'hot house' atmosphere of research was expected to provide an opportunity to explore all the faults and the virtues of the 'foetus' execution. The respondents were encouraged to express themselves freely because their comments could lead to substantial alterations.

The research took place on the basis of the stills (which were mounted on cardboard), three of the foetus (drawing back from foetus's face to the full foetus), then one of the Christian Aid Week envelope on a black background and a recording of the message (the actress...
Haydn Gwynn did the voice-over) on tape. These were displayed separately and together (sometimes several times - to get maximum response). BDDH felt that they had a challenging, thought-provoking and emotional advert. The research aimed to evaluate the type of emotional response it produced (whether it turned people off) and how this could be harnessed.

On the whole BDDH was gratified by the response. The moderator stated that she had rarely received such positive feedback. The findings were to prove decisive and resulted in the fine tuning of the advertisement into a subtle and persuasive statement.

Since the 'emotional' response was especially important respondents were asked to describe how they felt afterwards.

Reactions ranged from guilt ('it pricks your conscience', 'You think of the babies in your family and the life they will have'), through sorrow ('the fact that it's their only comfort'), to anger ('it provoked me into saying Why?, Why should it be?'), but also included the banal ('they need help'). Respondents were quite taken with the advertisement's unusual content. It made them think twice, and it contrasted with the repetitious negative images of starving babies and positive images of people working in fields. They claimed to be immune to both of these.

Interestingly, several desired a final resolution to 'shock' the viewer (themselves). What they wanted to see was the 'end product', a picture of a starving child to set out, explicitly and visibly, the fate that awaited the foetus post parturition. One collector was particularly insistent that there should be 'images of desolation', rather oddly suggesting representations of starving livestock, to ram the story home.

Even the Head of Communications was considering having some form of closure. She was more inclined towards incorporating positive images of people working and being 'constructive' to lift the tone of the advertisement, and to subvert the imagined conclusion by injecting a note of hope.

30 see footnote number 17.
The foetus images produced mixed reactions, although a minority (mainly men) felt a little squeamish ("it would put you off your dinner") most enjoyed this choice of 'illustration'. The 'foetus' was described as 'lovely', 'fascinating', 'almost beautiful' and 'natural ... it's life isn't it'. The respondents attributed warmth, contentment and comfort to the images. BDDH concluded that the combination of images and theme 'We believe in life before death' was 'extremely impactful'. The central comparison was 'easily understood and very compelling'. Respondents pronounced it 'very moving' or said 'While it's in the womb it's comfortable, it's getting fed. As soon as it comes out it's starting to die', 'It makes me realise how close to death people in the Third World are'. One of the collectors felt that it 'absolutely crystallized' Christian Aid. BDDH (1991) concluded that the proposed execution had succeeded in

rais[ing] a central issue (the gritty reality of life in the Third World) in a very personal way (a baby in the womb).

It broke through peoples' claimed immunity to advertising. The feel of the images bestowed beneficial associations on Christian Aid; a 'personality' had clearly emerged. Christian Aid was described by respondents as 'caring', 'concerned', 'warm', 'thoughtful', 'sympathetic', 'serious'. They personalised it, seeing it as 'someone with a special conscience' who was preoccupied by the 'here and now', and equally, therefore, 'a practical sort of a person' which trained 'people to cope and know what to do 'and 'help[ed] people to help themselves'. Christian Aid's 'good' work and commitment were no longer in doubt.

There were, however, some minor negative attributions. Some people claimed to feel useless and hopeless as a consequence of the advertising while others felt personally responsible, 'guilty', 'uncomfortable', stunned', or 'sad'. There was an objection that Christian Aid overestimated its own capacities.

In general the proposed television execution attained most of its goals. According to BDDH, it 'clearly branded' Christian Aid (though did not impart great illumination about the Week), prompting a 'desire' to change the situation. It said 'potent' and unusual things about the Third World, hinting also at Christian Aid's preference for long term
solutions. Ultimately the proposed advertisement 'mobilised guilt in a highly original way'
(Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1991).

The 'Embryo' execution generated a strong and very emotional response. ... The central comparison between the security of the child in the womb and the insecurity of its life out of the womb was clearly understood and found to be extremely compelling. The commercial works in the first instance by "conscience-pricking", engendering an awareness of one's own and one's family privilege and security compared to that of individuals, especially children, in the Third World. ... This response is greater than for any work previously researched for Christian Aid. Respondents were forced, by the emotional power of the comparison, to think hard about the gritty realities of life in the Third World. Unlike their saturated response to much stereotypical charity advertising, they were sympathetic both towards the Third World and towards Christian Aid.
(Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1991)

The advertisement signalled both a change of pace and a step in the right direction. For Christian Aid's Head of Communications it marked the desired-for shift away from the 'happy, successful, constructive' but 'tame' form of advertising that Christian Aid had produced previously. She was pleased with the advertising because it demonstrated a greater degree of 'passion' and 'commitment' but also brought home the 'gritty realities' of life in the developing world in a highly original way. The Head of Fundraising was also satisfied. He felt Christian Aid had traditionally valued creativity above communication, but this new advertising justly cut down the ideas and increased the communicational content. The foetus advertisement was clever, but it also obeyed the rules of good advertising by being, 'simple, direct, emotive and challenging'; it used 'safe emotionalism' - something which Christian Aid had traditionally shied away from - to its own distinctive advantage.

The acceptability of the message was enhanced by the content of the narrative. It spoke of uncontroversial basic needs; 'shelter', 'comfort' and 'nourishment'. All the respondents had understood that others aspired to, and had a right to demand, these minimum essentials. This advertisement by being accessible could not fail to increase peoples' awareness of development issues. It would provide Christian Aid with an opportunity to say some 'quite powerful things'. Its righteous anger was packaged in an acceptable and popular style.
According to the BDDH Researcher, piloting the advertisement had suggested that the 'embryo' execution would be successful for a number of reasons.

The feeling of urgency is important. I think also it's very powerful this commercial. I think the baby and just the fact that it is about life, rather than about these people who are 'other', or foreign, or black, or different, or not to do with us, or somewhere else or whatever. ... It's a very personal commercial and it makes the Third World more personal and I think that has to be a good thing. (my emphasis)

She felt that using an image of a foetus rather than a child or baby was an unusual and a provocative move. An 'embryo' was neither soft nor sweet, neither immediately emotive nor gooey, neither ugly nor disturbing. It was visually arresting because it was 'actually quite strange'. It elicited positive reactions by being striking and original. Moreover it had intrinsically universalist connotations. For the Head of Communications the television advertisement 'started with an unborn baby. Which is where we all start'. For the BDDH Researcher it represented 'a kind of ... universal baby in the womb, in a universal womb'. The narrated message complimented this universalist image. It carried resonances of the great family of man (everyone is born, eats and dies) (Barthes 1989: 107-11) and was inscribed with the new orthodoxy of development. This was the quintessential representation of Freire's 'subject in expectancy', the vulnerable tabula rasa on which expectations were built. But the warm, emotive visuals were equally framed by a 'climate of facts'. The narrative was constructed so that it was 'actually factual', it was 'about what's happening to people and what needs to be done'.

An added attraction of the television commercial was its ambiguity; both the message and the image defied easy classification as negative or positive. For BDDH it was a 'new fresh way of making people think about the negatives'. For Christian Aid's Head of Fundraising, the overall representation (image and message) was neither negative nor positive, but essentially humanitarian, reflecting 'our' - mankind's - experience of human life, or more specifically the beginnings of life. Later, he reevaluated his answer by saying that it was more 'positive' than anything else since plainly what it represented was security, nourishment and comfort. For him, the marriage of message and image produced a 'hard hitting' and emotive advertisement. The image recalled the vulnerability of human life and the very personal experience of parenthood. This was compounded by the narrative, which
explicitly counterposed the safety within the womb and the imminent danger without, and therefore the operation of luck and injustice in the lives of the poor.

It doesn't deal in stereotyping and there's a genuine feeling with it. ... It's very human. ... It seems that what this ad has done is ... taken a sort of strength of being human and warm ... , in a sense, to its natural conclusion - taking it in to the womb - which is all ... warmth, generating quite a strong emotional reaction. ... It ... carries so much about it of that whole experience of motherhood or parenthood and so gives it a very strong ... attachment. ... But also it picks up things about security and nourishment and so on in quite an emotional way, and ... what is important in quality of life for us, which are issues ... [of] shelter, food, security ... and then ... it takes them back into this sort of idyllic state where we're all provided for and us es that to ... pick up ... 'vulnerableness' and so engages in a very emotional way.

The readings were endless; the imminent birth of the imagined child into an imagined life of despair and survival insinuated an urgent need for some kind of action.

But most importantly, for its creators, it offered a message of hope declaring that there was the potential for change, for the child to achieve a full life. The vulnerability insinuated within the commercial grabbed people's attention and challenged them, demanding that they do something. It tapped into the common ('human') but nevertheless very personal and emotional experience of parenthood (either experienced or imagined by the viewer). This role, then as now, has provided very fertile ground for advertisers (Campaign 17.05.91).

Christian Aid claimed they did not think of themselves as functioning within 'the mainstream', as exploiting what I termed the 'current gooeyness' towards all things to do with children and parenthood, though they admitted that they were quite prepared to exploit this structure of feeling if it was around.

iv  Readjusting the 'visuals'.

The 'foetus' visuals were acknowledged as crucial by all involved. They anchored the message, engendered certain sentiments towards the people of the developing world, and represented Christian Aid's caring and concerned 'personality'. For Christian Aid and BDDH the visuals set the tone and were the key vehicle of meaning and address. It was important that respondents felt equally positive. Research showed that in the main they did, although respondents were also fascinated and intrigued by the images. In each

31 As indicated, respondents wanted this conclusion to be made for them; they wanted 'closure' of the narrative, so they did not have to think.
research group, however, a particular caveat surfaced. It revolved around the question of 'colour'.

The 'whiteness' of the depicted foetus apparently jarred with respondents' expectations. They were habituated to associating the developing world with people of colour, and though there were qualifications that people in Latin America were not black (but also not white), they were surprised that the foetus was not duskier. Respondents suggested that stills of a black baby - or what they imagined a black baby would look like at the foetal stage - would ease their understanding, and create a greater personal bond. There would not be the disjunction of talking about people with 'black' connotations while presenting a visual that looked 'white'. The Christian Aid collectors felt most strongly about this issue. They believed not only that people within ethnic communities might object to the 'whiteness', but even that these representations verged on dishonesty (Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1991).

BDDH was mystified by this reaction. They felt the humanitarian message was strong enough to neutralise this inconsistency. In any case, none of the respondents seemed to have actually needed this prompt to understand perfectly well the message or the visual. Staff at Christian Aid took the issue seriously, however, and started enquiries to discern the exact nature of the difference between white and black foetuses at the stages depicted in the advertisement. The Head of Fundraising was happy to investigate this, since he argued that:

> whatever it looks like, if people need it to look a bit 'darker' to help them understand the ad, then we should do that and we're aiming to do that ... while bearing in mind as well that part of the beauty of the image is actually this tremendously beautiful, orange, translucent [glow].

The point was not to detract from the attractiveness of the image, but to anchor within it some feeling of 'ethnicity' and verisimilitude. Had there been a possibility of 'black' stills or footage, both BDDH and Christian Aid said they would have seized the opportunity to use them but these were not available. Furthermore, to procure 'real' pictures would have entailed enormous amounts of time and expense so it was impracticable. There was also the question as to what lengths Christian Aid would have to go to secure and procure 'authenticity'. Would the 'foetus' simply have to be 'black', or did it have to have some
connection to the developing world? Moreover such a photographic expedition would represent the height of invasiveness and intrusiveness. Since this was out of the question, the debate was a non-starter.

However, Christian Aid did consult some senior medical practitioners (a Senior Obstetrician at St. Bartholemews Hospital in London and the World Health Organisation) to ascertain the precise physical differences between embryos of different 'races'. It was told that only after six months were there observable differences.

The burden of 'authenticity' was therefore displaced onto peoples' perceptions. Since the only suitable photographs showed a Swedish baby, and according to BDDH these images had already been altered to make them more radiant, the question of whether or not to retouch them was somewhat academic. These Swedish stills would be modified. The solution was:

\[ \text{tinting the negatives so that the negatives are less ostentatiously Anglo-Saxon. We can't make it black, obviously, but we'll make it less conspicuously white.} \]

Neither BDDH and Christian Aid had any qualms. These images were not of 'subjects' but merely archive photographs. This was not a misrepresentation, but simply a way of easing communication. It would have beneficial consequences in the long term. The point was not to compromise the 'warmth' of the stills for the sake of the audience. The images would have to retain the beautiful and luminous qualities for which they had originally been selected.

