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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE AD HOC SENATE COMMITTEE HEARINGS

ON WORLD HUNGER

PRESENTED BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM,

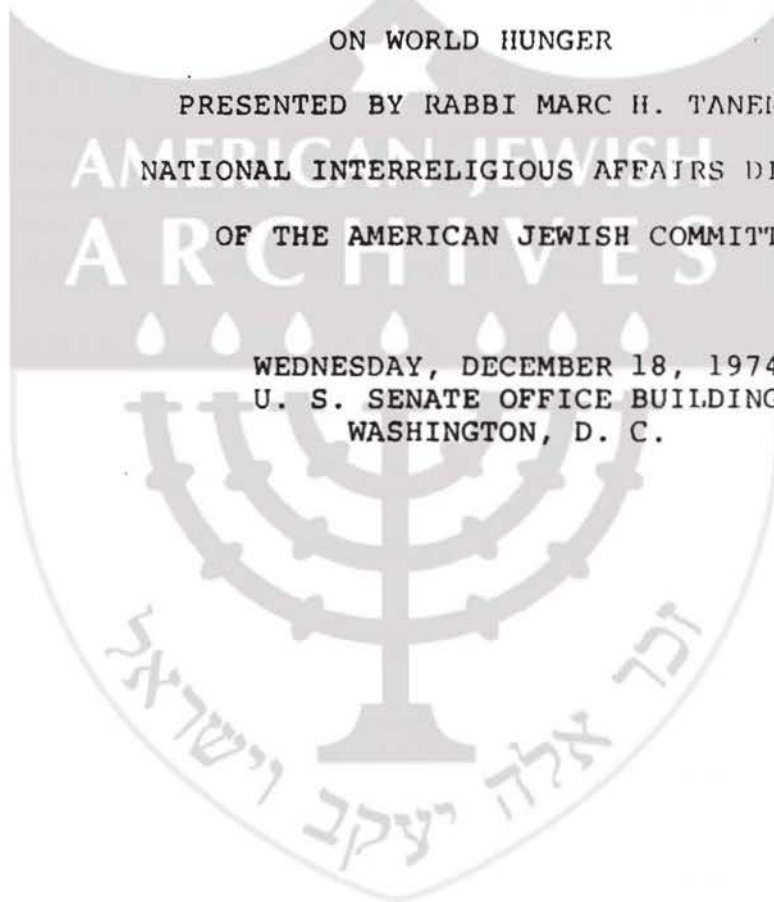
NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1974

U. S. SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, D. C.



ANNOUNCEMENT

"REPORT ON ROME—THE CHALLENGE OF FOOD AND POPULATION"

In June 1974, at a hearing of the Nutrition Committee, Nobel Prize Laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug, warned that "... 50 million people, perhaps more, could perish from famine" and that "... it will probably take a disaster—perhaps the death of tens of millions—before we will come to grips with this..." We are sure that everyone hopes it will not take such a monstrous calamity to inspire action. We believe it is important that the attention be brought to the urgent nature of this problem now, prior to the Christmas adjournment.

Therefore, today, a month after the Rome Conference convened, we announce an ad hoc hearing into the urgent world hunger and population crisis... and America's role following the Conference.

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Mr. Chairman,

My name is Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum of New York City. I serve as National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, a major human rights and intergroup relations agency of the organized Jewish community in the United States. I appreciate your extending to me the invitation, together with my Catholic and Protestant associates, to present these views on the compelling problems of world hunger.

On May 18, 1974, the Board of Governors of the American Jewish Committee adopted a policy statement in which we called upon our entire membership and the Jewish community at large to take an active part in helping to mobilize maximum American relief support to meet the needs of the millions of impoverished, hungry, and starving peoples throughout the world, including those within our country. A copy of that statement, entitled "The Poorest Among Us," is attached to this testimony.

My purpose today is to elaborate on the rationale for a Jewish involvement in this urgent effort to save human lives, as well as to address several current problems.

