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United States Senate hearings on the Food for Freedom Act highlighted deep religious interest not only in accelerating efforts to alleviate staggering hunger problems around the world but also in establishing the most humanitarian and effective national policies toward this end.

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America's Acres Idle While Millions Starve

To a man, the church representatives — about 20 per cent of the public witnesses testifying — echoed President Johnson's emphasis that hungry nations must be encouraged to help extricate themselves from poverty's tentacles. In this regard, a main stress of some testimony was on the implementation of birth control programs as well as on increased agricultural production.

The religious spokesmen were in broad agreement that American overseas aid efforts should involve more than the giving of just surplus commodities. They urged the nation's efforts should increase despite the scale of giving by other countries and that in addition to material goods the U.S. must share its technical knowledge in such areas as land cultivation and conservation, transport handling and the establishment of indigenous voluntary agencies.

Though, as pointed out by Sen. Allen J. Ellender (D-La.), chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee, \$110 billion in "American largesse" has been distributed overseas in the last 16 years, the church representatives saw the country as hardly doing enough.

E. Raymond Wilson, executive secretary emeritus of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Father James L. Vizzard, S.J., director of the Washington office of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, both called attention to the 60 million acres of farmland kept out of production in the U.S.

Father Vizzard, who termed the idle acres "immoral" in the light of the hunger crisis, at the same time cautioned that it could be "severely harmful" to the nation's economy to remove the curb on production abruptly. He maintained, though, that a "carefully planned restoration" of average production in a manner neither "precipitous" nor "discriminatory" would help meet hunger needs and yet not hurt the farmer.

Wilson praised the President's announcement that the U.S. would allow more production of rice and soybeans to meet the crisis. The Quaker spokesman also suggested that additional controls might be relaxed, par-

ticularly in those foods having high vitamin and protein content, such as dried milk.

Another witness, Dr. Henry McCanna, director of the Commission on the Church in Town and Country of the National Council of Churches, suggested that American farmers get directly involved in overseas aid programs through formation of a Farmers Corps, modeled after the Peace Corps. He envisioned broad participation in the international effort by a large number of retired farmers.

Questions about the direct connection between the distribution of U.S. food and the achievement of the country's foreign policy objectives were raised by some churchmen.

Wilson, referring to the policy of aiding only "friendly" nations, commented, "The Scriptural injunction, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him,' has never been repeated." The Quaker leader also suggested that "food may have an important place in the tortuous process of world reconciliation and the changing of enemies into friends." He added:

"The U.S. should not be a party to providing them (Communist countries) with any reason or excuse for engaging in political or territorial expansion in order to get access to food. Here is a place where simple humanitarianism might be our guide — that food should be available on equal terms to people regardless of political ideologies."

Section 306 of Senate Bill 2933, however, on the surface at least, appeared to rule out the kind of help Wilson proposed.

The bill reads: "The programs of assistance undertaken pursuant to this act shall be directed toward the attainment of the foreign policy objectives and national interest of the U.S."

Bernard A. Confer, representing Lutheran World Relief, while not as pointed in specifically including overt enemies within the pale of the program,

said there is danger of making the program too limited by excluding those with basic ideological differences.

"Food for the hungry," he commented, "should not be used as a bribe for purchasing adherence to our political aims."

I believe that the purposes of this legislation and the long-term national interest of the U.S. will best be served by a posture of a concern for the hungry whatever the political complexion of their governments might be."

Father Vizzard was critical of past programs of shipping only surplus materials. In defense of Administration hopes to eliminate this concept in the Food for Freedom Act, he said:

"In effect, we were using the hungry people of the world as a waste disposal. We had certain surpluses we did not know what to do with. They were embarrassing us. They were costing us a great deal of money. Our attitude was, well, where can we get rid of these surpluses? We thought of the hungry in a

very demeaning way, as a waste disposal."

On population control both Wilson and Confer called for maximum aid. The Quaker official said: "There is no chance of winning the war against hunger without a drastic reduction in the rate of population increase." He advocated use of some of the local national currencies accrued under the present food bill (Public Law 480) in financing programs emphasizing maternal, child health, nutrition and family planning services.

Mr. Confer said he would be "very hesitant" to see the U.S. undertake an increased food donation program, "unless it straight-forwardly strives for progress in the control of population growth."

Most striking testimony of all came from Father Vizzard after he had briefly alluded to the problem of population in his prepared testimony. The Jesuit priest, under questioning by Sen. Ellender, said that while he was not speaking for either his agency or the Catholic Church on the issue, added that

as a private individual he believed public family planning programs are necessary throughout the world, open to anyone who, in good conscience, can participate.