Christian Aid was still toying with the idea of footage rather than stills. Moving film was felt to be superior by some (the Head of Fundraising) at representing 'life'. It would add 'depth' and verisimilitude to the message. In the event using moving film proved impractical, involving additional time and expense whereas the stills were already popular and available. Moreover the only footage of embryos that BDDH could find came from natural history or documentary programmes about conception. According to the BDDH Researcher, not only were these images 'pretty vile', but the embryos in the filmed extracts did not move peacefully and boyantly in the womb as BDDH and Christian Aid had wished. On the contrary, every so often, after a lengthy period of inaction, the embryo would unexpectedly, and most unattractively, 'twitch'. 
In the event fears that using the stills would result in flat, lifeless and stilted images were dispelled by the expertise of rostrum camera-man Ken Morse. The Head of Fundraising pronounced the final images to be a 'very nice job' with visually strong, 'luminescent images' made up of three stills of an embryo before six months (Figs. 6.19, 6.20, 6.21, 6.22). The 'ethnicity' and 'mobility' of the images were further enhanced by the music, subsequently composed for the commercial (I shall return to this later).

v Refining the message and its delivery

There were other sticking points. Research uncovered some undesirable despondency amongst respondents. Although they knew that there were being asked to give and wanted to do so, they expressed doubts as to whether their donations could change things for the better. Somehow the commercial imparted a sense of hopelessness, something that neither Christian Aid nor BDDH wanted to encourage. Both were convinced that 'leaving people with a sense of hope' was crucial because 'hope demand[ed] action'.

The difficulty was preserving a sense of gravity within an optimistic framework. Good advertising, according to Christian Aid's Head of Fundraising had to demonstrate need, offer hope, and challenge, in order to 'move people on'.

The really important issue that came out of the research was the way that a very, very emotive image grabbed me and took me down and left me desperate.

Fact: for many people, Third World people, [it is a question of] desperate survival.

Reaction: Oh! crying shame, what a killer, Oh! dear, isn't life sad? There was a real heaviness about that and we wanted to establish quite a climate of fact or that was the idea, and then lift them out, but not lift them clean out of the way. And a lot of that was about tone, some of [it] ... about the words, the information altogether.

So for the Head of Fundraising a despondent message was counterproductive, eliciting either inactivity or 'kneecjerk' giving. For Christian Aid and BDDH the difficulties lay with the message - the copy - and its delivery:

i The message was not forceful enough, particularly from 'We're working...' this lacked power and conviction which in turn impacted on the personality of Christian Aid.

ii The delivery of the message compounded (1) by being too gloomy.

iii The precise identity and timing of Christian Aid Week was a source of confusion, as was the amount of money that was appropriate, ie: that could make a difference.

(drawn from Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney 1991)
The narrative did make people feel passionately, but did not give enough of a sense of how Christian Aid was contributing. People were not 'being dragged through to the end', nor were the necessary emotions of 'I care, I believe, I give' being elicited. Respondents were being 'left on a low'. They had doubts, not only about Christian Aid's ability to solve the problems, but also about Christian Aid's own belief that it could transform the quality of life of subjects in the developing world. The copy had to be changed. It had to identify the need, hopes and successes more clearly. Additionally, it had to strengthen and reiterate the campaign slogan 'We Believe in Life Before Death', because it was memorable and said 'so much about Christian Aid'.

The delivery was also problematic. Christian Aid and BDDH described it as toneless, flat, unenthusiastic and confrontational. The crescendo of the copy, 'we're working to give everyone a chance of a real life. Please help us in Christian Aid Week' just 'simpered' away tonelessly. Commenting on the initial delivery the BDDH Researcher explained:

It was the delivery. ... She starts off with 'For millions of people in the Third World these will be the best months of their lives' and that's very powerful but then she ... says 'Christian Aid is working' her voice goes down. It's as if she just doesn't believe that there's anything that can be done about the situation. So we felt that, first of all the voice should have more power, more conviction, more feeling that it was doing something about this. Also ... we felt that the theme which was at the end ... should be brought upfront. So that you get more of a 'feeling'. The script now goes 'we're working, we believe, do you? Please give'. So it's much clearer. The whole script now goes:

For millions of people in the Third World, these will be the best months of their lives. Later on there is little nourishment, less shelter, and no comfort. We're working to give the whole world a chance of a real life because we believe in life before death, do you? Please help us in Christian Aid Week.

So there's more of why Christian Aid is different, by bringing the theme upfront. There is more involving of another person because of the 'do you?' and then 'please help us in Christian Aid Week'.

Having changed the copy, BDDH recommended a change in delivery. The Head of Fundraising agreed, but he wanted a new 'voice' as well. It was taken for granted that another female voice was needed since it imparted qualities (care, concern, commitment) which Christian Aid wanted to cultivate as its own. Another actress, Barbara Flynn, was engaged and the Heads of Fundraising and Communications sat in on the next recording to make sure that it was right. The new 'voice' was described as 'warmer', 'richer',
'powerful, confident and impassioned'; it more convincingly conveyed a commitment and (tempered) passion\textsuperscript{32}. Consistent with the desire to bring the 'theme' to prominence, the end frame was modified, to clarify that the black, white and red Christian Aid Week envelope was not just a logo but a reference to the envelope that had dropped through the door. To make this doubly obvious 'money' (three pound coins) was placed near it, suggesting a suitable level of donation. The envelope would also carry the dates of Christian Aid Week, to clear up any confusion concerning its timing. These minor alterations were supposed to 'sharpen up' the call to action - the collector's call (for the envelope) would be an integral part of the 'hope'. The lasting impression would be the 'super' coming up - white against a black background - asking 'Do You Believe in Life Before Death?' (Fig. 6.23), and Barbara Flynn saying 'Please help us in Christian Aid Week'. This provided an 'upbeat' ending and a clear message of optimism and action. \textit{vi} Putting the final touches to the CAW television advertising. No other changes would be made, especially not in terms of structure. There would be no extra footage. The Head of Fundraising believed that the commercial should remain open ended, that the audience should have to draw their own conclusions\textsuperscript{33}. As indicated above, by February 1991 all the main alterations were complete for the television advertisement. Further discussions in March and April about the television advertising focused on the flow and artistic quality of the visuals, in particular the shot of the envelope and the pound coins. The only thing left to create was the music, and this was also tested. Research showed that music could enhance the 'ethnic feel' of the advertisement (like 'tinting' the negative) and therefore could ease communication, establishing a 'Third World' feel without

\textsuperscript{32} Apparently Barbara Flynn had to be calmed down during the reading because she became angry when reading the script. The Head of Fundraising especially wanted her to preserve her 'nice soft voice'. Her 'voice' was used for the 1992/1993 CAW television advertisements as well.

\textsuperscript{33} This proved a very wise decision. The news coverage of 'Third World disasters' which coincided with Christian Aid Week in 1991 provided more than adequate 'closure'. 
(supposedly) resorting to stereotype. In the event, the music proposed in mid-March sparked heated discussion.

BDDH had engaged a highly recommended up-and-coming composer. The result was an original and modern composition that sounded to Christian Aid like 'Star Wars music'. For Christian Aid it was too strong and loud, building in a 'fairly frenetic crescendo' which detracted from the words and injected a 'disturbing feel' into the advertisement. As that mood had been studiously excised at every other stage, it was very obviously the wrong kind of music. The Head of Fundraising was intransigent in his wish that it should be re-composed.

A music brief was devised. It stated that the music had to 'align itself more directly with the visuals', it had to convey the 'warmth and comfort of the womb using ethnic sounds so there [were] more contrasts with the message' and bring to prominence the final 'call to action'. An 'ethnic feel' would permit subliminal identification with the 'Third World', making the commercial easier for the audience to read or feel. The music could not be 'disturbing or frightening'. It had to build on the sentiment and beauty of the visuals, rather than undermine them. The new music included an African rhythm/drumbeat, Latin America cicadas and soothing, rhythmical, sounds reminiscent of heartbeat and 'womb-like' noises.

The Head of Fundraising admitted post-facto that he had been overly preoccupied with the music, but that his concern had proved beneficial.

It actually helped build up quite a powerful atmosphere and the way it was slightly heartbeat-y and slightly discordant and then building up to a bit of a crescendo and then a very nice fading out ... resolution too, the music was really nice.

According to him, the new music complemented the 'tough' narrative and the soothing quality of the visual imagery. It also encouraged a feeling of movement which helped carry the visuals along and made the rostrum work seem like a seamless film. It was also felt to have dispersed the slightly confrontational tone still left in the voice.

BDDH and Christian Aid were enthusiastic about the television advertising: it was dramatic and contained a 'fine, effective', though provocative, image (Figs. 6.19-23). It was
populist without pandering to people's preconceptions; it encouraged a 'sense of outrage or a moderation of outrage'. People would be forced to act.

In the final analysis both Christian Aid and BDDH were convinced that they had produced a powerful, challenging, compelling and, they hoped, successful commercial.

vii The Christian Aid Week Communications Plan.

On 22 February, the detailed plans for Christian Aid Week were submitted to the Staff Management Team (SMT) for ratification (Fig. 6.24). By this time BDDH and the Christian Aid staff had come to a consensus on the way to proceed. Television advertising could develop the 'personality' and 'feeling' of Christian Aid and development, whereas the press work would provide the factual base.

In addition, these initiatives would be supported by a tiny number of large (48 sheet) posters broadcasting the theme 'Do you believe...?'. These posters would reinforce Christian Aid's defiant approach and were designed to target a select audience of 'decision makers'. Twenty four posters would be placed tactically outside the Houses of Parliament, major media players (e.g., BBC and ITN) and development agencies (including Christian Aid) (Campaign 03.05.91). They would proclaim the arrival of Christian Aid Week to the powers that be (they were put up as from 1 May). This was 'poster lobbying': it was not a demand for money, but an incitement to action. These posters signalled Christian Aid's desire to go for the hard and 'gritty' path, but also its belief in advocacy. They were designed to force those in positions of power to do something about reality in the developing world. Christian Aid could choose gritty images for this material since the targeted audience of opinion makers needed to be bullied.

The images selected for the posters were taken by the Brazilian photographer Sebastiao Salgado. One depicted a Brazilian miner. Mud covered and slithery, weighed down by a

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34 Reasons given for producing these posters differ. The reason advanced by one staff member was 'a touch of cold feet', but other Christian Aid staff claim it was because extra money became available at the last minute.

35 The posters were placed in the following way in London: one outside Thames, one outside LWT, three outside ITN/The Guardian, one outside the BBC, one outside The Telegraph, two outside News International, one outside Westminster. Four were placed in Belfast, two in Swansea, two in Cardiff, four in Edinburgh and four in Glasgow.
sodden and hugely overfilled bag, he was emerging out of an enormous pit, the mouth of an infamous goldmine (Serra Pelada) in Brazil (the 'miner' image) (Fig. 6.25). The other photograph featured people (again Brazilian) carrying bags of some sort ambling round a 'waste land', or a 'land of waste', with vans in the distance and overhead large, menacing black birds flying (the 'scavenging' image)(Fig. 6.26). Both these images were in black and white.

BDDH decided that Salgado's images were the best photographs for the job. They fitted the bill since they were 'incredibly powerful, very strong, challenging, [and] gritty'. For the BDDH Researcher these were not positive representations, but neither were they negative or predictable.

They don't show starving, pot-bellied children, they are all pictures of people struggling under appalling conditions. They are not pictures of people succeeding to overthrow those conditions. They are people struggling and fighting, but not winning and I think with the copy they are very powerful because clearly these people are antagonistic but they are not having a good life.

For the Head of Fundraising, these images depicted a quasi-victory. The 'miner' was depicted emerging from a large pit, one reminiscent of Dante's inferno, except this one horrifyingly enough existed. The merging of message and image produced his rise as a triumph: he was victor against circumstance. These were very 'rich' images. The 'miner' image especially had religious resonances. At first glance the image - bleak in black and white - seemed to depict a man with a cross on his back rising, exhausted, (after a steep climb) to reach the summit. The Head of Fundraising admitted that these intricacies and especially the symbolic significance of the individual miner arising out of the morass of human life in the 'pit' (the mine) were somewhat lost on him initially and therefore potentially on the average viewer.