As is well known, the Jewish community in the United States and throughout the world is anxiously beset, as seldom before, by massive problems of Jewish survival and security--the defense of the fundamental right of 3,000,000 of our brothers and sisters to national self-determination in their Biblical homeland, now the sovereign state of Israel; the safeguarding of the human rights of free emigration and religious-cultural freedom of our 3,000,000 oppressed kinsmen in the Soviet Union, and the surviving pitiful remnants in Arab countries; the combatting of a renascent anti-Semitism now being systematically refuelled by demonic forces in this country and in many other parts of the world; not to speak of the vital needs of responding more adequately to the Jewish religious, educational, cultural, and family needs of our people.

In the face of these challenges and burdens, which except for the inspired support of the United States Government the Jewish community has responded to virtually alone out of its own limited resources, the American Jewish Committee and I personally have been asked with increasing frequency by Jews and Christians alike, "How can you get involved in such massive problems of world hunger when the needs of the Jewish community are so great and pressing?"

The question is a legitimate one. The answer that I have tried to formulate in response to that question is in fact the basis of my reason for being here today. That reason is grounded in the very essence of the morality of Judaism; in the traumatic

lessons of Jewish history; and in the duties of being a responsible citizen in a democratic American society and in a growing interdependent world community.

If one takes seriously the moral, spiritual, and humanitarian values of Biblical, Prophetic, and Rabbinic Judaism, the inescapable issue of conscience that must be faced is: How can anyone justify not becoming involved in trying to help save the lives of starving millions of human beings throughout the world -- whose plight constitutes the most agonizing moral and humanitarian problem in the latter half of the 20th century?

THE MORAL DUTIES OF JUDAISM

Nothing is more fundamental in Biblical and Rabbinic ethics than the moral obligation of tzedakah, a Hebrew term which means both "charity" and "to do justice." The Rabbinic sages of the Talmud declared that "Almsgiving -- i.e., aiding the poor and feeding the hungry -- weighs as heavily as all the other commandments of the Torah." (Talmud Baba Batra 9a).

In proclaiming the Jubilee year, which like the Ten Commandments was ascribed to divinely-inspired legislation revealed on Mount Sinai, the Bible ordained, "And if your brother waxes poor, and his means fail with you, then you shall uphold him; as a stranger and a settler shall he live with you." (Leviticus 25:35). The Rabbis observe that the expression that "Your brother may live with you" means that it is our personal and communal duty to see to it that our fellow human beings do not die of starvation. Though the person be a "stranger" or "an alien settler," he (or she) is to be included in the term "your brother" and is to be treated in a brotherly and compassionate manner.

To underscore the supreme virtue of humanitarian aid to the needy in the hierarchy of Jewish moral and spiritual values, the Rabbinic sages regarded such compassionate care of man as an act worthy of association with Divinity itself:

"God says to Israel, 'My sons whenever you give sustenance to the poor, I impute it to you as though you gave sustenance to me, for it says, 'Command the children of Israel...my bread for my sacrifices...shall ye observe unto me. Does, then, God eat and drink? No, but whenever you give food to the poor, God accounts it to you as if you gave food to Him.'" (Numbers Rabbah XXVIII;2).

The virtue of such care for the poor and hungry is depicted in Jewish tradition as the salient attribute of the "founding father" of Judaism, the Patriarch Abraham, who is called the archetype of the "Pharisee of love." In a mid-rashic commentary that begins with the phrases, "Let your house be open; let the poor be members of your household. Let a man's house be open to the north and to the south, and to the east and to the west," the Rabbis describe the humanitarianism of Abraham:

"He went out and wandered about, and when he found wayfarers, he brought them to his house, and he gave wheaten bread to him whose wont it was not to eat wheaten bread, and so with meat and wine. And not only this, but he built large inns on the roads, and put food and drink within them, and all came and ate and drank and blessed God. Therefore, quiet of spirit was granted to him, and all that the mouth of man can ask for was found in his house." (Abot de Rabbi Nathan, VII:17a,b).

Elsewhere the Talmud admonishes, "He who has no pity upon his fellow creatures is assuredly not of the seed of Abraham our father." (Bezah 32b).

