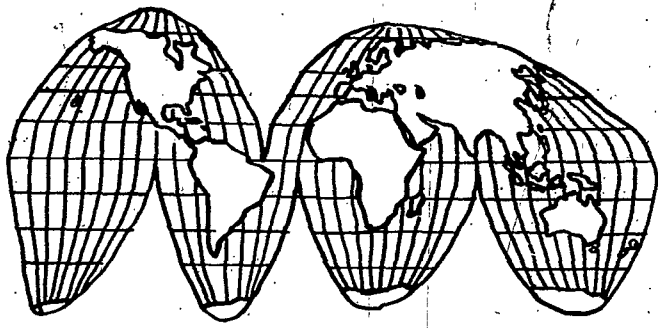


the nation and ...



... the world

A bill to repeal Minnesota's 1973 ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has been endorsed by the Priests' Senate of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Archdiocese. The senate resolution declared that the amendment would repeal anti-abortion laws and prevent enactment of any in the future, would legalize homosexual marriages, would make men no longer responsible for supporting the family, and would make women liable to be drafted and to fight in future wars. It said ERA "has nothing to do with equal protection or equal pay but abolishes all sex distinctions and ignores the physical and psychological differences between men and women." In a 7-1 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that states are not required to provide welfare benefits for unborn children under aid for families having dependent children. The opinion stated that in the Social Security Act, "Congress used the word child to refer to an individual already born, with an existence separate from its mother."

Pope Paul, expressing concern over current developments in Vietnam, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Cyprus, the Middle East, and Portugal, has called for a renewal of mental attitudes that will be more open to the demands of peace. The Pope also reiterated his condemnation of "commerce in weapons," which he said "increasingly nourishes conflicts and multiplies the risks of war." More than 20 Catholic bishops, representing episcopal conferences in the U.S., Canada and Latin America, will meet in Mar del Plata, Argentina, April 28-May 2 to share reflections on evangelization, reconciliation and human rights in Church and society. Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, will lead 10 U.S. prelates to the conference.

Church And Politics



Sister Frances

It is no longer an unheard of thing for the Church to lobby for specific legislation in the United States. Social change is usually brought about in a political process. Our institutions are influenced by the legislative process. The present abortion issue is an obvious example; in the past decade, aid for education was lobbied for by individuals and groups as well as the hierarchy. Since we do use the political process for those things that affect our interests we should be very alert at the present time for those legislative efforts that will help or hinder the fight against world hunger.

Public Law 480 ("Food for Peace") was adopted in 1954 as the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act when America's grain silos were bursting. It was created to dispose of some of those surpluses. It is the cornerstone of our food for the hungry of the world, designed to funnel some of the bounty of America to hungry people in poorer countries. Under provisions of PL480 the USA has provided nearly \$30 billion in food aid during the past two decades.

But to U.S. policy makers, PL480 is one of the most flexible tools for international diplomacy, a way of buying or securing friendships, rewarding allies and punishing transgressors.

There are two parts to this law. Under Title I food is bought by foreign governments under easy credit terms and then sold on the local market in the foreign country for local currency. Title I accounts for two thirds of our food aid. Under Title II our government makes available food supplies to non-governmental agencies for distribution abroad. These agencies include Catholic

Relief Service, Church World Service, United Nations, etc.

Funds generated by the sale of food under Title I by the foreign government may be used by that government "to procure equipment, materials, facilities and service for the common defense, including internal security." Nearly 70 per cent of Title I sales in fiscal 1974 went to Cambodia and Vietnam. Even considering the needs of these poor, war-ravaged countries, such an uneven distribution of aid in the fact of world-wide famine can only be explained in terms of "diplomatic use" and national security of the U.S.A. The criterion for selecting countries for our aid is not always "need" and is drawn up by an inter-agency staff from the State Department, National Security Council, Treasury, etc.

Food supplies donated by the U.S.A. to non-governmental agencies for "humanitarian purpose" are seriously limited by the program guidelines. Such U.S. food may only be distributed to (a) pregnant or lactating mothers with children under 5, (b) persons able to participate in a food-for-work program, (c) those attending a day school of secondary level or below. In other words, in many cases, the most destitute are denied the very food that we intend for their use.

The generosity of the average American is beyond question. From the candy bars that GIs have shared around the world, to the annual appeals for charity (HOPE, Red Cross, etc.) Americans are famous for generosity. But our institutional sharing, and our governmental aiding often has serious strings attached to it. The very laws that usually are a source of self-congratulations for us have another side to them. Lobby groups in Washington such as "Bread For the World" or "Network" can keep you abreast of such legislative action. Our own congressmen must always be made accountable for this legislative initiative. The revision and restructuring of PL480 in the 94th Congress is essential for America's honest response to World Hunger.

When we can organize such strong lobbies around issues that affect us close to home, we must be able to speak up also for our brothers and sisters whose voices are too weak from hunger to be heard.

LaPaz Bishop Protests Ouster Of 2 Priests

La Paz [RNS] — Roman Catholic Archbishop Jorge Manrique Hurtado of La Paz has denounced the Bolivian government's expulsion of two Catholic Priests.

Belgian Father Eric de Weissage, a Dominican, and Canadian Father Jorge Waureyelle were put aboard a military plane and flown to Paraguay on March 14.

Both priests were connected with the Justice and Peace Commission, an unofficial Bolivian Catholic Church agency, which has been highly critical of the government of Gen. Hugo Banzer Suarez.

Archbishop Manrique Hurtado said the government action would harm "the dialogue" which the country's bishops want to

continue having with the government.

Calling the move "a new display of intolerance," the archbishop said that "all clergy and Church leaders in the country" were opposed to the priests' expulsion. He called on the government to allow the two clergymen to return to Bolivia.

The Bolivian Justice and Peace Commission has accused the Banzer regime of distorting Christian principles of human rights in suppressing labor unions and political parties in the wake of an abortive coup last November.

Last Dec. 13, Father de Weissage, who is general secretary of the commission, was arrested on charges of interfering with Bolivian political affairs and

bringing "subversive" literature into the country.

Instead, the Belgian Dominican went into hiding for several months, pending the outcome of efforts by Church officials to have the expulsion order rescinded.

ANGELUS

Dansville—The ancient custom of the ringing of the Angelus bells has been revived and encouraged by Father Richard O'Connell, pastor of St. Mary's. "It is a joy and privilege to hear the peal of the bells while many in foreign lands have been stilled at the command of their rulers," he said. The boys of St. Mary's eighth grade have charge of the noon ringing while William Mitchell, Dom Martello, Harvey Boyd and Jim Sullivan, take turns with the 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. ringing.

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