

Series 9, No. 5  
September - October, 1982

# MIC

## MISSION NEWS



Canada

### **WORLD MISSION SUNDAY**

*...the occasion for crossing the borders of our own country,  
to open ourselves to the universe, to share with other churches.*

Propagation of the Faith

## Mission Is For all...

*The peoples to whom we are sent reveal to us the world of today and call forth a response. On our part, we see the changing face of the world in sharpening focus and look upon it with hope, eager to respond to its challenges and answer its needs. Continually growing and adapting to the needs of the people we serve, we find that our basic commitment to mission as **Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception** is lived out differently in each age and each area of the community's life. But the strength of this common commitment remains, marking every passing year only as another beginning in an ongoing response to Christ's call.*

*How, concretely, can we accept the challenge to discover, each of us according to the circumstances of our lives, our part in carrying on Christ's mission to announce God's Kingdom in word and deed? We respond by telling the Good News in our time and history, helping to build that unity in the world which can free all men to say 'Our Father'.*

*In the September-October issue of the MIC MISSION NEWS, we focus on these concerns. Moreover, the 'mission-month' of October invites us in a special way to honour Mary, holding her Son as He reaches out to the world and to each of us. She gave Him to us. Likewise we are asked to share Him with others.*

*In the days ahead, may all members of our **ICMA Family** add a brighter missionary dimension to their lives. May we respond more readily to Christ's invitation and follow Him who came among us 'as one who serves'...*

...*"Having come as disciple,  
will you not go as apostle?  
Will you not be sent by Me  
- for such is mission -  
as the Father sent Me?  
Don't be afraid to be as I was,  
Servant.  
I, the Lord, am with you  
always.  
Go now to my world;  
and make disciples of all."*

*Sr. Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.*

COVER-PHOTO: Sr. Lise Lamarche, M.I.C., shares with young Canadians glimpses of the African culture.

### MIC MISSION NEWS

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## Mary Proclaims The Good News

**M** "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord  
My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."  
Magnify the Lord with me  
Marvelously infinite His loving gratuity.

**A** "As He has looked on His lowly handmaid  
Almighty God has done great things for me."  
All you who share my lowliness  
Are blest with God's redeeming grace.

**R** "Rich is His mercy to those who fear Him  
Reaching out to every generation."  
Rejoice with me, you descendants of Abraham  
Receive the promised Saviour, God-became-man.

**Y** "Yahveh has exalted the hungry and lowly  
Yet the rich He has sent away empty."  
You who are 'poor', come to His sight  
Our life, He wants to fill with His Love and Light.

(Lk. 1: 46)  
Guada, M.I.C.

Quebec, Canada

## Invitations To "Come And See"

*By Sr. Leonie Therrien, M.I.C.*

*Sr. Adrienne Guay, M.I.C.*

The groundwork for the **M.I.C. Missionary Project** was laid in Montreal, back in 1976. Its headquarters were moved to Quebec City in the Fall of 1978. It aims at providing young girls with practical experience of missionary community living. In the M.I.C. house at 1060 Park Avenue, a team made up of Sisters Leonie Therrien, Louise Sauvé, and Clémence Trudel guided the work towards its objectives: to allow young girls to know the depths of their own personalities, to deepen their sense of missionary commitment, to ascertain whether or not they felt the call to leave all behind and launch into the deep, into the evangelization of other peoples in the name of the missionary Church, and to facilitate the realization of their departure if need be.

After a three-year experience, the need was felt to acquire larger premises with a sufficient number of rooms where young girls who felt the desire to carry out an ongoing formation experience could function.

This Centre was finally established at 1044, Murray Street, Quebec, in June 1981. The following September, it welcomed 22 years old Noelline. She came to us because she wished to make sure whether she had a call to religious life. Living with us at the Centre and sharing our household chores, she earnestly sought what her deep aspirations really were. After a fruitful period of discernment, she left to take up her

outside occupations and studies so as to ensure a more adequate preparation to missionary life. Deep down in her heart she still hears the call.

In November, it was Celine's turn to come to the Centre, feeling the need to create a balance between her daily activities and reflection, busyness and quiet. She works outside as a secretary and continues her formation and her discernment, thanks to various courses, activities and individual sessions.