In Jewish communities from Biblical times through the present, there was much free and generous giving of alms to all who asked -- even to deceivers! -- and there was also much systematic and careful relief through established institutions. Each Jewish community boasted of a tamhui (public kitchen) from which the poor received two meals daily. There was also the kupah (alms box) for the disbursement of benevolent funds on Sabbath eve to provide three meals for the Sabbath. (Mishnah Peah VIII,7). Additional care was exercised in respect of the itinerant poor, who were provided with a loaf of bread which sufficed for two meals, and who were also entitled to the cost of lodging.

The Biblical laws of charity in Palestine relating to "gleaning," the "forgotten sheaf," and "the corner of the field," implied the underlying idea that national territory belongs to the public as a whole. In accordance with Jewish law, landowners used to lay open fences surrounding their fields and vineyards, and during certain hours of the day, the needy were allowed to eat from the produce of the harvest. There was also a three-yearly allocation of Maaser Ani (poor man's tithe) from the threshing floor.

Thus, there arose the charitable traditions and institutions of the Jewish people which have remained a religious-communal characteristic ever since. These customs of charity, which were foreign to the pagan frame of mind of the Greeks and Romans, also had an abiding impact on the nature of the Christian "caritas."

THE LESSONS OF JEWISH HISTORY

In addition to the impact of this long and engrained tradition of tzedakah on the moral sensibilities of Jews, the historic experience of the Jewish people, both past and recent, have predisposed the Jewish community to a particular empathetic understanding of the plight of the starving and suffering poor. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, the world community -- certainly leaders of major segments of the international community -- had knowledge of the fact that Hitler's Nazi Germany had embarked on a program of systematic extermination of the Jewish people through starvation, forced labor, and finally through the technological efficiencies of the crematoria and gas chambers. With rare exception, leaders of governments, churches, labor unions, and universities stood by indifferently or cynically turned their backs on the genocide of six million Jewish men, women, and children and millions of other human beings.

The failures of the world community to confront that evil incarnate and to seek to contain its murderous programs resulted, I believe, in a supreme crisis of conscience which has not yet been fully comprehended. Certainly one consequence of that indifference was that it led to a depreciation of the worth of the human personality as a creature fashioned in the image of God, and thereby added to an ecology of callousness, dehumanization, and barbarism in the family of mankind. The Jewish people were literally traumatized by that experience of abandonment by the human family. In our struggle to find some meaning out of that ultimately absurd chapter, the Jewish people relearned the command of the Book of Leviticus as a governing lesson of its existence and as a permanent and universal claim on its conscience, "You shall not stand idly by while the blood of your brothers and sisters cry out to you from the earth."

In the strict sense of the term, the deaths of hundreds of thousands resulting from the world famine is not genocide. But the fact that some 800 million people are at this moment suffering from debilitating malnutrition and starvation, that at least 10,000 people are dying each week from famine does mean in fact that there are human holocausts taking place before our very eyes. The facts of this vast human tragedy are inescapable --

we see on the evening television the corpses piled up in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Sahel, Ethiopia; we read in minute detail about the magnitude of food and medicines that are desperately required in feature stories, editorials, columns in daily newspapers and news-magazines; our rabbis, ministers, and priests preach sermons about our moral obligations as Christians and Jews.

For a nation with our liberal, humanitarian ideals and for a people with our unambiguous Jewish and Christian ethical heritages to temporize in the face of the greatest moral challenge in the last decades of the 20th century is to risk the betrayal of everything morally meaningful that we profess to stand for. What is at stake in the way we respond during the coming months to this unparalleled world famine is our capacity to arrest the cycle of dehumanization and callousness to suffering that is abroad in the world, ultimately affecting all peoples, and to set into motion forces of caring and compassion that are the singular qualities without which an emergent interdependent world cannot be sustained.

