

Editorial

**Food Enough But
Something Missing**

A recent National Catholic Reporter editorial nicely pinpointed the crux of the world hunger problem when it stated, "The problem is not that there is not enough food to go around. The problem is that enough food does not get around."

Startling statistics have been quoted so often regarding the waste and stockpiling of food in the face of the need for food, of the spending for war in the face of the cost of justice that they have lost their edge. In any case they have fallen on deaf ears.

Pope Paul VI countless times has asked in the name of simple Christian justice that the wealthy nations do more to see that their bounty is spread to the poor nations. He is ignored not only by world leaders entranced by the battle for world power but even by those of his own flock who mouth worldly reasons for ignoring the plight of hungry children.

The inspiring local instance of potato farmers and the Office of Human Development working together to get surplus food to those who need it is not duplicated enough. Most unfortunately it is not practiced where it would do the most good — in the halls of government.

There is no denying Americans have always been generous. And they still are. But the government seems to have one hand tied behind its back by bureaucratic red tape and the other too busy making bombs.

The worthy ideas of justice and peace have been replaced by the deities of self-interest and so-called self-defense. The next time we glibly refer to "Godless communism" we had better first review our own deities and reflect on whether a Christ-less society is enough of an alternative.

Lest there be any confusion, we see absolutely no virtue in communism, particularly as practiced in the world today. But we as a nation had better start showing the rest of the world that a free society can be also a benevolent society. One worth emulating.

Some Solace

The Vietnamese orphans. God love them.

And praise the Lord for those wonderful people who have opened their hearts and their arms to these homeless children of God both at this distressed time and in the past.

Amid chaos, a small victory for love.

Be Unafraid

And while referring to the Vietnam "baby-lift," we should make note of the opinions of psychologists and columnists criticizing the effort.

They question the motives of those wanting to adopt the orphans, claiming such acts are prompted by underlying guilt feelings. They say the Vietnamese children are so different they will not be able to adjust to this country, that the people do not understand the responsibilities they are undertaking.

There may be a kernel of truth in such misgivings but it would be a gross mistake for anyone to try to make the whole bag of popcorn from it. To hazard continuing the culinary metaphor, such people have their eyes on the hole and are missing the donut. They overlook the main motivational factor — love. Second, the critics would have a difficult time trying to prove that these war orphans would be better off if we ignored them.

We also worry about the prejudicial tone of some of the criticism. Vietnamese children already living in the States are doing well, from all that we have read or heard.

So we praise such Church agencies as the Association of the Holy Childhood, Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services, the Missions office for quickly and tangibly showing the Church's humanitarian concern and capabilities; we commend the national administration's efforts in evacuating the orphans; we took heart from the sight of an American president gently protecting an evacuated orphan from the California rain.

While we also are pleased to congratulate those Americans who are trying to adopt orphans or who are helping to pay the costs of such operations, we also know that it is not really necessary. Such unafraid people already have their rewards in their hearts.

Opinion

**Chile Sisters
Send Thanks**

Editor:

As the economic crisis in Chile worsens, as it is doing all over the world, we Sisters of Mercy of Rochester working among the Chilean people daily are more grateful for the generosity of the people of our diocese back home. If it weren't for all of you we would not be able to live here, nor be able to relieve, in even a small way, the misery of our suffering brothers.

There are emergency needs which must be met: a mother comes to our door with a baby on her arm and a toddler grasping her hand to say there is absolutely no food in the house; a teenager comes with a prescription for medicine for a week-old baby sister who will die without it; and on it goes.

Then there are the long-range, self-help projects which give work to those who can't find jobs because of former political affiliations or simply because there aren't enough jobs to go around. Men with large families are the first to be laid off because, beyond the miserable basic salary, an allowance is required to be paid for each child. Women, whose husbands are missing or in prison or who can't find work try to join the laundry or sewing cooperative, but there are just so many who can share in this.