While young girls are preparing to join us here, others participate in missionary weekends timed to the number of requests. On a weekend in January this year, six girls between 20 and 28 years old met at the Centre. The programme for these two days comprised a deepening of personal motivation, talks on missionary topics, the Christian concept of sharing, personal growth and intensive prayer. The importance of preparation for the work to be done in the missions was stressed. All this helps participants view the call to religious missionary life as a gift of God which ought to be accepted in a spirit of faith and joy.

The following paragraphs are excerpts from the journals of Lise and Sylvie, both already at work in the mission fields:

"Slowly, the desire to carry on an experiment of missionary life grew in my heart. I knocked at the door of the



*Young girls respond to invitations "to come and see" by joining sessions animated by Srs. Leonie Therrien and Adrienne Guay at the Vocational Orientation Centre.*

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. For several months we shared, elaborated various projects, exchanged ideas... Finally, the puzzle was solved and I left for Bolivia." (Lise, March-April, 1980)

"I grasped the fact that one must understand and respect the mentality of other people and not to try to persuade them to discard their traditions. All we need to do is to live among them and love them. We must make sure that we will be able to live within the fraternity, to be accommodating and patiently suffer the lack of close friendships... It is important to learn how to share with the people, for we live in their midst. I found my work in San Juan (Peru), at the heart of a pueblo, a very rewarding experience." (Sylvie, Jan.-Feb. 1981)

Anne, a newcomer at the Centre, expressed her impressions as follows: "It was thanks to an old copy of the *Précurseur* (1969) that I found the address of the M.I.C. Sisters. I came to the Centre with a view of making a vocational discernment, that is to

say, discovering God's designs upon me. For a whole month, I have been living the life of the Centre, and I have experienced the joys and exigencies of living a community life which is both reflective and apostolic. The fact of living together, far from being as annoying as I had imagined, has a strengthening effect for we help one another. The more I reflect upon the call and the mission, the more I thank the Father for the graces received. In a word, I have discovered Joy."

To all of you who are seeking your way in the world of study or work, the **Vocational Orientation Centre** and the **Missionary Project** offer help in coming to a deeper understanding of how God moves in each of our lives. **WELCOME** to anyone who wishes to try carrying out creative active love in the true sense of our Christian mandate.

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# PROJECT



## 1982

## MOYO

*By Sr. Louise Denis, M.I.C.*

**Moyo in Chitumbuka means health, life. *Project Moyo '82* is a *Solidarity Project* which enlists the financial collaboration of Canadian high school students on behalf of their brothers and sisters in Malawi, especially children under five years old. They help support the medical work undertaken by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in the fight against illness and malnutrition.**

For centuries Africa and its people held for the rest of the world a mysterious character and wielded an irresistible attraction for outsiders. It eventually became a centre of attraction and a matter of stake for explorers from French, Portuguese, and English Europe as well as from the Arab world. Merchant fleets anchored off the coasts of the continent, and their caravans rode

through arid plains acquiring loads of gold, ivory and iron.

Africa and its people can rightly boast of an ancient civilization and culture. Their history is replete with deeply interesting pages. The African personality reflects a care-free spirit, full of spontaneity and zest for life, joined to a keen love of colour and music.

For hundreds of years Africans struggled against a hostile world. Nearly the whole of Africa is infested by the dreaded tsetse fly which spreads the sleeping sickness and causes diseases in cattle. Mosquitoes infest plains, swamps, and ponds, perpetuating to a great extent tropical diseases, especially malaria. The Africans gradually conquered and peopled inhospitable lands. They learned to till the ground and to herd cattle. Their history has been marked by constant strife and even up to the present, they must fight to preserve their national heritage.

We live today in a period when individual health problems preoccupy the international community. The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed the right of every individual to a standard of living which guarantees his well-being, especially as far as nutrition and medical services are concerned. Nevertheless, in the greater part of Africa, life expectancy represented by the death rate of the under-five is 10 to 15 times higher than that of developed countries. For instance, in Malawi, out of every ten babies born, only seven will reach their fifth birthday. Out of these seven who will survive, four will have had malnutrition at some time or other before they are five years old.