The media proposals included a week long series of press advertisements, starting with the most sombre and factual one: 'Spend a few minutes learning the facts of life' to prepare the way (Fig. 6.24). This was described by BDDH and Christian Aid as a 'treat' or a 'teaser'. They were enthusiastic about its level of challenge as well as its word play and North/South comparisons. It would introduce the factual 'climate' of the advertising as
well as Christian Aid's mission of 'making people face up to the truth'. Its role was not expressly fundraising.

The next two press advertisements would be more explicit in their appeal. They would 'launch the theme'. They would boldly demand 'Do you believe in life before death?'. The final selection of illustrations had not yet been finally confirmed. Despite some uncertainty as to whether one, or both, would be used, there was a strong likelihood of using Salgado's photographs. These press advertisements would work in tandem with the television commercial coming out at the beginning of the CAW on 13 May. The television advertisement was supposed to provide the affirmative conclusion to the Week and was therefore timed to coincide with the arrival of the collectors to pick up the full envelope. Given the difficulty of cutting it down to a shorter 'reminder' advertisement of ten seconds, and the danger of this suggesting a connection with a pro-life group, it was proposed that the television advertisement should only appear in the thirty second format.

All these proposals were 'sprung' on SMT who had to approve them formally. As this was a highly novel advertising approach, both the Christian Aid staff involved and BDDH were a little apprehensive. BDDH was advised to keep its presentation to SMT clear and to the point. It was reported to me that SMT greeted these plans with 'stunned silence'. Eventually some members registered concern over cost and questioned the particularities of some images mentioned. On the whole the discussion tackled familiar areas, not the television images.

The most forceful disagreement concerned the choice of poster images. Some managers were unhappy that Christian Aid should consider using negative images of people in distressing and denigrating circumstances. The objectors felt that Salgado's images compromised the 'dignity of the peasant'. These criticisms were countered by others, equally vociferous, who stressed that on the contrary these miners and scavengers (not peasants) were replete with dignity: they were managing, against the most incredible odds, to forage a living. They were depicted as surprisingly resourceful and exceedingly

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36 BDDH and Christian Aid did not consider using the foetus image as a still as it was felt to be too ineffectual and open to misinterpretation.
industrious subjects, despite the circumstances in which they were compelled to work (rubbish dump, over-populated/unsafe mine). They managed on their own terms and were in a fundamental sense 'empowered'. What these images demanded from their viewers was not pity, but respect.

The disagreement related back to the Bolivia incident. Some managers had still not forgiven BDDH for their conduct and viewed the entirety of their work with suspicion. Equally, however, it was symptomatic of the debate around Sebastiao Salgado's work. Salgado is a controversial photographer. His pictures operate within a 'social documentary' mode. His subject matter is invariably poverty, injustice or situations of conflict, but his images are also seen as 'art'. This produces a tension: he is simultaneously accused of producing a realistic though limited and 'degrading' image of people in the Third World, and of having an overly artistic eye 'creating beauty within squalor' or producing 'heroic images of degrading work'. Ultimately his images confound. A number of purposes and contradictory sentiments are regularly read into them.

For the Christian Aid Photo-Librarian the quality of Salgado's photographs was undeniable. They dispensed with trivialities and distilled the essence of the difficult situations in which he regularly found himself.

He is an unbelievably emotional photographer. ... His concentration is awe-inspiring, the way in which he is holding on or trying to find the reality of what's going on there and all the rhythms of life that he sees in front of him. To try and come across with a still image which contains those rhythms but also gets rid of all the inessentials as much as possible. ... All that are in the pictures are things that it is important to convey. It's a great craft and he is very good at it.

What distinguished Salgado, and made him widely admired within Christian Aid, was the way his commitment to his subjects was felt to emerge from the frame. Salgado was also a 'native' photographer and this endowed his work with authenticity and a certain code of ethics. Salgado usually lives near his subjects and gets to know them before photographing them. So there was additionally a notion of shared values when using his images37. Salgado's work was also chosen for its artistic merit: these were intensely 'felt.

37 A touring exhibition of his picture was co-sponsored by Christian Aid and the Arts Council in 1990 providing the former with an opportunity to stage lectures about the 'ethics of imaging'.
comments' taken by a photographer who empathised with his subjects and wanted to impart his compassion and anger to others.

In general the 1991 plan was positively received, and after the SMT meeting, several managers complimented BDDH on their work.

viii Other advertising work for CAW 1991

In recommending television as the lead medium for Christian Aid Week in 1991, BDDH hoped to create an emotional and lasting response to the charity. Television had the advantage over posters in that it could preserve its immediacy, impact, excitement and intrusiveness. It could develop a personality and a feeling. But could not 'argue the case'. This burden was left to the support medium of press advertising.

The posters and press advertisements were discussed simultaneously, and there was considerable debate about whether or not to use the same images. Initially it was thought that Salgado's images were appropriate, though the preferred image was the 'scavenging' one. This image seemed to be an idee fixe with BDDH. Having been thwarted in their attempts to procure the 'authentic' image in Bolivia, they nevertheless managed to find its equivalent on their return. There were compositional problems: the subtleties and precise details of both images would potentially be lost in their press reproduction. The 'scavenging' image in particular seemed 'peculiar' and looked, when reproduced, like a 'collage' rather than a 'real picture'. There was another sticking point. Although Salgado's images were provocative, powerful and interesting - people had to look hard to understand what was going on - they were also 'very desolate'. Could they be used to carry the message in the press especially if they were to be the only pictures?

In the event both photographs were chosen, each having a different copy (Figs. 6.27, 6.28).

Commenting before Christian Aid Week, the Head of Fundraising found this a satisfactory choice. He judged these to be 'very powerful images of life without equality'. They represented desolation and poverty in a way 'which takes with some seriousness and
respect people with serious difficulty'. Neither the poster nor the press work used extremist or negative images to communicate poverty and desolation, nor did they (misguidedly) try to marry very positive images with 'hard messages about poverty'. Salgado's images were 'different' and 'unusual' and as a consequence they complemented the copy and acted as a prelude to a message of greater hope brought through by means of the television advertising.

After Christian Aid Week 1991, the Head of Communications had reservations about the images, specifically their implicit 'protestant ethic'. She questioned why images that upheld the dignity of the poor had to portray them as smiling or working - was this not simply replacing one stereotype by another?

In retrospect the Head of Fundraising also appeared less convinced that they worked as press advertisements. He felt that Salgado's images had been a little obscure after reproduction, and that ultimately they were not ideal. He would have preferred to use 'stronger', more 'personal' images as these would have been more effective in the restricted format of a press advertisement. He asserted that in future he would choose images which elicited greater identification and included eye contact between the subject and the viewer.

A very 'strong' and 'personal' image was, in fact, used in 1991 but only within the context of the limited circulation Church poster. This used a 'Mother and Child' photograph, part of the series taken in Bolivia and originally produced for the CAW advertising (Fig. 6.29). This poster was produced by the old advertising agency Cohen and Company. Apparently BDDH had not been able to produce a suitable alternative. They were holding too adamantly to their 'new design' which was considered inappropriate in this arena.

The headline was pretty weak, small ... very subtle, you couldn't put that up outside a church. You've got to have [a] really bold headline, [a] really strong image, that's cropped really close and the envelope on it. You can't be too creative and the designer did a very nice job, wacked in the headline very strongly, gave it a sort of ... death feel by having a very thick border on the funereal black border, cropped it really close so that you're into the mother and child. Very nice photograph which I chose actually but I mean the baby's looking straight at you, lovely child. And there's the envelope as well, with a ... nice red, bluey tint on the photograph just to make it a little bit different. And I think it looked great actually, I really do.
It is interesting that this poster alongside the television advertisement were the Head of Fundraising's favourite images from Christian Aid Week 1991. Both encapsulated his desire to prize communication over creativity and to use 'safe emotionalism' within the framework of promoting Christian Aid's overall discourse of development and ethical commitment towards certain types of representation.

Christian Aid and BDDH were confident that this new style of advertising was very powerful. The press work in particular relied on another component, the copy. The television advertising was mainly about images and emotions, whereas the press work hoped to achieve more of a balance between 'headline and photo'. The style, tone and content of the copy were very important, it had to hook donors so that they would 'read on' and understand.

The pure copy advertisement (Fig. 6.30) would boost the public at the beginning of the Week by highlighting the differing qualities of life in the North and the South. It would pave the way for the launching of the theme and the issue of justice. The subsequent, illustrated, press executions would reaffirm the theme of CAW. The headline and the beginning of each line posed a question starting with 'Do you believe...'. The purpose was to challenge the individual reader from the beginning - starting at the 'title' - and 'drag' him/her right through to the end with the implicit question: 'do you believe any of these things enough to help us do anything about them?'. This was unanimously acclaimed as a defiant but optimistic message which plainly described Christian Aid's commitment and valuable work and called on the individual to pledge her/himself to the cause.

These press advertisements would be placed in the quality press since they had a thoughtful style and it was cheaper. They would run before the Week and two or three times during the Week. They would, however, be complemented by some other smaller advertisements which would appear in the middle weight nationals and tabloids during the week. These small reminder advertisements would come out at the start the Week and would feature every day for three days.

38 *The Sunday Times* was excluded.
These small reminder advertisements came in three forms (Fig. 6.31). One simply demanded 'Do you believe in life before death?'. The other two had illustrations. One carried a still of an foetus's sucking its thumb (a Nilsson image) with the statement:

For millions of people in the Third World these will be the best months of their lives.

The other held a depiction of a Christian Aid envelope pouring out seeds accompanied by the assertion:

£3 buys enough seed to feed a family for 3 months.

These small advertisements were constructed so that their size and colour mimicked the dimensions and colour coding of the Christian Aid Week envelope. They were specifically geared towards income generation and their message was simple: 'please give'. But their rhetoric and visuals strongly resonated with and reinforced the other images and messages circulating during the Week\(^{39}\) (Fig. 6.31).

\(*ix* \) Christian Aid Week 1991 and the management of contingency.

In the lead up to 1991 Christian Aid Week, Christian Aid spent considerable time and expense on fashioning what it deemed would be a distinctive communication strategy, appropriate for the relaunch of the organisation. Despite all this rigorous planning the success of Christian Aid Week of 1991 was heavily dependent on timing. The early part of 1991 was marked by conflict and 'resolution' in the Gulf, quickly followed by a crisis that few predicted: the plight of Kurdish refugees. Though there had been some interest before, the beginning of April saw the explosion of the issue in the Western media.

Millions of Kurdish refugees were to be seen (on television and the press) fleeing in the wake of the restoration of control by Iraqi troops. The Kurds were a population in fear of their lives. Rebellion and minority status seemed to suggest the possibility of extermination rather than the amnesty which, subsequent to their uprising, they had been promised by Saddam Hussein (The Observer 07.04.91). Theirs was an 'exodus without hope'.

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\(^{39}\) One of these mini advertisements ended up in the middle of an article on Madonna's underwear in The Sun.
was a population forsaken and betrayed by Western governments. The sense of outrage permeated both television and press coverage.

So sorry Kurds. Sorry, Shias. Sorry to everyone else in Iraq who thought the US actively planned to help them in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. You’re on your own now, guys: notwithstanding the efforts of a few columnists, Bush could still hardly be doing better in the ratings among the great American public. (The Observer 07.04.91)

The plight of the Kurdish people was a matter of some urgency and one that demanded response. Answers were sought not only from governmental bodies but also from international bodies (and their powers of persuasion) and from British based non-governmental organisations.

The Kurdish issue was clearly a crisis, but also one which had, for NGOs, been created as a disaster by a news hungry media. It was more engaging that other simultaneously developing crises, because it involved people who were less different, and who weren’t, in the mind of British public, the traditional recipients of disasters (unlike ‘Africans’). For NGO fundraisers, there were excellent reasons why this event captured people’s imagination:

They’re beautiful people, Evil Saddam ... was killing innocent people and there was something very biblical, very, well, ... gripping that I could relate to ... about watching people struggling up mountains with no shoes ... These were some very poignant ... images, no shoes, nothing, no possession in the sheeting rains ... very poignant ...[a]... whole nation on the move.