Caritas Chile, to which the American Bishops' Relief Fund contributes, sponsors dining facilities where pre-school youngsters from the poorest families receive a noon meal and brotherly help groups called the ayuda fraterna, which give out food and clothing when there is a supply, but Caritas, too, runs out of funds and supplies.

Giving things necessary as this is, is only a band-aid procedure. Developing more ways for the poor to be self-supporting is the challenge of the day. We welcome all ideas and most especially your prayers.

In the Courier-Journal (3-26-75) I read with pain the letter of Mary L. Panetti. Perhaps she is justified in looking askance at certain gifts she mentioned, and I agree that the United States Government must examine and rectify the situation of the millions of Americans living in poverty. But our brothers live all over the world. We are all neighbors. Charity does begin at home, that's where we learn it, but it must not stop there.

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"I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING... NEXT TIME I ORGANIZE A CAR POOL, IT'LL BE WITH GUYS WHO HAVE THE SAME RELIGION!"

A mountain of thanks (as the Chileans say), then, to all in the Rochester diocese who have a world vision and a charity that goes out to all suffering brothers.

Sister Margaret M. Mungovan
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April 4, 1975

**ERA Raises
Questions**

Editor:

Mrs. Lyn Somers' letter (4-2-75) classifying Mrs. Hober's concerns about ERA as juvenile, inaccurate and utter nonsense is unfair.

Having read the lengthy Yale Law Journal's analysis Mrs. Somer refers to, I can only conclude that the pro-ERA and women's liberationist authors seem sure that ERA will be the best answer to all their legal desires. However, they cannot promise what will result from its enactment as the interpretation of it will depend completely upon the courts as law after law will surely have to be adapted to it.

Mrs. Hober recognizes a "pig in a poke." I have read nothing that assures me that she is wrong and Mrs. Somers is right. Mrs. Hober raises questions. Neither Mrs. Somers nor the Yale Law Journal give answers.

Frankly, I think I have a responsibility as an adult to get more conclusive information on this sweeping social proposal before I can justify it.

Smith Hempstone, D&C columnist did a critique on ERA in 1972. I'll be glad to copy it for anyone on request.

Jeanne D. Sweeney [Mrs.]
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**Stand Up
For Viet Victims**

Editor:

As a Vietnam veteran of 18 months in that country, it is unbelievable that Danang has fallen to the Communists and unless the U.S. gets off its posterior the whole country will fall and the blood bath will be comparable to when Mao Tse Tung took over China.

My first thoughts, when Danang fell, were of the Sisters and children I know at the Phouc-

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Thanh Orphanage just outside Danang. Since I left Vietnam in 1969 we have corresponded constantly with them by letters and taped messages. My family and I pray for them and all the innocent lives being destroyed as this evil totalitarian machine feeds its insatiable appetite. However, by the news reports and the word we just received from the Catholic Relief Service in New York City, hope of their survival is not very promising. In fact no word has been heard from any of the many orphanages in Danang, it is as if they have disappeared into thin air.

My wife and I look at our Vietnamese daughter we had fought so hard to get and we wonder if we have really saved her from anything at all, but only postponed the inevitable when the past catches up with us all and we pay the price of abusing freedom. When we watch the refugees trying to escape from death itself and we do nothing to help can we rationalize this as we do other acts of horrors such as abortions, pornography, and our obsession of sex. I sincerely hope not. How long before we run out of excuses and stop thinking only of self? If we cannot save the liberty of the many less fortunate than we, then, we will not be able to save the liberty of the few who remain.

I ask all to speak out to save and support those who are grasping for freedom in South Vietnam - stand up and be counted - its been a long time since we did.

We continually wait for any news on the fate of the Sisters and little friends, and if this country refuses to act soon we hope the Sisters will pray for us whether they are still in the Church Pilgrim or in the Church Triumphant for it will surely take a great many prayers for us to be saved.

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They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced, with names and addresses. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.