SOME PRACTICAL RESPONSES TO WORLD FAMINE

While I have sought to keep myself informed about the complex nature of the world famine problems and the political and economic issues that necessarily affect our responses, I hardly qualify as a technical expert. For that reason, I have relied on such research studies as those of the Overseas Development Council, and have identified myself with the central features of the positions taken by my cherished, long-time friend, the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, president of the University of Notre Dame, who also serves as chairman of the board of ODC.

As a personal stand, I associate myself with the views expressed by Father Hesburgh in a letter to President Ford dated November 22, 1974, which I joined in signing together with a group of other religious leaders. The key features of that position, which I reaffirm as my own at this testimony, are as follows:

- 1) I join in urging President Ford to lead the United States in initiating immediately the shipment of two million tons of U.S. food aid additional to the amount now programmed to alleviate present conditions of critical starvation. I also urge that another two million tons of increased food supplies be planned for next spring and summer shipment, contingent on matching commitments by other donor countries. Canada and the European community have already acted and we should likewise move now.

At the same time we should seek to persuade other industrial and OPEC countries -- which are wallowing in tens of billions of dollars -- to share a substantial part of their incredible newly-found wealth to help feed the starving millions in the third world nations. Failure on the part of the Arab nations to continue to demonstrate a significant measure of compassion for the hungry, while they are recipients of hundreds of thousands of tons of food supplies through our American Food for Peace program, cannot but lead to an erosion of the consensus and will of the American people who are determined to help, but who will not be taken as naive suckers.

We understand that the President can make these shipments of four million tons under his existing authority without need of further prior legislative action by Congress. We further understand that the Senate, in Resolution 329, sponsored by a bipartisan group of 38 Senators and passed in August, has also urged that the President increase food aid this year by this amount that we are recommending.

We recognize that it will not be easy to provide an additional four million tons of food relief in the current crop year, which represents a doubling of the present announced level of the Food for Peace program. But the alternative is not morally acceptable. The starvation of millions, while an even greater number are eating more than is healthy, will be worse than a moral travesty; the spread of famine and misery guarantee a degree of economic and political instability potentially disastrous for all in an interdependent world.

Moreover, the failure to muster up the political will to prevent a massive human catastrophe will further undermine the faith of citizens everywhere in the capacity of the world to cope with the problems it now faces. Such an indication that the world's problems had indeed become unmanageable would have dangerous psychological consequences everywhere.

Adding \$800 million to the federal budget also will obviously be difficult at a time when large budget cuts have already been initiated. There is no escaping the question of priorities. We must ask whether the threat to human security and well-being posed by the food crisis does not outweigh some of the more traditionally recognized security threats -- and whether a budgetary adjustment is not appropriate.

2) Negotiated delays in commercial export deliveries to Europe, Japan, Iran, and the U.S.S.R. are another possible source of additional grain. These countries are not facing starvation; indeed, the Soviet Union bought almost 30 million tons of United

States grain, in secrecy and at an unreasonably low price level supported by unwarranted Government subsidies, mainly to increase substantially its feeding of livestock.

3) A major, systematic national program is required to reduce food waste and reduce American consumer demands for grain. The average American consumes 1,850 pounds of grain per year, much of it in the form of meat. The average person in India consumes 400 pounds, most of it directly as grain. Our government, and especially our religious leadership, must help our people to reduce their enormous appetite for animal products which has forced the conversion of more and more grain, soybean, and fish meal into feed for cattle, hogs, and poultry, thus decreasing the amounts of food directly available for direct consumption by the poor.

It may be worthwhile to recall that in ancient Palestine, the staple food of the Jewish community consisted mainly of cereals, fruits, and other produce of the land. Meat was consumed solely in connection with the sacrificial obligations of every Jewish man and woman, of which the paschal lamb was an outstanding example. In more recent history, President Truman in 1947 called on Americans to conserve 2½ million tons of grain to stave off famine in Europe during the winter of 1947. President Truman then called on Americans to take many specific actions to save food, including meatless days, saving a slice of bread a day, and closing distilleries for 60 days. Today our total food supply is far greater and Americans consume far more than they did in 1947. The emergency relief now required could be made available without an inflationary impact through far less drastic measures today, if we have the necessary national political will and government leadership.