Development charities were in a quandary. This was clearly an emergency to which people wanted to respond, or to engender a response (through giving money to third parties who could be seen actively engaging in the nightly television drama). There were multiple enquiries and large unsolicited donations. For development charity staff, the spontaneity of response was similar to that which followed the Amin/Buerk report of 1984. But in this case the agencies were ambivalent about launching an appeal. However, the issue had remarkable staying power. ‘Entertained’ by scenes from the mountains, of air drops, of convoys of troops, of people settling in appalling conditions without food, the nation turned its attention towards the voluntary sector in expectation that they would be doing ‘something’.
Early on the Heads of the main British development NGOs (the Disasters Emergency Committee members) convened to discuss the advisability of a joint appeal. They decided it was unwise (it was not clearly within their remit). Their firepower should be saved for the more urgent, larger scale, impending crisis in Africa (*The Independent on Sunday* 21.04.91). In an attempt to 're-set' the agenda several NGOs clubbed together to bring Africa into focus. A large advertisement was placed in *The Times* (14.04.91) by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, SCF and the World Development Movement. It entreated both the Prime Minister and the European Community Ministers not to sideline Africa. It forecast starvation and death, and urged people to think of Africans as they did of Kurds, as victims of hunger and conflict.

The visibility of the Kurdish crisis pressurised those agencies that worked overseas. Save the Children had a role and was seen to be actively working on the spot like other NGOs, such as the French medical NGO Medecins Sans Frontieres. But the responsibilities of non-operational development charities were unclear. As April wore on, development charities were increasingly asked to justify their decision not to appeal, even if they could not contribute to the allaying of the crisis.

Although some agencies admitted that they were confused as to where the money could go and how they would spend it, they nevertheless joined the rush to appeal. Oxfam, Y-Care International, Care, Unicef, Concern, Save the Children, the British Red Cross as well as other lesser known charities such as Feed the Children, International Refugee Year Trust and the Kurdish Disaster Fund all clamoured for space in the dailies.

By mid-April the media expressed doubt as to what could be done for the Kurds. For Hugh Hanning of *The Daily Telegraph* (16.04.91), although the voluntary agencies were represented as the 'shock troops' - those with the most expertise who were the most constructive under the circumstances - they were actually unequal to the challenge.

By the end of April, Christian Aid began to feel that its imminent advertising campaign would be overwhelmed. The Director, in particular, was worried that the general 'feel' of the advertising would be at odds with the specificity of news coverage. This was
exacerbated by the fact that Christian Aid was not conducting an appeal for the Kurds. There was a fear that Christian Aid would lose out because it did not seem to be doing anything. The converse argument (spearheaded by BDDH and the Heads of Communications/Fundraising) was that this issue was a flash in the pan, and that basing the whole advertising strategy on a comparatively ill thought out and panicked response would be detrimental to Christian Aid in the longer term. It would pander to the public's *cris de coeur* rather than build a solid base from which to communicate in the future. A compromise was finally reached. Another poster would be produced which would carry a familiar refugee image (taken on the Ethiopian border) (Fig. 6.32). This gesture would get a message of concern and relevance across without making the whole advertising strategy a hostage to fortune.

This decision preceded the British Red Cross's (BRC) bombshell that it was launching a Kurdish Appeal 'The Simple Truth'. A hasty DEC meeting (24.04.91) was called to discuss it. This was, by all accounts, fairly acrimonious with accusations of jealousy and opportunism (*The Guardian* 07.05.91). This British Red Cross appeal joined the talents of an unlikely bunch: Jeffrey Archer, John Gray (the new Head of Public Affairs of the BRC), Harvey Goldsmith (impresario and organiser of Band Aid) and Chris de Burgh. It was to last a month from 25 April, encompassing British Red Cross Week, and culminating in a pop extravaganza at Wembley on the 12 May (the day before Christian Aid Week). It intersected with Save the Children Week (28 April - 2 May) and Christian Aid Week (13 - 19 May) transgressing an agreement among agencies that they should not intervene in each others' major appeal weeks. There was also a question of manners. The BRC had presented the DEC with a fait accompli and there had been no consultation. The BRC was accused of jumping on a bandwagon to the detriment of other worthwhile causes, using the crisis as an opportunity to raise its profile and to distance itself from its old dated image. Although the BRC was intending to split the appeal money (50% for itself and 10% for all the other DEC members and 10% for other Kurdish charities), it refused to widen the remit of the appeal (*The Guardian* 07.05.91).
By 25 April the atmosphere at Christian Aid was marked by extreme unease and felt vulnerable. Long meetings ensued with discussions on the 'pros' and 'cons' of adjusting the advertising strategy. Again a compromise was reached. Some insertions would be made in the press advertisements that would have direct relevance to the Kurds (Fig. 6.33). Also a more specific copy advertisement would be specially produced for the Church press (presumably less 'saturated' than other media) (Fig 6.34).

29 April signalled the launch of the Save the Children Fund's (SCF) 'Skip Lunch Save a Life' appeal, also unusually high in profile (see Chapter 5). SCF Week passed in a flurry of Africa and SCF coverage - on television, in the press and on the radio - but contingency was to strike again.

This time the victim of circumstance was Bangladesh, hit by a devastating cyclone (reported from 2 May). Pictures of bloated bodies, people in distress and devastated land masses adorned television screens and newspapers. By the beginning of May there were several disasters to cover, Kurdish refugees, impending famine in Africa, and the cyclone in Bangladesh, as well as the cholera epidemic in Latin America. For SCF, the Bangladesh cyclone was a negative occurrence which removed the limelight away from Africa (though also the Kurds), but for Christian Aid it was a 'coup de grace'. Donors were so confused that there was little point in being topical.

The coincidence of these events had repercussions for overall reportage. It sparked off a debate about aid and development - what it should and shouldn't consist of (The Independent on Sunday 05.05.91), what the individual could do (The Guardian 06.05.91), and what the Government was doing. The beginning of May marked a turn towards a more inquisitive frame of mind as far as the press was concerned and the BRC Concert in particular was subject to scrutiny. The Guardian on 7 May carried a large, page-length, critique of 'The Simple Truth', alleging that the BRC had managed to alienate other voluntary agencies in Britain including its mother organisation the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) and its own staff (who were not happy about the new style of

40 The International Committee of the Red Cross were hoping to launch an International Appeal called 'light the darkness' on Friday 10 May which the BRC had effectively ignored, but which the BBC had agreed to link.
doing things). 'The Simple Truth' (under pressure) had widened its groups of beneficiaries to 'victims of the Gulf' and carried footage of Bangladesh and Africa within the concert despite the fact that money was earmarked for victims of the Gulf, thereby capitalising on the prevalent confusion. *The Independent* (07.05.91) argued that the needs of Bangladesh were being overtaken by concern for Africa and the Kurds. *The Independent* also reported on fraught discussions at the DEC concerning the feasibility of launching an appeal for Bangladesh (07.05.91). Reportedly Christian Aid and CAFOD were in support of it but the BRC opposed it. It was launched on 9 May.

Christian Aid decided to respond to these developments. It would release the new topical press advertisement (Fig. 6.33) on the day after the Kurdish appeal - ie: the first day of Christian Aid Week, to make a 'splash' but would also rethink its launch to make maximum impact. The original idea was to organise a Christian Aid Week event on 12 May (a Sunday) based on a 'sharing' theme, with women exchanging water in Trafalgar Square. This was changed into a more formal occasion. A press conference featuring the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Director of Christian Aid would be held at Church House in Westminster (with questions afterwards) on Monday 13 May.

In the days leading up to Christian Aid Week the atmosphere was frantic. The Press Office had to field a flood of enquiries as members of staff were increasingly asked to comment on the aid business and compassion fatigue. In the confusion and hype, Christian Aid's television commercial was shown on *Newsnight* and wrongly attributed to a pro-life group. It was shown correctly on *Channel 4 News*. There was complete chaos: charities were watching the media who were, in turn, watching their every move.

This momentum around NGOs was further fuelled by the publication of the Charity Commissioners report on Oxfam which followed a year long enquiry. The report made front page news in the *Daily Telegraph* (10.05.91) and provoked several other articles (*The Independent* 10.05.91; *The Daily Mail* 10.05.91). It was also featured on BBC 1's *Nine O'Clock News*. All this was pretty exceptional for a sparse report which concluded that
although Oxfam had acted 'in good faith', it had pursued some of its campaigns 'with too much vigour' and that 'unacceptable political activities of the charity must cease' (Charity Commissioners of England and Wales 1991). To those who suspected that the inquiry was originally motivated by a desire on behalf of the Charity Commission to prove their worth in the wake of a revision of charity law, the timing of the report's publication showed it to be a 'political' exercise (see Chapter 1).

Hundreds of thousands of people are dying in Bangladesh, Kurdistan and Africa. The last thing we need at the moment is the commission playing politics and trying to blacken the names of people who are saving lives. (A senior charity worker quoted in The Independent 10.05.91)

If the events of the previous weeks had created a general space for a debate on aid, a space was now forged for a debate on the rationale of development agencies, the role of 'charity' and the rights and wrongs of their being involved in advocacy activities. The Editor of The Daily Telegraph lost no time in making his own accusations (two days after the Oxfam report)

Oxfam's full title is the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief. It is not called the Oxford Committee for Discovering the Evils of Capitalism and Rooting Them Out. A charity that attends to what it thinks are the first causes of an evil will divert its moral and mental energies from remedying real, immediate ills. It will also tend to attract a different sort of person. Instead of recruiting people motivated only by a disinterested desire to help others, it will gather those who are politically minded (The Daily Telegraph 11.05.91). 41

When SCF launched its appeal, two weeks to the day before Christian Aid Week, there was a great deal of media interest and sympathy both for development charities and their work. There was almost nothing but praise. By the time Christian Aid launched its appeal, press reporting had turned against these agencies. The capacities and concerns of the voluntary agencies were now in doubt. After the Oxfam report was released, the International Freedom Foundation (a right wing pressure group) announced its intention to hold an inquiry into Christian Aid's activities. Christian Aid was first in the firing line after Oxfam.

41 Piers Paul Read made similar accusations in the The Evening Standard (10.05.91). He concluded that giving money to organisations such as Christian Aid and Oxfam was funding socialism, often the bane of developing countries, and that 'aid' handouts did not foster the gumption that was needed to get these countries on their feet again.
This press hostility was manifest at the Christian Aid Week launch. Christian Aid were expecting it to be a slightly uneasy occasion. It was one the new Archbishop's first public speeches since his enthronement and he was known to be nervous, but Christian Aid needed someone who could guarantee publicity and whom they could claim as their 'own'. It was clear, however, that the majority of journalists were not interested in Christian Aid Week as such, but were hoping to get comments on the Kurdish situation and in the case of *The Daily Telegraph*, a verdict on the Oxfam report. It was a struggle to turn the concerns of the press round to Christian Aid. The reporters asked searching questions of both Christian Aid's Director on the subject of 'politics', and of the Archbishop on the subject of his religious doctrine. The event was not well reported and this was ascribed to the Archbishop's uncharismatic performance. His speech was cautious but competent and uninspired. He alluded to the Christian Aid Week theme, and made references to the disasters overseas, but concluded simply by emphasizing the 'longer term' view without giving any concrete stories or examples. His most exciting gesture was putting the 'money' in the Christian Aid Week envelope.

The two television news reporters present (one BBC and one ITV) exchanged glances during the course of the launch, raised their eyes to heaven and sighed. Christian Aid admitted that it had been somewhat of a hasty and ill-prepared venture. The speech did not contain enough 'soundbites' to make it matter. Nevertheless, there was some media interest.

The Director was interviewed that afternoon on *PM* (Radio 4) with a member of the Monday Club (a right wing parliamentary group with the same views as the International Freedom Foundation), and again the following morning on the *Moral Maze* (Radio 4) with Michael Burke and Teddy Taylor (the vocal conservative MP). On both these programmes Christian Aid was accused of being too political and outspoken and therefore uncharitable. Teddy Taylor even went so far as to charge Christian Aid with funding revolutionary organisations and endorsing 'necklace killings' in South Africa. Christian Aid was made to defend its right to exist, to advocate and pursue policies based on the principle of 'empowerment'. These public accusations upset regional supporters who promptly
phoned up central office to set the record straight (so they could go and collect with impunity).

In contrast to SCF, Christian Aid's launch was sparsely reported in the press (The Independent (14.05.91) carried only a photograph) (Fig 6.35, worthy of comparison with Fig. 5.27). CAW was referred to either in the context of discussion of the Simple Truth and the Kurdish situation (The Guardian 14.05.91, The Times 14.05.91) or as an example of steadfastness in the midst of accusations of 'politics' and 'compassion fatigue' (The Financial Times 14.05.91). Nevertheless in contrast to previous years, Christian Aid Week did receive national media attention.

x Evaluating the impact of Christian Aid Week 1991.

What were the effects of all this chaotic news coverage on Christian Aid's carefully laid plans?

Although initially Christian Aid had misgivings about the pandemonium and had in some respects given into fears about 'compassion fatigue', the Head of Fundraising ultimately concluded that the fundraising and communication had been 'invigorated by the competition'.

