

U.S. Farm Program Lacks Justice, Says Priest Rural Leader

By ROBERT G. HOYT
(N.C.W.C. News Service)

Kansas City, Mo. — America's farm program, in some aspects, lacks both common sense and common justice, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference's executive director, said here.

In an interview that touched on a large number of farm-related topics, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti offered a critical analysis of the price support program, of the current agitation for moving "marginal producers" off the land, and of administrative practices in the distribution of surplus farm goods overseas.

MONSIGNOR LIGUITTI declined to comment on President Eisenhower's veto of the recent farm bill, or on the bill itself. But he considers the idea of price supports as a means of helping farmers ridiculous.

"The farmers are producing a great abundance of goods—too much, the government says," he said. "So the government enters the market, and buys some of these goods, and puts them away. It costs \$1 million a day just to store this 'surplus,' as they call it, not to speak of the cost of buying it.

"Because these goods are taken off the market, naturally prices are higher. So what does this mean? It means that we are paying higher prices for our food. What is the sense in this?"

He was asked about the effect on the farmer of suspending price supports.

"Naturally, the Rural Life Conference does not mean that the farmer should be left at the mercy of the market, when he has so little control over it. We simply oppose the illogical and doubly expensive system now being used to give the farmer a fair return," the Monsignor said.

A BETTER way to accomplish this end, he suggested, would be to let the farmer produce what he wants to and market it without controls. The farmer would then receive, directly from this government, the difference between the cost of production and a "reasonable" rate of return on his investment and labor. Such a plan would bring an immediate and sharp drop in prices, and the price reduction would in turn have these effects:

- Consumers would benefit financially.
- Consumption would increase, especially among poorer families. This would bring a rise in the standard of living — the natural response to abundant production, now artificially prevented. It would also tend to reduce surpluses.
- The cost of administering the government farm program would be materially reduced, because the system of paying directly to farmers would be far simpler than the present arrangement. By a provision limiting the amount payable to any one producer, the system would also allow the government to put into actual practice the frequently expressed but never implemented policy of favoring family-operated farms.

MONSIGNOR LIGUITTI said it is a "tragedy" that the farm problem has become involved in partisan politics.

"This is too serious, too basic an issue to be used as a political football," he said. "It needs open-minded, serious study. It is a matter that involves the welfare of our primary producers, those who provide our most fundamental needs."

"Farmers certainly aren't getting sufficient income now to justify their investments and recompense them for their labor. Their income is down by perhaps as much as 30 per cent,

while prices have gone up 10 per cent," the Monsignor estimated.

If price supports are to be retained, he argued, they should be administered with an eye to the realities of farm operations. He took issue sharply with the theory, frequently advanced by Agriculture Secretary Ezra Taft Benson, that reductions in price supports will automatically reduce production.

"Just for instance, I know a young farmer near Des Moines," Monsignor Ligutti observed. "When he is told that subsidies are being cut, he reasons like this: 'I've got to have a certain amount of income to keep the farm and my family going. Therefore, since my unit profit is being reduced — I will have to increase production. I think I'll buy two more cows.'"

"He buys the cows, they produce more milk, you have more surplus. The farm problem is not solved that way."

Making Marriage Click

Too Many People
By MSGR. IRVING A. DELBIANE
(Director, Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C.)

"With the possibility of extreme population on earth within 50 years, what means could be utilized to prevent starving people throughout the world?" L. J.

This whole problem of overpopulation has been appearing again and again in dozens of magazines and in the daily press. Almost all say that "birth control" is the only answer.

We will find another position in the new few columns. It is a fascinating, intriguing subject. Many of the articles you've read were hysterical, emotional, prejudiced, and selfish. Many, however, attempted to be objective and sincere. These latter we would like to discuss.

THEY SAY that the world's population has increased five-fold during the last 300 years and it may double in the next 50 and redouble thereafter every 25 to 50 years. In 100 years they predict that we will jump from our present approximate 3,000,000,000 to an approximate 12,000,000,000 people. They hurry to warn that the earth, after all, has limits.

SOME THINK we have only 4,000,000,000 acres of land which are arable. At least three fourths of an acre, they remind us, is necessary to supply the needs of one person. One hundred and fifty square miles of new farm land are needed every day to take care of the new births alone. What will happen 200 years from now?

Added to the problem of the new births is the increased longevity of man. Here in the States we are living twice as long as our ancestors of 1753 — one in 12 of us will live to be 65 years or older.

We are also helping others to live longer. In three years we have helped reduce a death rate in Japan which for ourselves took 30 years. In Ceylon we have recently helped reduce the death rate 30 per cent in



Philosophers At Meeting

Detroit — (NC) — New officers of the American Catholic Philosophical Association are, from left, Fr. Robert Lechner, St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Ind., Editor of Philosophy Today, Vice-president; and Dr. Lawrence E. Lynch, St. Michael's College, Toronto, Canada, President of the Association. The Association's annual meeting held here in Detroit, was attended by more than 400 philosophers from coast-to-coast.

control is the only answer presuppose that all conditions will continue as they are for the next few hundred years. That is a gratuitous assumption.

About food who can define what is or will be arable land? Our scientific know-how and nuclear energy defy present day definition. Food, of course, is not all that is needed for a growing population.

Houses, schools, churches, leaders, industry, capital are all needed, but food is the big worry. It is interesting how scientists in this country dealing with food are always optimistic. They know an "almost" almost anything we can imagine.

God is our Father and that is always reassuring, but He is not our Omnipotent Servant. We have jobs that we ourselves must do. Population problems will not solve themselves, but if it is by no means the problem it is said to be.

Those who say that birth

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Toronto Cardinal Deplores Lack of Charity To Poor

Toronto, Ont. — (NC) — Catholics who can afford to contribute support to a charitable undertaking but fail to do so were rebuked here by Cardinal McGuigan.

The Archbishop of Toronto characterized such Catholics as victims of "sordid, mean selfishness and materialism." In an Easter appeal for the House of Providence to assist the sick, poor and aged of the archdiocese, the Cardinal offered a "last chance" for the slackers, the doers, the solid shouldered and cold-hearted Catholics to join their fellows and the Risen Christ.

Cardinal McGuigan noted there was a generous response from priests, religious, and lay to the cause, but added "a tear came into my heart to see so many who could give but did not."

The prelate said that contributions came from persons in moderate circumstances, even from the poor and unemployed. He added there are others "with cars, upholstered chairs and comfortable beds in which to sleep, who give nothing to the poor, the aged, the afflicted," and expressed wonderment that such persons can go to Communion while lacking charity.

"These same people," the Cardinal said, "hold cocktails, drink liquor until they are more beast than man, and still think they are good Catholics."

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