4) There are numerous other suggestions which experts propose which call for serious consideration and implementation as part of a national and global strategy to cope effectively with this vast human problem -- including those outlined in studies by James Grant, ODC President, and in Lester Brown's perceptive books, In the Human Interest, and By Bread Alone. There is an area in which I believe the religious community, in concert with other cultural forces in our society, can make a distinctive contribution; namely, the definition and articulation of a new "Ethic of Scarcity" for the American people. Our society has been blessed since its founding with what appeared to be almost limitless natural resources and raw materials. We seem to have been living on a set of unexamined assumptions that constitute an "Ethic of Abundance" which has rationalized and justified endless consumption, self-indulgence, and permissive hedonism. The waste at our business and social functions -- conferences, conventions, weddings, confirmations, bar mitzvahs, even funeral wakes -- have verged on the scandalous, especially

when seen against the background of the needs of the world's starving masses. We are entering a new experience of growing scarcity of resources and energy supplies as a permanent condition, and the nation requires a definition of values and human priorities that will result in greater self-discipline, restraint, and a genuine motivation to share out of a more limited supply of goods.

The American people are a generous people, and I feel confident that with vigorous governmental, religious, and other voluntary leadership they will respond as constructively and positively to this great human crisis as they have to other challenges in America's past.

74-700-120



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT ON THE POOREST AMONG US

The American Jewish Committee has long been concerned with the plight of 25 million poor Americans, those who subsist on incomes below federal minimum living standards. They include the 9 million people on public assistance (of whom only a small percentage are employable), the under-employed, and the fully employed who earn less than these federal standards. A majority of this group is white, but it includes a disproportionate number of Blacks and persons from other minority groups. Included also are poor Jews, particularly many elderly living on inadequate social security.

We believe that the existence of poverty in an affluent society is morally indefensible, breeds hostility and community tension, and alienates one group from another. The best bulwark against poverty, we contend, is a prosperous nation that provides work opportunity for all, and adequate financial aid to those who cannot work. Therefore, we call for a program of social insurance that will incorporate financial safeguards, health insurance for all, and a social security program that will ultimately make the existence of a public welfare system unnecessary. Until such time, the present welfare system must be revised and improved.

But our efforts to eliminate the blight of poverty and malnutrition in America must not lead us to neglect our obligations abroad. The spectre of starvation is haunting large parts of the world today. Hundreds of millions of the world's peoples are undernourished. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and scores of other nations in South Asia, Africa and Latin America face widespread famine. Thousands have already died in drought-ridden sub-Saharan Africa. U.N. Secretary-General Waldheim has warned that "peoples and countries could disappear from the face of the map" in West Africa if the world does not help with immediate relief and long-range efforts to make the region self-supporting.

The high cost of oil, created by the oil-producing countries, is wrecking the economies of the poorest countries. And because petroleum or natural gas is needed for fertilizer production, oil and gas shortages in poor countries are spelling starvation. It has been estimated that if just one quarter of the natural gas that is now wasted in the Persian Gulf fields was diverted into a fertilizer industry on the spot, the world's entire current demand for nitrogen fertilizer could be met.

We must also recognize that, in our finite world where resources are limited, the family of man must bring birth rates into reasonable balance with the lowered death rates that have been achieved. Many governments see the need to guide national policy toward this objective. We urge that the United States, working in consort with other governments and international organizations, give family planning at home and abroad the highest priority and adequate funding.