What was extraordinary was that it followed a few days after a BBC and ITV DEC Appeal [for] Bangladesh, which was the Thursday before Christian Aid Week. It followed the Kurd Concert and for most people ... seeing a Kurd Concert and then getting an envelope through the door, people don't make a distinction between the two. What's it for? It's for overseas aid. Are you helping the Kurds? Yes we are ... So you've got those two factors. We got Songs of Praise in the end, which was really good for us. We had a much bigger launch than usual, with the Archbishop on the Monday morning. There was a lot of general interest in charities because of the Oxfam report being published the previous week and because of the International Freedom Foundation. Now that's in a sense potentially bad publicity, we've had some correspondence about it, but it meant that there was a huge amount of press interest. We did loads of interviews for the national press and religious press. There were two slots on the Channel 4 News in the two weeks before Christian Aid Week, one of which showed the TV ad. ... The level of interest generally was very, very high.

The media fixation about 'compassion fatigue' was not borne out by any of the British development charities experience. ActionAid launched a Bangladesh disaster 'postcard appeal' the day after the disaster. This rudimentary appeal (it was simply a postcard with writing on it) raised three times the desired amount. Save the Children had two appeals, one for the Kurds (in conjunction with The Observer) and one for Africa. The first raised
over £300,000 and the second doubled its target (see Chapter 5). The Christian Aid Week income had increased to £10 million (up 45% gross from 1990). On the financial count alone Christian Aid Week had been a success.

Christian Aid felt that rather than 'compassion fatigue', 'compassion confusion' had won the day and that the prominence of the staff and the agency in the press had been beneficial. DEC squabbles were too 'highbrow' for the average reader and therefore had not affected the majority of the population ('you've got to be a pretty avid reader of the qualities'). NGOs had emerged as authoritative, active and, for the most part, co-operative and collaborative. The Head of Fundraising concluded that publicity had to be truly dire before it had negative effects.

But all this hype also created a slight problem. Given all the extra publicity, how could one truly evaluate the impact of the advertising?

There were some indications. Market research was conducted to monitor the effect of Christian Aid's television advertising (similar to the 1990 research). This included pre and post-advertising testing throughout the country. The conclusions were compelling and convincing. Both 'spontaneous' (unprompted) and 'total' (prompted) awareness, of Christian Aid and its advertising rose as a result of the 1991 appeal (sometimes to the order of 20%). The television advertisement in particular was recalled at levels well above those of 1990. There was also significant difference in qualitative assessments of the television advertising as compared to 1990; people were much more favourably inclined towards it. But understanding how Christian Aid worked was not significantly imparted, although it emerged as a 'good', but not 'high profile' charity (Survey Research Associates Ltd. 1991).

One of the most important indicators was regional feedback, particularly from the volunteers. Collectors and regional staff were reported to be thrilled by the television advertising and saw it as a vocal and prominent means of supporting their work. It vindicated and valued their enthusiasm and commitment (also boosted by mentions of the

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42 76% of respondents said it was 'different' (vs 65% in 1990), 65% said it was 'interesting' (vs 46% in 1990), 63% said it 'stopped to make them think' (vs 36% in 1990) and 21% said it was unimaginative (vs 53% in 1990) (Survey Research Associates Ltd. 1991)
Week on *The Archers* and *Eastenders*). For the Head of Fundraising television advertising had 'influenced the energy of the collectors' and consequently the amount they raised; they 'simply love television advertising'. The message was also easy to pass on. One Area Secretary claimed that he had drawn from the copy of the television advertising for local radio interviews because it encapsulated the substance and the spirit of Christian Aid's work and was a compelling way of communicating it.

The response to Christian Aid's house-to-house was significantly improved, both in terms of the number of envelopes returned and the 'average size of the gift' which levelled out at one or two pounds (depending on the area) rather than the normal fifty pence. The Head of Fundraising connected this increase to the subliminal message in the television advertising which had suggested an appropriate donation of three pounds. Christian Aid had managed to galvanise the regions more effectively with 10 days of advertising than it had done previously with eight to six weeks of posters at the same cost.

There were other successes: the level of response to the advertising was much higher and regions reported large numbers of calls and spontaneous offers of help after the airing of the television advertisement. Press advertisements had a 300% increase in response on 1990 (when telephone donations and return coupons were counted) and, were for the first time ever near to covering their costs. There was also a 50% rise in unprompted donations. Unfortunately for the Head of Fundraising this meant that he had to spend the next three months signing 'thank you' letters.

The advertising work was approved by most Headquarters staff, and other British development charities were exceedingly complimentary. Christian Aid's Head of Fundraising was particularly flattered by the verdict of a former and highly respected colleague who pronounced the television commercial to be 'a brilliant ad'. He concluded from this that he had got as close as was possible to conveying a 'human and tangible need' without using stereotypes. This had been a bid to be 'emotional' and 'human' without alienating and without 'copping out', and it had succeeded against all odds. The challenge in the future was how to keep the 'feeling' and make sure those who were excited and who

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43 The area secretary for Kent said that in small market towns the average collection went up from £800 to £3,000.
had worked hard in 1991 were keen to do the same the following year. Television advertising had clearly shown that it had a role, not only in 'galvanising' support, but in raising the level of giving.

The 1991 campaign was a successful experiment, in fact, more successful than anyone had dreamed. Before the launch there was a realisation that the theme 'We believe in life before death' was a stroke of creative genius, mobilising some 'fundamentally important' and 'primary stuff' but in an acceptable fashion. This was a theme 'with no added extras' but which also had 'a lot of mileage' for (corporate) image building. For the Head of Fundraising it could be worked on in the future to become Christian Aid Week's essential 'theme' since it was very flexible, working equally well in the context of emergencies as in development.

'It's not peripheral, it's a life and death issue and I hope we can build on it. ... I recognise the value of staying with a good idea hammering it home for a number of years.'

'Vee Believe in Life before Death' has, since then, reemerged annually as the 1992 and 1993 Christian Aid Week slogan.

CAW in 1991 proved to be a turning point for the organization. However, the initial euphoria of success was followed by a period of evaluation. A crucial element of this reflexive process was the discussion of the advertising strategy which took place at a Staff Management Team Meeting (SMT) in July 1991.

At this meeting, the Head of Communications stated that the crucial objective of the organisation's communication strategy was to win the 'hearts and minds' of a number of different audiences, most especially the young (Christian Aid's 'automatic' constituency is slightly 'old'). With Cohen and Company's assistance, Christian Aid had progressed from 'symbolic' imagery to strong 'positive' images but there had been doubt as to whether these positive images 'moved people on'. By using images with which people could identify, the 1990/1 advertising strategy took the audience's level of understanding

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44 Subsequently recommendations for 1992 collecting included media watching i.e. telling collectors to take into account when the advertisement would be shown so they could pick up the envelopes afterwards (Collector 11-16.05.92).
seriously and attempted to present Christian Aid's case in a more 'humanitarian' and therefore populist fashion.

For the Head of Fundraising the crucial question was the 'role of advertising': what service should it perform? He felt he had been charged with 'marketing a product' that no one wanted. He had to convince the public that it was 'right' to support Christian Aid and to show them that Christian Aid had the confidence and prerequisite knowledge to back up its convictions. The task of advertising was not systematically to educate the public, nor to exorcise frustrations about their ignorance. It had to 'hook people', and 'ask questions' of them in a manner which 'demanded a response'. According to these criteria the 1991 advertising had been extraordinarily effective.

Other managers were preoccupied by the question of 'truth' or more precisely the acceptability of 'partial truths'. How could any form of advertising represent the 'truth' of the developing world? Indeed was this a goal of Christian Aid advertising? For one manager, all the stories Christian Aid chose to tell were incomplete. They did a disservice to the subjects' humanity and failed to portray the complexity of their lives: their joys, fears, sorrows and laughter. Moreover they glorified individualism and located the arguments in the personal rather than the political. One manager retorted that the television advertisement depended desperately on hearing the words, and an inability to do so left one with 'completely baffling pictures of a baby followed by an envelope' which did nothing to deconstruct stereotypes or impart optimism. Furthermore for those not willing to read the copy, the 'scavenging' image reinforced the message that there were too many people and too little food. Were these partial truths or 'stereotypes'? Was there a difference? Could either be condoned?

The Head of Communications and others argued that to tell the 'whole truth' was impossible. Its minimum requirement was a multiplication of words (long involved copy) and this was a passport to losing people's interest. Moreover any representation which disabused audiences of their flagrant stereotypes concerning the developing world as over-populated, badly-governed and prone to disasters, war and famine, was a step in the right direction. Presenting an alternative, albeit a deeply personal and individualistic picture of
the developing world, did move people on, even though it was on the basis of an oversimplification.

BDDH added that the advertising work could not operate in a vacuum, it had to understand peoples' preconceptions in order to change them. To present glowingly 'positive' images to an audience watching news footage of a sequence of disasters would leave Christian Aid open to criticism for ignoring 'reality', despite the fact that its advertising might well 'show the truth'.

The nature and the value of truth was a hotly debated issue during this meeting. Some stated that the 'reality', the 'truth' of the situation was that people in the Third World were not 'poor' but they were 'combating poverty' and that they are extraordinarily powerful people who, far from being helpless, were actively engaged in an on-going struggle.

The discussion highlighted the depth of feeling about the use of imagery, but also showed that the 'truth' was discussed more frequently in the context of 'accuracy' or 'representativeness'. Truth was described as something which existed, and which could be appropriated in bundles rather than something that was continuously renegotiated and constructed. Herein lay the fundamental problematic for an NGO like Christian Aid, an adherence to the notion of a truth while recognising the impossibility of its capture.

Predictably, then, the meeting did not reach a conclusion, nor was it really expected to do so. Christian Aid was and is resigned to wrestling with the ethics of representation. However the meeting did close on a consensus. The organisation reaffirmed its commitment to communicating/ popularising Christian Aid's distinct message in order to 'make a contribution towards strengthening the poor'. So it was unanimous in believing that there had to be a chain of equivalence between representational and interventional practice. It was stated that though To Strengthen the Poor (Taylor 1987b) was neither written as an advertising message, nor was it palatable as one, it represented the commitment of the agency. The role of advertising and its messages should therefore be true to its content, something that was never in fact questioned.
Conclusion.
We're basically arguing ... somebody else's case ... all that we're saying is: "We think that African would not like to be pictured like this". I mean why is it so offensive? Would you like to be pictured that way? Well you know, maybe I wouldn't but is it my place to say that that particular African doesn't want to be pictured that way? ... What right have I to interpret that person's feelings? ... And I've been overseas ... where we're being told we don't mind what picture you show of us, we just need the money, there's us saying get positive images of health care in Ghana we musn't imply everything is terribly primitive of whatever. And yet ... you've just come back from talking to a nurse who's saying we've desperate for resources, we just want money. (Development educationalist Volunteer Services Overseas)

The very right to write - to write ethnography - seems at risk. The entrance of once colonialized or castaway peoples (wearing their own masks, speaking their own lines) onto the stage of global economy, international high politics, and world culture has made the claim of the anthropologist to be tribune for the unheard, a representer of the unseen, a kenner of the misconstrued, increasingly difficult to sustain. ... Anthropologists now writing find themselves in a profession that was largely formed in an historical context - the Colonial Encounter - of which they have no experience and want none. The desire to distance themselves from the power asymmetries upon which that encounter rested, in anthropology as in everything else (and which, however changed in form, have hardly disappeared), is generally quite strong, sometimes overmastering, and produces an attitude toward the very idea of ethnography at least ambivalent ... All of this is made the more dire leading to distracted cries of plight and crisis, by the fact that at the same time as the moral foundations of ethnography have been shaken by decolonization, ... its epistemological foundations have been shaken by a general loss of faith in received stories about the nature of representation, ethnographic or any other ... Confronted, in the academy, by a sudden explosion of polemical prefixes (neo-, post-, meta-, anti-) and subversive title forms ... anthropologist have had added to their "Is it decent?" worry (Who are we to describe them) an "Is it possible?" one ... which they are even less well prepared to deal with. (Clifford Geertz 1988, Works and Lives, 133-5)

In this thesis I sought to investigate why in recent years, amongst British development charities the question of representation became a significant concern. I argued that the issue of imagery arose in an atmosphere of profound change, namely in the aftermath of the Ethiopian Famine of 1984/5. This was a key moment in the trajectory of British development charities and development NGOs in general. It threw a spotlight on their development work, and in so doing forced them to address, publicly, a dilemma which had hitherto been a marginal and internal concern. British development charities were repeatedly asked and asked themselves whether they could, in all honesty, justify the type of imagery they had produced during the 1984/5 crisis. Had they, in Geertzian terms, acted 'decently'? The answer was a resounding 'no'.