Infantile deaths in Malawi are caused chiefly by the following:

- Lack of suitable drinking water
- Contagious diseases
- Tropical diseases

### **What Can Be Done To Improve The Situation?**

One of the major difficulties to be overcome is the lack of drinking water. To help solve this problem, the government of Malawi has organized a sanitation programme. Projects of auto-development concerning the sinking of wells have been realized.

### **Mobile Under-Five Clinics**

While the contagious diseases of childhood have been practically eradicated from developed countries, in Africa they continue to make numerous victims each year. Prevention and education programmes which are set up especially aim at safeguarding mother and child, the two most vulnerable groups exposed to this situation.

A few years ago, the World Health Organization launched in Malawi a medical preventive programme aimed at providing adequate care for every child through medical clinics. Such clinics continue to welcome each year hundreds of mothers and their babies and to provide them with the following services: immunization of children against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanos, tuberculosis, and polio; education of mothers, through talks on nutrition, sanitation measures and cooking techniques; distribution of preventive drugs against malaria; distribution of a supplement of food to underweight children; tracking down of malnutrition cases and treatment for ailing children.

To reach the greatest possible number of children and to provide medical services for those who live in out-of-the-way places, staff members of mobile clinics travel to distant villages. This network of vaccination and prevention is called upon to play a very important role in the struggle to prevent the death of young children in Malawi.

### **Rehabilitation Centres**

The Rehabilitation Centres under the direction of the M.I.C. Sisters in Mzambazi and Katete welcome malnourished children picked up from villages by the mobile-clinic team. Together with the mothers, the medical personnel try to pinpoint the reasons for the children's sickness or their state of malnutrition.

- Objective:

# Health

*5 Mobile Clinics*

*2 Rehabilitation Centres*

*1,200 children*

## Rehabilitation Centre



*Malawian mothers receive instructions on child-development and food-preparation.*

## TO EDUCATE...

## Under-five Clinic



*Sr. Gertrude Paré, M.I.C., distributes food to the children attending the under-five clinic in Mzambazi.*

## Sanitation



*Wells and water pumps provide villagers with the boon of drinking water.*

**the mother and the child**

At these Centres, young mothers are trained in basic notions regarding the rearing and development of children. They learn how to prepare suitable meals, each in turn, under the supervision of an experienced guide. They are also taught how to use local products such as corn, beans, fish, etc.

### **What Can We Do To Remedy The Situation?**

Many people ask themselves this question.

**Project Moyo** has been elaborated and presented to the Pastoral Animators of the School Board Commission of Mille-Isles, Quebec. Nearly 1200 students of 7 High Schools, from Secondary I to V, were invited to participate in a fund-raising Rallye-Cyclothon. Through this activity, the students aimed at raising funds to help sustain financially for a year, the functioning of 5 mobile clinics engaged in a vast programme of preventive medicine for children under five years old, and the maintenance of 2 rehabilitation centres for malnourished children.

The school communities' collaboration and solidarity means a great deal to us in the crusade we have

launched against sickness and malnutrition.

Each school received information and animation by means of slides which presented the challenges to be faced with regard to the causes and the high percentage of infant mortality rate. An exhibition of the arts and crafts of Malaŵi allowed the students and their teachers to become interested in the culture of African people and to get acquainted with its values. The school communities also had the opportunity of meeting M.I.C. Sisters from the missions, especially those who had spent several years in Africa.

The present situation of certain peoples such as those of Malaŵi offers a real challenge to more favoured nations who should refuse to remain passive when faced with the fact that millions of human beings are forced to beg for their right to live.

**Project Moyo** was a way of awakening students in Canada to the acute needs of the children of Malaŵi. Its invitation and challenge calls out to other individuals and groups who desire to concretize their faith into action, urging all to answer the call expressed in this year's theme for Mission Sunday: "Listen to the cry of your brothers."