Father Vizzard said that the document on religious freedom adopted by the Vatican Council, in his estimation, makes it necessary that this right to participate, or not to participate be open. There is, no freedom, he added, "if the means to follow it are not available. There are vast numbers of people in

the world who neither have the knowledge nor the financial means to follow their conscience in the matter of birth control."

All of the witnesses were rather general in their emphasis that increased production know-how locally must take over if the "freedom" aspect of the bill is to be realized. The ultimate objective is to make undernourished nations more able to cope with their own needs, utilizing their manpower and land area effectively, rather than depending on doles from the U.S., it was stressed.

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Sister's a Grandma

St. Louis — (RNS) — Sister Monica of the Dominican Mission Sisters chats with her son, H. E. Davis, Jr., of Los Angeles, who was in St. Louis to visit his mother. The main topic of conversation was Sister Monica's four grandchildren. A convert to Catholicism she entered the Dominican Mission Sisters in 1960 after the death of her husband. She is supervisor of home help aides at the Cardinal Ritter Institute.

Population Boom Feeds on 'Hysteria'

Washington — (NC) — A Catholic educator told a Senate birth control hearing that efforts to deal with population problems must respect "human dignity and human freedom."

Warning against "hysteria and a scar for panaceas," William E. Moran, Jr., dean of the Georgetown University foreign service school, said solutions to population problems should aim at "making man more knowledgeable and putting him in a position to be responsible."

Moran, who is also president of the Catholic Association for International Peace testified before the government operations subcommittee headed by

Sen. Ernest Gruening of Alaska.

For the past year the subcommittee has been holding hearings on a bill sponsored by Gruening to set up population offices in the Department of State and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and to call a White House conference on population in 1967.

Moran acknowledged that rapid population growth creates a "serious, even critical" problem and said: "Means must be found, morally acceptable to the persons involved, to reduce birth rates."

Warning against a merely "statistical and technological" approach, he said the question of human motivation has too often been overlooked in discussions on how to bring about the needed changes in political and economic life and family practices.

"Success in our efforts to increase production and reduce population — for both are essential — will result only if man can be brought to understand his condition and induced to use new methods," Moran said.

"Our lack of success does not result in any substantial way from a lack of knowledge of techniques, but rather from a lack of knowledge of how to move man to think and act in new ways," he added.

He pointed to a relation between the problem of motivation in both increasing production and reducing population, and said:

"If we knew how to induce a man to use a new kind of plough, we would probably be quite close to knowing how to induce him to use a pill."

Viet Cong Behead Priest

Salgon — (NC) — A 70-year-old priest was tortured and then beheaded, and the village church was destroyed during a Viet Cong attack on Thanh Tri village in Chau Thanh district, it has been learned here.

Father Phan Khac Dau was one of five civilians and 11 South Vietnamese troops killed in the attack, during which the church and rectory were demolished by mortar fire. Two civilians and 10 soldiers were wounded, and a number of buildings damaged.

Catholic Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference sent relief supplies from Saigon to the stricken village as soon as it learned of the attack.

DEADLINE FOR NEWS MONDAY NOON FRIDAY DELIVERY



'Sacred Heart Program'

Mayor Alfonso J. Cervantes of St. Louis presents the International Radio Award to Father Eugene P. Murphy, S.J., national director of the worldwide Sacred Heart Program. The International Festival conducted by the Spanish radio and TV journal, Ondas in Barcelona, Spain, awarded the trophy. The program was adjudged the best religious radio program of 1965. Under the supervision of Father Murphy, the Sacred Heart Program, now in its 28th year, is heard throughout the world over 900 stations.

Priest Dies, Noted Scholar

Washington — (RNS) — The Rev. Theodore C. Petersen of Washington, the nation's oldest Catholic priest and a noted Semitic scholar, died here of a heart attack on March 14 at the age of 83.

He was stricken as he was accompanying relatives on a sight-seeing tour of the nation's capital. Some of the visitors were from Germany, where his family lived, and whom he had not seen since coming to the U.S. in 1907.

A long-time teacher, Father Petersen retired as a professor at Catholic University of America in 1948. He taught there for eight years, and earlier, from 1932-36, was research assistant in Coptic literature at the university.

Father Petersen played a role in the completion of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception here.



Mr. and Mrs. Frank D. Parker, of Auburn, are celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary. (Story on page 15).

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