In the ensuing discussion the imagery produced and disseminated by British development charities was said to symbolise both their integrity and commitment to the developing world. The question of imagery became a moral issue. Critics asserted that British
development charities had for too long projected a particular image of the developing world. During the Ethiopian crisis, especially, they had persistently favoured a narrow repertoire of imagery, 'negative' imagery, which focused exclusively on helplessness, disease and death. In so doing, it was argued, British development charities had abnegated their responsibilities. They had demeaned their beneficiaries and misled their donors.

This hostile and moralistic critique linked charity, development and representation to form a powerful and persuasive argument. Moreover it emerged at the very moment when British development charities started to enjoy a renaissance, in terms of income, influence and prestige. As a corollary they came under increasing pressure to justify their work and concerns, particularly the ethics of their representational activities. As Becker (1988:xii) aptly remarks 'most discussions of ethics arise, as a practical matter, in situations where workers need to defend themselves against an accusation. *We use the language of ethics when people accuse us of taking advantage of someone we have used as a subject in our work.*'

In this thesis I explored and evaluated the recent debate on imagery using tools derived from the work of Michel Foucault, most specifically his definitions of discourse, power and truth. I suggested that the dispute over imagery was usually structured in terms of polarities - charity/social justice, fundraising/education, positive/negative, and so forth - and that these were linked to other foundational assumptions concerning theory/practice, reason/emotion, society/individual, fact/fiction. By rupturing these polarities and demonstrating them not to be facts of life but discursive constructs, the Foucauldian perspective made it possible to show the historicity and contingency of the key terms deployed in this debate about imagery.

By adopting a Foucauldian approach, I was able to challenge, theoretically and empirically, the conventions of argumentation and the rationales deployed to vindicate the emergence of the mid-1980s critique of imagery and its subsequent effects on representational practice.
In particular I was able to question the posited chain of equivalence between charity, development and representation, by reassessing four key assumptions.

1. Knowledge
To deploy a Foucauldian perspective I had to redefine the category of knowledge. I argued, following Foucault, that knowledge could not be reduced to the realm of 'meaning' or 'language' because all knowledge operated as a social practice: all knowledge was power/knowledge. By linking knowledge indissolubly to power, it was then possible to rethink the practices of charity or development. This was clearly the aim of chapters one and two. In these two chapters I did not seek to uncover or establish the pure, innocent or real definition of either activity, or to discover whether theory and practice were synonymous. I refused to reproduce arguments based on moral imperatives. Instead I wanted to examine why particular interpretations of both these practices, those which pinpointed social justice and empowerment as key criteria, had risen to prominence and acquired the status of truth at a particular moment. Indeed by describing charity, development and representation as 'discursive practices' - practices which were subject to a regulation and patterning through the operation of discourses - I was forced to question the nature of knowledge and the validity of more conventional 'history of ideas'.

2. History
The second advantage of a discursive analysis, I contended, lay in its denial of 'progress'. In this thesis I did not rehearse the triumphal narratives drawn up to explain, for instance, the ascendancy of either the new discourse of development or the recent popularity of NGOs. I did not describe 'history' as a straight line of progression. On the contrary, I asserted that histories functioned as narratives: they were not reflections of the past, but discourses on the present.
In chapter one I deployed this interpretation of history to explain charitable practice. I indicated that charitable practice had frequently been explained as an elaboration or distortion of foundational intent or meaning, and had often been ascribed an 'innocent'
I argued that these 'foundations' and 'histories' were used to justify a particular discourse which created philanthropy as a divided entity split between theory and practice, purity and compromise, or social justice and charity. Similarly in chapter two, I suggested that the new NGO discourse of development described itself as the product of an evolving dialectic between theory and practice in which crisis and contradiction ultimately resulted in the emergence of more enlightened theories and practices of development.

In chapter three I tackled the question of history in the context of the debate on imagery which arose in the mid-1980s among British development charities. I assessed whether, by mere fact of emergence, this debate could be said to signal an augmented sense of responsibility on behalf of British development charities for their partners. I also questioned whether it initiated more ethical and democratic practices, *per se*. I concluded that though this debate had questionable origins and ambivalent outcomes, it nevertheless denoted a moment of transformation. It inaugurated new ways of thinking about imagery: from this point on, the practice of representation was intimately connected to both development and charitable practice.

Consequently in the first three chapters of the thesis I presented a critique of prevailing interpretations of crisis and history. In chapters one and two, in particular, I rejected the teleological histories of development and charity because of their underlying assumptions about power. I posited that a recurring motif in these optimistic accounts of enlightenment was that new ways of thinking and acting eroded unequal relationships of power. For instance both the new orthodoxy of development and new imaging practices are said to be more democratic. It is asserted that they in contrast to previous discourses and practices, abolish distinctions between knowers and the known, or representers and the represented. I questioned these equivalences and assumptions by arguing that relationships of power could never be eradicated or overturned. Furthermore I submitted that progress was simply a name given to newer, and temporarily more subtle forms, of power relations.

3. *Power*

The conception of power I presented in this thesis was novel in two significant respects.
First, power was not described as deriving from any single point, nor was it portrayed as a unilateral and external force concentrated in certain sites, such as the state. I used Foucault's definition of power to suggest power permeated the social body and was made manifest in certain practices. Secondly, I proposed that power was not a repressive and negative force, but a productive and seductive one. I concluded from this that practices which defined themselves as more enlightened and less powerful should be reassessed in line with an understanding of power relations as immanent not external to social relations. In chapter one I utilised this conception of power to explain why British development charities experience charitable status as an ambivalent achievement. I indicated that they deemed the resonances of charity and its links to the establishment to be antithetical to their present role as social justice organisations, because of their understanding of power relations. I suggested that they saw official funding or state endorsement as powerful attributes which carried the threat of co-option and compromise and ultimately conflicted with the interests of the poor. I stated that parallel arguments were deployed by the new orthodoxy of development. This prescribed a role for the 'third generation' NGO as autonomous and oppositional agencies, the radical voice of the North. So as charities and NGOs British development charities portrayed their relationship with the state as ambiguous, because the state was described as embodying vested interests and monolithic power.

In chapter two, three and four power was considered in relationship to the new orthodoxies on development and imagery. In chapter two I contended that portraying power as a monolithic and negative force allowed the relatively unexamined concept of 'empowerment' to surface as the distinctive contribution and methodology of the new orthodoxy of development. Through the vehicle of 'empowerment', the new orthodoxy portrayed itself as both transparent and pure: a discourse where the issues of power disappeared because 'subjects' were allowed the rise up as self-representing, self-determining and self-reliant persons. I argued that these assumptions were reproduced in the arena of representation.
In chapters three and four I proposed that a reconceptualisation of power necessitated further examination of the assumptions underlying arguments for positive and negative imagery. Using the insights from theories of representation I established that the content of visual images - as the predominant forms of representation and those amenable to control and regulation - disclosed nothing about their conditions of production, ie: the manner in which they were obtained, selected, produced and regulated. I argued, most particularly in chapter four, that representations had to be situated discursively and historically in order to answer why, at a particular juncture, they aspired to and attained the status of truth. In chapter four I explored the implementation of several types of image guidelines, the documents produced to police representational practice and ensure democratic relations. I showed through examples that these were imperfectly applied: pragmatic decisions to alter images or to by-pass consent procedure were spoken of as being either inevitable or irrelevant. I concluded that power was inscribed into these ostensibly democratic procedures such as giving voice or eliciting consent.

4. Category of the human subject

A recasting of power necessitated a reexamination of the category of the human subject. In chapter two I stated that the new orthodoxy of development assumed and reproduced as an essential criterion of its own enlightenment the category of the human subject. I indicated that the new orthodoxy of development prized the autonomous, free individual - the 'subject in expectancy' - which was revealed and mobilised by genuine development. In chapter four I delineated the manner in which this same human subject was supposedly inscribed into imagery. Together chapters two and four elaborated how discourses on development and imagery were seeking to humanise the objects of intervention by constituting them as empowered subjects, and how empowering images were deemed to function as visible evidence that this process had taken place. I argued that this project was flawed, and that the underlying humanistic discourse promoted by British development charities assertions was itself inscribed with relationships of power. Thus, in chapters two and four I asserted that the notion of a 'free individual' was a construction of
power/knowledge not its antithesis, and had arisen in tandem with sophisticated techniques
of subjugation.

In summary the Foucauldian analysis presented in this thesis conclusively exploded the
various assumptions and regularities used to vindicate the production of certain types of
images. By reexamining ascendant theories linking the practices of development, charity
and representation it problematised four presuppositions underlying this equivalence,
namely the status of knowledge, the notion of history, the phenomenon of power and the
category of the human subject.

In the second part of the thesis - chapters five and six - I developed these insights
empirically in the ethnographic context. Together the first four chapters built a new
framework that could be deployed to explore the series of events that formed the core of the
case studies. They combined to suggest that in order to evaluate and interpret the
representations emerging from British development charities one could not consider them in
isolation. Reference had to made to their 'hidden histories': the historical, institutional and
discursive conditions of their emergence. Both case studies sought to do this.

In chapter five I considered how an unprecedented emergency appeal was orchestrated by
the development charity the Save the Children Fund (SCF). I argued that both the content
and tone of the appeal were conditioned by a number of factors.

First, there was the question of the charitable niche occupied by SCF. In comparison to
other development charities SCF was described as relatively conservative and cautious. The
'Skip Lunch. Save a Life.' appeal of 1991 was interpreted, in part, as an attempt to address
this criticism. I stated that to be consistent with their development discourse, SCF
believed that they had to be more proactive at home. In such a way a link was constructed
between representation and intervention.

Secondly, in this case study I examined how the practice of representation was regulated
through image guidelines. I suggested that these provided a discursive structure within
which representational practice could be policed. I indicated that although they did not
overtly outlaw particular images, they were often interpreted as restrictive and censoring. However I also stated, in line with the conclusions of chapter three and four, that these guidelines outlined a framework within which the agendas of seemingly diverse professional groups could be reconciled. There was no essential conflict between practitioners. Furthermore I illustrated that the representations produced by SCF emerged through a constantly evolving process of negotiation between different parties from within and without the organisation. I argued that these different agents were engaged in a tactical struggle over truth.

Thirdly, the chapter documented how the stigmatised subject of famine in Africa was represented in order to circumvent producing 'negative' images. The 'Skip Lunch. Save a life.' campaign was definitively a 1990s campaign. It embraced populism and diverse communicational strategies in order to address sections of the British population previously ignored by SCF. I indicated that although the representations produced for 'Skip Lunch. Save a life.' could not themselves be judged to be 'demeaning' in the sense that this was understood by British development charities, their power and success depended on an over-simplification of the issues. Moreover I established that the key assumption of the advertising agency was that visual representations were not required, because the campaign could capitalise on the negative images produced by the media and the press and these would provide closure. In chapter five I considered the manner in which messages which posited the equivalence between food and people's lives overseas - messages which had previously been judged as too empowering of Northern donors - were rationalised and justified. I showed that they were appraised as the right means to satisfy certain ends. Reflecting chapter three, I suggested that because these negative images and messages were contextualised within a plural communication strategy they were constituted as acceptable. The concepts of balance and accuracy were used to validate the choice of representation, but this choice was itself inscribed with power because they patently did not involve dialogue or consultation between North and South.

The SCF campaign was historically contingent, in that it had to distinguish itself from other Africa appeals. In its own terms it was unprecedented. It was the first campaign SCF had
launched. It reunited what were described as antagonistic professional groups, and it was designed under the influence of new guidelines. The SCF case study corroborated the conclusion of chapter three, showing that the restricted positive/negative framework was being transformed into a more liberal discourse which validated campaigns which utilised populism, diversity and simplicity as methods for successful communication with audiences. So the ethical framework provided by the images guidelines was negotiated in accordance with practical and powerful needs and complex institutional agendas.

Whereas chapter five resonated with chapter three, chapter six had more in common with chapter four. Chapter six focussed on the manner in which the development charity Christian Aid reimagined their annual fundraising appeal, Christian Aid Week. In this chapter I focussed on how Christian Aid explicitly selected, discussed, altered and produced the images and messages for this appeal. In particular, I considered the way in which Christian Aid sought to score its distinctive discourse of development and its role as social justice organisation on its images. This case study examined in great detail the deliberations surrounding image production, rather than the larger institutional dynamics that were the topic of chapter five.