*M.I.C. Sisters join faculty members to send off nearly 400 students from their starting point at the Poly-Jeunesse School in Fabreville, Quebec, for the Rallye-Cyclothon held last June 4, 1982.*



# Delia Tetreault And Her Message

*By Sr. Pauline Longtin, M.I.C.*

## Presence and Participation

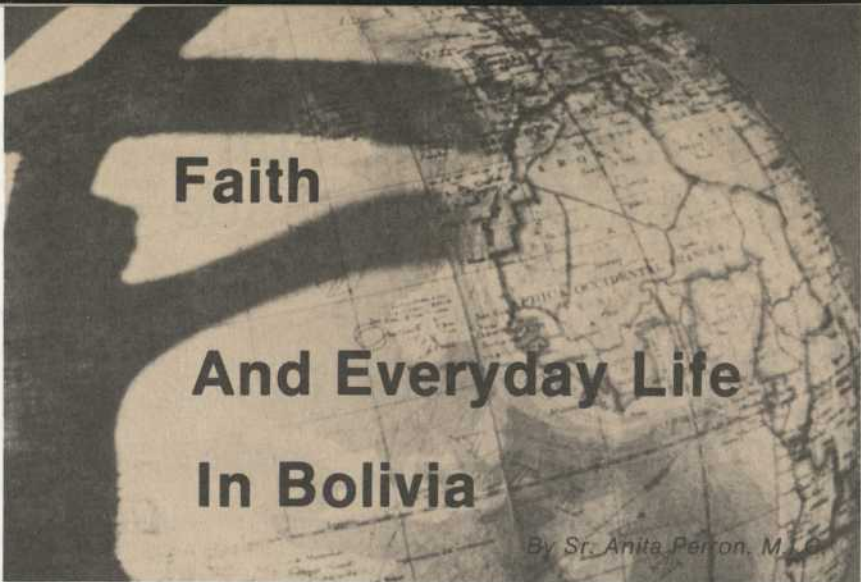
In a preceding article we have seen how Delia Tetreault, urged by her ardent love of God, of the Church, and of humanity, manifested this love in her works with a dynamism far surpassing mere human enthusiasm. Love like faith is proved by action; it consists in presence, attention, service. Such was the ideal this woman, whose heart embraced the world, constantly lived up to.

To stand by the needy, to ease their burden and to provide for their needs, this was the deep motive which inspired Delia to undertake her apostolic activities. Considered against the background of the times in which she lived they now seem nothing short of daring and even reckless. As soon as Rome had declared in 1908 all mission lands open to the Community she had recently founded, Delia Tetreault answered a call which came from China. She sent her first missionaries to Canton where they assumed the direction of a residence for elderly women, and a Foundling Home where babies, almost always in a dying condition, were brought in day by day. The little ones had been abandoned either under the pressure of ancestral superstitions or of extreme poverty. To these members of the human family, left to fend for themselves at the start or at the close of their lives, the Foundress wished, through her missionaries, to ensure the comfort of a loving presence, of the tender compassion without which no human heart can hope to thrive.

She often told her Sisters, "Spread happiness around you, scatter seeds of joy... If many are poor in this world's goods, many more are poor in happiness..." (Outremont 1910)

Besides the elderly and the abandoned babies, another portion of suffering humanity touched Delia's generous heart. Her attention was early drawn to the sad fate of the lepers, those unfortunates of all times and places rejected by society. One cannot read without deep emotion the circumstances which led to the opening of the lazaretto of Shek-Lung, entrusted her daughters. This lazaretto was opened in 1913, on an island situated on the Pearl River. Two hundred leprous women had been confined there by the government of the Kouang-Tong province. When the unfortunate patients set foot on this "sand bank", in the middle of a river, they could not but think that they had reached the end of the trail. But the charity of the Sisters, inspired by their Foundress, eventually transformed this island of despair into an island of hope. She wrote: "Cherish these outcasts whom the Lord has entrusted to your care... treat them as the apple of your eye; care for them as you would care for me if I were sick." (15/11/13)

Presence and service are indeed the genuine expression of the gift of one's love. Throughout her life, Delia Tetreault's love was never limited to empty words, to pious exhortations. It was manifested in actual commitment. For her, to **LOVE** meant to be **PRESENT** and to **SERVE**.



# Faith

## And Everyday Life

### In Bolivia

By Sr. Anita Perron, M.I.C.

*In Bolivia, the religion of the people is a living, total language that expresses the day-to-day concerns and dreams of hopeful men and women.*

During several years I was privileged to work as a missionary in Bolivia, a country with a population of close to five million. Majority of the people are forced to live a life in which their essential rights are constantly flouted. Nevertheless, while I lived in their midst, I witnessed a profoundly Christian attitude on the part of those who clamour for bread, justice, and dignity. Thanks to them I have witnessed more than one Gospel page become a striking reality.