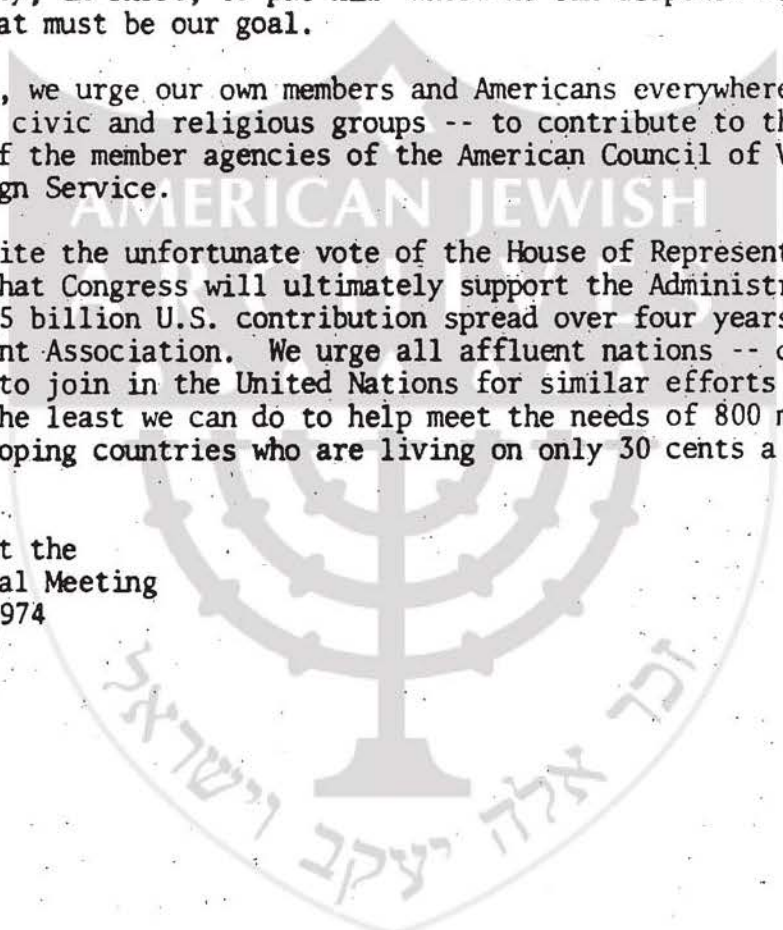
The American Jewish Committee is strongly committed to the search for economic and social justice everywhere. It sees the need to reduce the widening gaps

between rich and poor states. This must be a concern of Jews, Christians, Moslems and Hindus; of blacks, browns and whites. As the world becomes smaller, and nations closer, we become increasingly aware of the interdependence of one with the other. The affluent and developed nations cannot remain untouched by the poverty and famine in the less advantaged nations. This means not only immediate famine aid, but development of productive economies in the poor states. The highest degree of charity, said Maimonides, is not only to give food but also to assist a poor person to find a job or business opportunity, in short, to put him "where he can dispense with other people's aid." That must be our goal.

Therefore, we urge our own members and Americans everywhere -- in unions, business, civic and religious groups -- to contribute to the famine relief efforts of the member agencies of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service.

And, despite the unfortunate vote of the House of Representatives in January, we hope that Congress will ultimately support the Administration's recommendation for a \$1.5 billion U.S. contribution spread over four years to the International Development Association. We urge all affluent nations -- developed and developing alike -- to join in the United Nations for similar efforts to aid the poor. This is the least we can do to help meet the needs of 800 million people in the developing countries who are living on only 30 cents a day.

Adopted at the
68th Annual Meeting
May 18, 1974
74-900-50





October 5, 1983

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Rabbi Mark Tannenbaum
American Jewish Congregation
15 East 26th Street
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Tannenbaum:

Enclosed is a copy of the statement from "100 Against Hunger" which will be presented to the world's political leaders on the occasion of World Food Day, October 16, 1983. The purpose of this statement is to stimulate renewed commitment for the international effort to eradicate hunger, as enunciated by the World Food Conference in 1974.

This statement is to be signed by approximately 100 prominent citizens. You have been selected to be one of the signatories because of your stature and achievements. Your signature will be assumed to reflect your personal views, and not necessarily those of your organization or affiliation.

The group of signatories includes many of the world's most successful and influential people from all walks of life: leading statesmen, industrialists, members of the military, sports and entertainment figures, scientists, anti-hunger spokespersons, journalists, academicians, and others. All political viewpoints are represented by this truly nonpartisan group. But they share the common view that hunger can and must be eradicated.