The case studies were distinct in other respects. The rationale for SCF's campaign was unprecedented need. Christian Aid wanted to create a lasting identity for itself through the vehicle of Christian Aid Week, their annual and highest income generating appeal. Accordingly, Christian Aid had greater resources at its disposal both in terms of time and money. There was also a contrast in institutional style. SCF adhered to a rhetoric of antagonism between professional groups. Christian Aid did not, it stressed that the ethics, poetics and politics of representation were fully understood by all staff. This was the manner in which it justified its lack of drafted guidelines. Moreover as an organisation Christian Aid represented itself and was described as a more 'progressive', empowerment and social justice oriented agency than SCF.

I began the Christian Aid case study by delineating the institutional context. I described the changes occurring within the organisation, in terms of growth and staffing. I argued
that these combined with changes in the voluntary sector provided the impetus for a revision in communicational practice. I also considered the 1991 Christian Aid Week campaign in relation to previous campaigns, notably that of 1989/90, and within Christian Aid's general advertising strategy. I established that Christian Aid defined itself in relation to a specific mode of representation which it had pursued for a considerable amount of time. I proceeded to illustrate how staff within Christian Aid explicitly connected representational practice to a discourse of partnership and social justice. I argued that mapping out the historical, institutional and discursive context of Christian Aid's representational practice was important because this highlighted the significance of the changes that were implemented in 1990/1, in representational terms. Specifically it showed how, in 1990/1, Christian Aid sought to combine their ethical commitment with the need to communicate with their public. I suggested that Christian Aid was considering how it could establish a more popular brand image.

The core of the Christian Aid case study attempted to disclose, through ethnographic evidence, the artifice behind representation. In other words, I wanted to describe exactly how empowering and positive images were selected, produced and disseminated, to show the manner in which power was inscribed into the representational process. First, I showed that in the case of the Bolivian (debt) images, the conditions of appropriation transgressed all Christian Aid's ethical criteria. I argued that such an incident radically challenged Christian Aid's discourse of partnership, social justice and democracy by utilising methods which lay bare the relationship of power between a Northern NGO and its Southern partners - the representer and the represented. Furthermore I indicated that the ability to select whether or not these images would be used in advertisements amplified this power relationship. That these representations were subsequently acclaimed as positive by other organisations within the sector proved that the content of images disclosed little about their conditions of production. In this case the realism and documentary mode of the visual images worked simultaneously to mystify the audience and to inspire confidence as to the integrity of the development agency concerned. Clearly then, Christian Aid's conduct in purchasing their Bolivian (debt) images disarticulated the
much spoken of and, ostensibly, highly valued equivalence between representation and intervention. However in parallel with chapter four I suggested that because power was inevitably inscribed in representation, this example should be viewed not as an anomaly but a spectacular example.

Secondly I concentrated on the manner in which the images for Christian Aid Week 1991 were fashioned. I showed that the decisions surrounding which images and messages to broadcast were heavily influenced by market research, which explored what the British public were prepared to accept. I stated that this demonstrated that agencies such as Christian Aid were willing to popularise their messages and to render them more emotional and human in order to communicate with their public. Again I argued that the representations of the developing world presented by Christian Aid were not a direct reflection of their development discourse, or their Statement of Commitment - *To Strengthen the Poor* - but ones that were modified for the consumer (this was also the case in chapter five). In the chapter I suggested that images were sites of negotiation, where 'truths' were actively and strategically evaluated so that they could simultaneously satisfy clearly delineated ethical criteria, while being popular enough to please an audience. This was particularly exemplified in relationship to the television advertisement, since the preoccupation over colour on behalf of the research respondents was addressed - but only once expert obstetricians had been consulted. I argued that the combination of these two voices - punters and experts - were used by Christian Aid to validate and justify certain representational procedures, notably tinting the negatives, or making the music more 'ethnic'. In other words both the need for ethnic authenticity and accuracy were satisfied, yet the ability to select and fashion this image of the developing world was firmly etched in power relationships and ultimately rested with Christian Aid.

In chapters five and six I elaborated and illustrated the claims I made in the first part of the thesis, namely that representation was inscribed with a relationship of power and that development charities were implicated in a process of truth construction not reflection. The case-studies supported the assertions made in the first part of the thesis, namely that
representational practice was regulated and regimented by various discourses. So what are we finally to conclude from the exhaustive ethnographic case studies and the discursive readings presented in this thesis?

The first conclusion is that there is no resolution to be proffered. My purpose in writing this thesis was to reveal and critique representational practice not to criticise; indeed I sought to distance myself from arguments based on polarities and certainties. However I explored avenues that British development charities would shy away from, because I reinserted power and truth into representational practice. I argued that instead of focussing on ethics, British development charities should reconsider the politics of representation, in the light of alternative definitions of power and truth: definitions that located these phenomenon of power in choice rather than repression. My purpose was simply to displace complacency, especially in the arena of representational practice. I attempted to reopen a debate which, to all intents and purposes was declared closed, or pronounced to be significantly resolved (Coulter 1989).

I indicated that British development charities have frequently posed Geertz's 'Is it decent?' question - the quotation from the Voluntary Service Overseas' development educationalist that began this chapter clearly enunciates this. They frequently mull over the ethics of representation, the 'who are we to represent them?' question. Yet they have consistently avoided going further. Only the hardened cynics ask themselves the relatively more problematic question of whether the project of representation, as it is presently understood within British development charities, is actually 'possible'. Clearly then the critical engagement with photographic imagery and practices has only gone so far. British development charities are still concerned with contesting racist stereotypes or the canon of negative images that has been produced over the last fifty years. They do so in good faith. They believe wholly in their new regime of truth on representation. They maintain that presenting a positive and plural (see Introduction) image of the developing world is necessary, because it can engender a more democratic and empowering relationship between NGOs, donors and recipients. In this thesis I argued that this faith is based on too many oversimplifications. I suggested that a concern with the ethics of representation is
based on binary oppositions and regularities: it does not seek to question issues of truth or analyse questions of power.

I in contrast proposed a different way of analysing representational practice. I suggested that by considering how images were constructed, circulated and consumed one could glean the discursive construction and historicity of representational practices. One could understand why representation were judged to be meaningful and truthful at any given moment. My question was not 'Is it ethical' but was it possible, namely was it possible to dissociate power and politics from representation by promoting the values of dialogue and partnership. I sought to investigate this by asking a series of questions in the context of the case studies. Why were certain representations produced? For whom? For what reason? For whom were they meaningful? and what were the consequences of accepting them as true records of reality?

I suggested that British development charities were involved the political practice of representation. I indicated that the struggle for power was not only situated around images (and the evidence they gave) but that they were themselves a site of struggle and that their production and reproduction testified to the operation and convergence of power-ful discourses. I hoped that this investigation would resituate the debate on representation. To reconsider representation in this light might even be a liberating move for development charities. It would allow them to escape the overgeneralisations and articles of faith that characterise their discourse on representational practice at present. In particular this strategy might allow for greater creative diversity in imaging practices, in the sense that development charities by subjecting representational practice to greater scrutiny would be freed from the constraints and pressures which require that they substitute negative for positive images, or power-ful for power-less practices.
Appendix I

Methodology.
Introduction

My academic interest in the area of imagery and development arose out of personal experience as an employee of a British development charity in the late 1980s. During this period the issue of imagery was a cause for concern amongst most British development charities. In the aftermath of the Ethiopian Famine 1984/5 many of these organisations, chastened by the conclusions of reports such as the *Images of Africa* (Chapter 3), were forced to reconsider the effects of their representational practices. They were strongly criticised for producing an overwhelmingly 'negative' image of the developing world. Their images were said to concentrate on the extraordinary and devastating events (disasters, famines and floods) that took place in the developing world to the exclusion of other more everyday and positive stories. It was argued that 'negative' images predominated because British development charities invested more in fundraising materials than educational ones. Fundraising materials, by definition, appealed to the emotions and needed hard hitting images and messages to elicit donations. Educational materials, on the other hand, were said to be more reasoned and informative, creating a more complex and realistic view of life overseas. The issue of images in the British development charity context was constituted as a simple 'tug-of-war' between the educational and fundraising departments. The argument was relatively straightforward: British development charities should honour their commitment to the developing world and global social justice by prioritising the activity of development education over fundraising and by favouring the production of 'positive' images (Arnold 1988; Reeves 1989).

However inside British development charities the issue seemed a little more complicated. The simplistic description of British development charities torn asunder by internal conflicts bore little relation to the complexity of ethical and political arguments revolving around the issue of imagery, or the number of agendas of individual staff members. The divisions between fundraisers and educators seemed to be uncomfortably blurred. Indeed such a narrow analysis of this thorny issue reflected a particular approach which deployed content
analyses of images to back up an argument concerning the reproduction of ideology (Slater 1989).

Research design

My academic interest in the issue of British development charity imagery arose from an awareness of weaknesses at two levels. First the lack of theorisation of the issue. The argument deployed to advocate educational images as against fundraising images was based on essentialisms, as the theoretical chapters of the thesis show. But while there was a clear gap in the realm of 'theory', there was certainly a glaring omission at the level of empirical evidence and methodology. Prevailing analyses were conducted at a high level of generality, focussing on the product rather than the process of representation, with the result that almost no attempt had been made the reflect the views or experience of those agents engaged in image fashioning. It seemed to me that to examine images in isolation without reference to the process of construction, and to extrapolate from image to motive, was a way of confirming pre-conceived ideas, rather than engaging with the problem itself. Such methodology lacked 'explanatory reach'. It simply rediscovered the formal relationships - fundraising versus education, positive versus negative, for instance - that had already been delineated, because it used a method that sought only to target 'similarity, dissimilarity, correlation and the like, rather than causal, structural and substantial, ie: relations of connection' (Sayer 1992: 246-247).

In contrast, I wanted a more open-ended, intensive, qualitative method of research that had sensitivity to meaning formulation and the operation of values. Instead of singling out the product, the images produced by British development agencies, as representative and telling indices of people's agendas, I wanted to examine, in detail, the process of image construction. The terrain of investigation would differ, therefore, from that of more conventional analyses. The images would cease to be the sole focus; the specific intentions and agendas of those involved in image making as they were manifest in the context of their fashioning of particular images would occupy equal place. Following this logic I pursued a broadly ethnographic method in the context of two case studies.
The virtues of the ethnographic method lie in the research technique of participant observation. In traditional anthropological fieldwork participant observation implies complete immersion into another culture, it is the means 'into' unfamiliar territory. It facilitates personal cognitive mapping of strange terrain, and makes it possible for the researcher to carry out research. In my case, having worked in a British development charity, and using that charity as one of my principal field sites, the terrain was already familiar and I could easily lapse into a 'staff member' mode, catching up on gossip and talking to friends and colleagues. This did not depend on day to day participation but 'popping in' on a very regular basis, and attending important meetings, as well as keeping in regular telephone contact. Moreover because I had an in depth knowledge of the development charity sector I could function as both an 'insider' and an 'outsider'. I clearly knew the language, and those with whom I kept regular contact frequently used me as a sounding board and as a source of knowledge. Although I never imparted knowledge that was given to me in confidence, my breadth of knowledge on the issue of development charity images proved of interest to those I interviewed. This degree of participation enabled me not only to observe the variations in organisational behaviour but also to apply other qualitative research techniques such as semi-structured, in-depth and corroborated interviews, and content analyses of images.

The advantages of ethnographic research are two-fold. First, it is an all inclusive technique of social research which can encompass and document the existence of 'diverse perspectives' or the 'multiple realities' of those engaged in social acts. Secondly it is a mode based on 'reproduction' of social reality in that it seeks, ultimately, to reflect the social realm as 'it really is' (Hammersley 1992a: 23; Ellen 1984:23). In essence therefore it should be faithful to, and non-judgemental of, the subjects that its portrays. I should respect 'indigenous' theories for social practices (Ellen 1984: 71).

I felt that the advantages of such a methodology was that it would prove counter-suggestive. If suitable 'case studies' were available whereby one could chart the diversity of agendas negotiated in the production of images and the views that were expressed during
their construction, this might go some way into exploding the polarised framework imposed on the imagery debate.

In order to implement such detailed research I felt that it would be necessary to isolate appropriate 'case studies'. Hammersley advances a definition of a 'case study' as a distinct phenomenon (located in space/time) about which all manner of data is collected, but which is not constructed by the researcher (1992b: 48). The distinguishing feature of 'case study' research is that it pin-points an already existing entity for investigation.