The miners who work the underground tin mines, do so under deplorable conditions. Exploited and fully conscious of being so, they claim their rights and denounce the abuses of military governments. At times, the only means in their power to obtain redress is to go on strike. But this often turns the tables against them. As they live from hand to mouth, and the food supplies come from the plains and valleys by truck, the big bosses block the roads that lead to the mines. Hunger soon drives the miners and their families to surrender. On such occasions, I have

seen a good number of workers from other parts take common cause with the miners and provide them with food so as to enable them to carry on their strike.

Santa Cruz, stronghold of the military presidents, has not given the labour force any support. Some time ago, this region was severely damaged by floods. I could not help thinking that the region did not deserve any aid since the people never helped the miners. But I was jolted back to a more genuine Christian attitude by a worker who spoke over the radio, suggesting that help be sent on the spot. He reasoned as follows, "True, the people of Santa Cruz can scarcely be called our benefactors since they have not helped us out in any way. But now is the time to forget our resentment and to remember that we are all brothers. Let's give a helping hand to those who are now in trouble." Suiting the action to the word, the already destitute labourers agreed to give the people of Santa Cruz the benefit of one day of work, free of charge, and food for another day.

By way of assuring the security of the State, military dictators justify arbitrary imprisonment and exile. This situation causes serious harm in many families. Very few women are on the labour market. Unemployment benefits and social welfare are non-existent. When such repression is generalized, the fate of families deprived of their provider can easily be understood.

Following the failure of their husbands' negotiations, four women freely chose to fast with fourteen of their children so as to obtain the liberation of all fugitive workers or university students, either imprisoned or exiled. For twenty days, they took nothing but water, although meals were provided for the children. It fell to my lot to accompany these women in order to watch over their well-being and care for the children.

A dramatic part of this event occurred when it became known one of the younger women was pregnant. She was accused of cruelty by the government officials because she was risking the life of an innocent unborn child. The mother retorted to a journalist: "... I know I'm taking a big risk. But I'm ready to give up my own child so that others may find a normal home when their father is allowed to return to his family..." This declaration reminds us of the values preached by Jesus when He was on the point of giving up His own life as a supreme expression of His love, "A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends." (Jn 15: 13)

The mother and child came through their ordeal unscathed as well as the other participants. Their heroic feat stirred a movement of national and international indignation and the government was forced to sign a decree of liberation of prisoners and return of exiles such as desired. This victory was celebrated

by Christians as a sign of resurrection for the present and a pledge of hope for the future.

I also became acquainted with René, a man in his forties, a worker dedicated to the service of his oppressed compatriots. Convinced that it was not enough for him to merely stand looking up to heaven for aid, and strong in his belief in the Holy Spirit, he clamoured his own rights and those of his companions for more bread, justice, liberation, dignity. Suspected of being subversive, he was imprisoned. In his cell, he prayed: "Dear Lord, you gave up your own life to save the world. If you need mine to save my people, to ensure that they may be treated more fairly, take it. I'm ready to give it up for this cause. But do not forget I have a wife and four children. If you do take my life, see to my family."

Thanks to the voluntary fast of the four women mentioned above, René was finally liberated. Giving witness before a group of young people, he declared, "In the midst of my sufferings I was confirmed in my faith in Jesus." The beatitudes proclaimed by the Lord found their accomplishment in the life of this poor and oppressed man: "Happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven... Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right; theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5: 1-10)

The struggle of our Bolivian brothers and sisters recall to us our own history in the light of the Gospel teachings. Justice, liberty, and solidarity are Gospel values proclaimed by Jesus. Do we not too often tend to forget them? Some of our Bishops have asked, "Are we perhaps tired of hearing the Gospel message?" We should learn from the poor who take it seriously, often at the cost of their own lives. We can learn to love as they do.



*Preparing for First Holy Communion together brings added joys of friendship and sharing to Peruvian children.*

**Pucallpa, Peru**

## ***Forging Bonds Of Love And Hope***

*By Sr. Therese Beaudet, M.I.C.*

This year there has been a quiet revolution in the field of catechesis in Pucallpa, Peru. What has really happened? Why should parents be required to prepare their own children for First Communion, and why should this preparation last for two years?

The Family Catechesis has been organized chiefly in order to intensify Christian life in the family, starting with the First Communion of the children. In spite of the different stages involved, this new programme was introduced with enthusiasm and hope. I joined six couples who attended the first meeting under the guidance of a pilot couple to study together a specified subject. During the week following a meeting, each couple discussed this subject with their own children. Young people between 9 and 14 have their own meeting during which they study the same theme with a young animator as guide. Each week, the groups also prepared together the main points to be discussed in their next meeting.

The celebrations for adults gave us the opportunity of meeting with the fathers of families participating in the programme. These provided good occasions for all to express their faith, to pray, to enjoy themselves together.

The Family Catechesis in our parish has been successful beyond our expectations. Parents and children have grown closer to one another; couples have learned how to live in better harmony, how to receive the sacraments with deeper understanding and piety, how to share their faith with their children, their relatives and friends. As for the young people, they have grown more eager to know about their Christian faith.

Having followed the programme this year, I can truly say that it was a precious personal experience. The perseverance of the couples in being present at our weekly meetings forged between us bonds of deep friendship and awakened in them the desire to do something worthwhile for their families and community.

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

In 1902, Delia Tetreault founded the first Canadian Missionary Congregation: **The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception**. Since 1923, at the launching of a missionary publication "The Precursor," she invited her compatriots to participate more directly in the Mission by becoming ASSOCIATES and BENEFACTORS of the Congregation.

Today, we offer you in her name a means of personally collaborating in the missionary service of the Church: **Immaculate Conception**

**Missionary Association (ICMA)**. The bimonthly magazine, MIC MISSION NEWS, the link between the MIC's and their Associates, is sent to all the members.

Your affiliation gives you share in the prayers and apostolic works of all the MIC's. Every week, two masses - applicable to the deceased - are offered in one of the MIC houses throughout the world. Moreover, a stream of Marian prayers flows in the Congregation for the intentions of the Associates and Benefactors.

### *Schedule of Masses for our Associates:*

#### **September, 1982**

La Paz (Bolivia)  
Plantagenet, Montreal (Canada)  
Morón (Cuba)  
Chicoutimi (Canada)  
Les Coteaux (Haiti)  
Baguio (Philippines)  
Cochabamba (Bolivia)

#### **October, 1982**

Mzambazi (Malawi)  
Antsirabe (Madagascar)  
Maplewood, Montreal (Canada)  
Hinche (Haiti)  
Holguin (Cuba)  
St. Sulpice (Canada)  
Llallagua (Bolivia)

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

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and subscribe to the MIC MISSION NEWS.*

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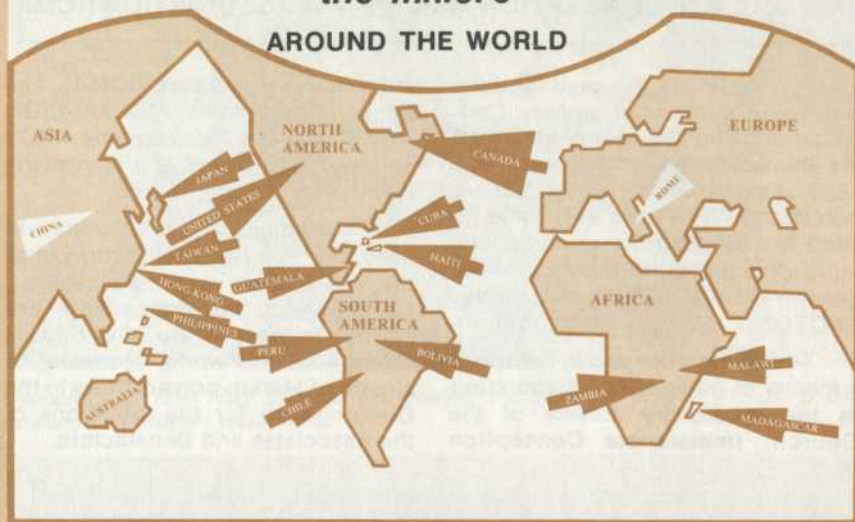
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