Having worked in the charity sector I was aware that charities, typically, seek to differentiate themselves, and indeed in organisational terms these charities do have distinctive histories, styles and organisational structures. My purpose in selecting case studies was both to highlight the differences and regularities, in order to delineate and analyse different regularities and themes than had been isolated by the existing discussion on imagery.

I also felt that in selecting the case study framework I would not run the risk of reaffirming the conventional categories of analysis ie: fundraising versus education, or positive versus negative, but confound them by giving 'voice' to those involved and showing that the agendas were blurred. These case studies would not therefore function as exemplars but as anomalies: which would force reinterrogation and reconstruction of the theoretical terrain in the light of newly emergent themes and perspectives. Burawoy remarks that to embark on such research is to engage in 'a running exchange between field notes and the analysis that follows them. The conjectures of yesterday's analysis are refuted by today's observations and then reconstructed in tomorrow's analysis' (1991:10). For Burawoy such a dialogue between empirical evidence and analysis necessitates a mindful but not over-respectful consideration of the body of knowledge on which the research is based.

The case studies must be the basis for the new and deeper interrogation of the issue.

At this point a caveat must be introduced. The 'ethnographic' method and case study approach encourage a representation of the researcher as reproducer of social reality. It seems as though the researcher simply charts objectively the acts and the opinions
witnessed in the course of research. This objective stance is somewhat of a deception. Texts do not simply mirror or reflect objects, events or categories of a pre-existing reality, indeed such a position is untenable given the theoretical perspective of this thesis. Texts operate in the social world, they actively construct a version of events and as such they have political effects (Potter and Wetherell 1987:7). The mere process of communication, as this thesis repeatedly argues, involves a process of selection, which itself necessitates analysis.

The best ethnographic fictions are ... intricately truthful; but their facts, like all facts in the human sciences are classified, contextualized, narrated and intensified (Clifford 1988:112).

Ethnographers do not, therefore, solely offer descriptions of social acts: they simultaneously proffer explanations. They are, therefore, inevitably involved in the process of representation (Rabinow 1986). The best ethnographies are simultaneously persuasive fictions and partial truths (Clifford & Marcus 1986).

Nevertheless, I would contend that in this instance such intensive and qualitative methods were of value. By according a space for the operation of 'lay theories', for social acts or of the 'common-sense' knowledge of those they observe they provided a valuable point of departure for assessing the inadequacy of more distanced and restrictive analyses. Participation and observation highlighted the ambiguities and contradictions in social acts which, in turn, supplied the means to challenge extant theories (Burawoy 1991:26).

Implementing research design

My fieldwork took place in three stages from the middle of 1990 until the middle of 1992, with the most intensive period occurring during 1991.

In the initial stages of research in 1990, I was considerably aided by my knowledge and contacts within the sector. Though there are approximately 100 British development charities, the majority of these organisations are small. I sought to target those organisations that had a high profile and a large income since these were the charities that had wrestled most overtly with the issue of imagery in the aftermath of 1984/5. During this preliminary period of research I hoped to acquire a mental map of the British charitable
sector, the development charities' position within it, and the role of individual development charities in relation to each other. In order to do this, I consulted the relevant literature, not only published texts (including the HMSO leaflets on charities, Charity Commission reports and Charity Trends documents) but more specific journals dealing with issues to do with development (the New Internationalist), charities (Charity, Marketing), advertising (Campaign) or charity newsletters (Christian Aid News, World's Children,) as well as the charity features in the national press. I scrutinized the pertinent research reports that had been produced in the aftermath of the Ethiopian Famine in 1984/5 (Chapter 3). I also maintained files of current charity press advertisements collected from the national newspapers and of cuttings on the relevant issues.

During this period I conducted preliminary interviews (taped) and telephone interviews or sought written responses from a variety of development charities: Christian Aid, Oxfam, Action Aid, Charity Projects (Comic Relief), Save the Children Fund, Voluntary Services Overseas, The British Red Cross, Returned Volunteer Action, Womankind and War on Want. I contacted development educational bodies or non-governmental organisations who were involved in the imagery debate or in development education such as The International Broadcasting Trust, Focus for Change, The Development Education Project and Education Network for Environment and Development. I sought the opinion of individuals, including photographers or advertisers who were known to be outspoken on the issue of charity images. From these preliminary meetings I hoped to establish which charities might be suitable for in depth case study investigation.

After initial contact in late 1990, I widened the net of interviews, to encompass all manner of practitioners (campaigners, press officers, audio-visual staff, fundraisers, educationalists) in the field of charity image production. Overall, negotiating access was time consuming but not difficult: my work experience was a definite advantage not only in obtaining access but during interviewing. My familiarity with both the imagery debate and the way the sector worked allowed me to ask more searching questions that perhaps a complete outsider would have judged advisable. Most interviewees were candid and happy
to explore the idiosyncrasies of the imagery debate, although a couple of times I was told to
switch off the tape recorder and not to divulge certain 'trade secrets'.
On the whole, these exploratory meetings generated significant amounts of information, all
of which proved useful in the context of the research - even though the majority of those
organisations interviewed do not feature prominently in the thesis. The initial contact led,
in the end, to further involvement with five charities: Christian Aid, Save the Children,
Help the Aged, ActionAid, Oxfam and the Disasters Emergency Committee. Two
charities, Christian Aid and Save the Children, granted me almost 'full' access. They
allowed me to attend meetings, to participate in conferences, to interview at length both
their own staff and the staff of their advertising agency, and to have access to their libraries
and the documentation they produced. It emerged during the course of these interviews
and research that both these organisations were planning to launch 'campaigns'\(^1\) in 1991,
and these seemed appropriate case study material.
The Christian Aid 'campaign' took place in the context of Christian Aid Week, a yearly
event. The interesting feature about the 1991 Christian Aid Week campaign was the fact
that it signalled both a change in advertising strategy (in tandem with the hiring of a new
advertising agency) and the novel venture into television advertising. This was a
'campaign' where both the images used and the image of the agency were judged to be
crucial criteria in terms of which success would be evaluated.
In the case of Save the Children the 'campaign' was an emergency appeal related to the
unfolding 'disaster' of drought and famine in seven African countries. It was the first time
Save the Children had ventured into this type of high profile appeal. It was supposedly a
'one-off' campaign, but it brought into focus broader issues concerning the wider
communication role that Save the Children felt that it should adopt.
I felt that these campaigns would form ideal case studies since they would have to
reconcile a variety of interests. Particularly attractive was their 'boundedness': both these
campaigns would be over by the middle of 1991. Equally, because both these campaigns
were novel ventures for both charities their design, orchestration, launch and success

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\(^1\) I use the term 'campaign' very loosely to describe a harmonised and coherent communicational
venture uniting a broad range of materials (including fundraising and educational documents) in order to
provoke some form of support during a specific time period.
would be evaluated and reflected on. This evaluation process would most likely take place both within the organisation and with the general public. Indeed if these campaigns were to succeed research would be a major part of the designing process. Moreover because the time span for these campaigns was limited, the evaluation process could occur during the fieldwork period. As discrete units, bounded in time, these campaigns offered the perfect opportunity of focussing on the issue of charity images in the actual context of image construction. Indeed the practitioners involved in image production were very self-reflexive, articulate, critical and candid. In general they were willing to debate the pragmatics and ethics of 'representing' the developing world.

Research with these two agencies followed a similar trajectory, although Christian Aid allowed me a greater degree of access. As in both cases the rationale behind these 'campaigns' evolved through a dialogue between the development agencies and the advertising agencies (Butterfield, Day, Devito, Hockney for Christian Aid and Ogilvy and Mather for Save the Children Fund), staff at both types of agencies were interviewed, and these interviews were taped. In each case I consulted the relevant documentation concerning, for example, the advertising agency brief, the development agency's brief, the results of previous market research on previous advertising material, corporate branding, or audience surveys. I was allowed access to the lengthy transcripts from market research, memoranda and transcripts arising from meetings, memoranda detailing changes or content of images, as well as planning documentation and documentation for submission to various committees.

In Christian Aid I had access to the archival material for previous Christian Aid Week campaigns (showing previous themes and images) as well as the market research reports that had been produced by the previous advertising agency Cohen and Company. For Save the Children this was not possible since 'Skip Lunch. Save a Life' was their first venture into campaigning. However in this case I investigated the different pitches that had been registered to win the account for the 1991 Africa appeal.
At certain points, I was permitted to partake in meetings when the issues of images or advertising were discussed: small meetings between advertisers and charity staff, or in the context of larger more formal meetings discussing the relevant issues. In the case of Christian Aid I accompanied both the development agency and advertising agency staff to a market research venue. We all watched 'the general public' react to the proposed advertising for 1991 behind a two way mirror in a 'semi' in Sheen.

This intense monitoring of activity was accompanied by prolonged formal interviews with all the practitioners involved in setting up and implementing the campaigns (photographers, advertising agency staff, charity staff from all divisions and of all statuses), but also more informal discussions either on the phone or in person. If interviews were conducted with staff of other charities, or individuals without the charity sector, they were invited to comment on the 'campaigns' under investigation. I attended all meetings that were open to me, including a development charity conference (by invitation only) on the issue of imagery held at the Africa Centre in London in March 1991 and the official 'launches' of the 'campaigns' that were orchestrated for the media. Even if I was dissuaded from joining meetings I sought a description of the proceedings, verdicts on the outcome, and opinions on their dynamics from different participants.

In addition, I undertook to monitor the media reportage from January 1991 onwards, particularly the months of April and May, the time period for the two campaigns. Media surveillance was enlightening in 1991 since the Gulf War and the Kurdish crisis created a momentum of opinion concerning the imperative behind humanitarian assistance which, in turn, generated a degree of interest in both Christian Aid's and Save the Children's 'campaigns'. This widened the topics of discussion of image, since both charities hoped to get media attention for their issues and campaigns.

My focus was the production and content of the imagery, so I used images as a focus of discussion. In each case I sought opinions on the images and messages, which the tone of each piece of documentation or advertising was analysed with a variety of image makers and other critics. Individual members of staff were repeatedly reinterviewed, either formally during a taped interview or informally on the phone. In addition I had a couple of
key people in each agency who kept me informed and would give me an opinion of what exactly was going on.

As indicated above I was watchful of the media during the lead up to the campaigns. During the 'campaign' weeks I searched for reportage in the national television news and press. In the case of Save the Children the reportage of the appeal was outstanding and one of its greatest achievements. In order to assess the level and the substance of this reportage I consulted Save the Children's files. During the campaign period there was some controversy surrounding the Charity Commissioners' investigations of both Oxfam and War on Want. I followed this up by carrying out interviews on the subject and by collecting information or documentation pertaining to charity law in addition to the specific Charity Commissioners' reports.

From mid 1991 onwards, when both 'campaigns' had wound down, I began to reinterview staff in order to have a final verdict on the success or the content of each campaign. In addition I discussed the campaigns with other development charities staff during interviews, to gauge their reaction to the 'campaigns' and to ascertain how they felt about the 'campaigns' strategies in general. In reference to Christian Aid I spoke to a wide variety of staff members including area staff. In reference to Save the Children I attended their Annual Public Meeting held at the Barbican in October. This meeting was held for the voluntary workers and the non-headquarters staff, so it provided an ideal opportunity for evaluating the reactions of those not close to image production. In addition, since several headquarters staff made presentations specifically referring to the success of the 1991 Africa appeal, it offered a public evaluation of the 'campaign'.

From mid-1991 until the beginning of 1992 I continued to interview a range of British development charity staff and advertising agency staff as well as other informed individuals on the subject of charity imagery. I also attended the Charities Aid Foundation Conference (in November) which dealt with the issue of charity fundraising in great depth, in particular the British Red Cross Kurdish appeal of 1991 which was somewhat controversial. During the early part of 1992 I maintained contact with those development charities with which I
had been particularly involved, chatting informally about their communication policies, the imaging practices and so forth, in order to keep in touch with current developments. I continued to scour the press and the relevant journals for information on the field of fundraising and charity in general.

The combination of the intense qualitative research that was implemented in the case study context and the more general surveillance of charity imaging practice was designed to refute the simplistic manner in which the debate on imagery had been framed. The wealth of opinion and evidence did prove counter-suggestive and force a reexamination of terms. The intricate and extensive fashioning of the images produced by development charities led to a questioning of the issues of truth and reality in the context of imagery production, which suggested the need for a different theoretical framework to view the practices of representation. This in turn led to a reinvestigation of the founding assumptions of imagery debate concerning the dual practices of charity and development.
Appendix II

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