This letter has been prepared by Impact on Hunger, a New York-based hunger-education organization, in collaboration with: Richard Garon, Special Assistant to Congressman Benjamin Gilman; David Guyer, President of Save the Children; Richard W. Loudis, Assistant Director, Program Liaison Office, C.A.R.E.; Martin Rogol, former Executive Director of World Hunger Year; Dr. Joseph Short, Executive Director of OXFAM-America; Steve West, Executive Director of Impact on Hunger; and others.

Since time is of the essence, we ask you to review this material at your earliest convenience and respond by returning the enclosed Signature Return Sheet, by telegram, or by phoning me with your verbal response at 212-759-5111 before October 5, 1983.

This year's signatories will, we trust, become the core group for an expanded effort next year. We are planning to launch a follow-up statement on World Food Day, 1984, from "1,000 Against Hunger." Be assured, however, that no action will be taken in your name without your specifically approving that action, nor will your name be used for anything except the enclosed statement. Your signature does not represent your agreement with, or endorsement of, any of the initiating agencies, any philosophy, or any viewpoint--save the need for the total and irreversible eradication of hunger.

At your request, we will present you with a final list of signatories. Please check the appropriate box on your Signature Return Sheet if you wish to receive this list. All signatories' names will be published alphabetically.

Thank you for your cooperation, and we hope to hear from you soon. We invite your comments on this initiative.

Sincerely yours,



Steve West
Executive Director

dln
Enclosure

STATEMENTSTATEMENTSTATEMENTSTATEMENTSTATEMENT

In November, 1974, over 130 nations gathered in Rome under United Nations auspices for the World Food Conference. The Conference set as its goal "that within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, that no family will fear for its next day's bread, and that no human being's future and capacities will be stunted by malnutrition."

The delegates stated that "society today already possesses sufficient resources, organizational ability and technology, and hence the competence to achieve this objective." In the years that have passed since the 1974 Conference, accumulated evidence and experience have overwhelmingly substantiated this claim. Our planet can provide for the basic needs of all its citizens.

The Conference further declared that food is not only a basic human need, but a basic human right. The world community reaffirms that premise when World Food Day is observed each October 16. World Food Day was established in 1981 and is commemorated around the globe by a wide cross-section of peoples, governments, and agencies. In marking the third annual World Food Day, we recognize that this observance heralds the beginning of the final year, set by the World Food Conference, of the decade during which hunger would be eliminated.

Today, achieving the irreversible eradication of hunger constitutes one of the most important and compelling challenges facing mankind. We therefore call upon our world leaders to renew and reinforce their commitment to the objectives of the World Food Conference. We urge each to use the power and prestige of their office to commit the resources for the planning and implementation necessary to achieve the Conference's goals within the next decade.

Moreover we ask them to personally provide the moral leadership to meet this challenge and to place the eradication of hunger high on their national and global agendas.

Specifically, we request that each leader use a public forum concurrent with World Food Day 1983 to restate the commitment of their country to the resolutions of the World Food Conference. We urge them to announce their intention to initiate a concrete plan outlining their nation's participation in overcoming domestic and world hunger, and, within the next year, to present this plan to their legislature and people for their response and support. Finally, we ask that each work toward this goal in concert with other world leaders as well as individual citizens and groups which are committed to ending hunger.

We make this urgent plea in the conviction that by achieving a world free of hunger and want, we will promote global stability and security, greatly improve our chance for survival, and enhance the realization of our collective humanity.

SIGNATURE RETURN SHEET

_____ Please include me as one of the "100 Against Hunger" signatories.

_____ I do not wish to be included in this project.

Comments _____

Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

Telephone(s) _____

Signature _____

Your Contact Person _____

_____ Please keep me informed on the progress of this initiative.

_____ Please send me a list of the signatures.

_____ I wish to become more involved.

If you need more information, please call Steve West at Impact on Hunger, (212) 759-5111.

FOOD POLICY NOTES



INTERRELIGIOUS
TASKFORCE ON U.S. FOOD POLICY

GEORGE A. CHAUNCEY
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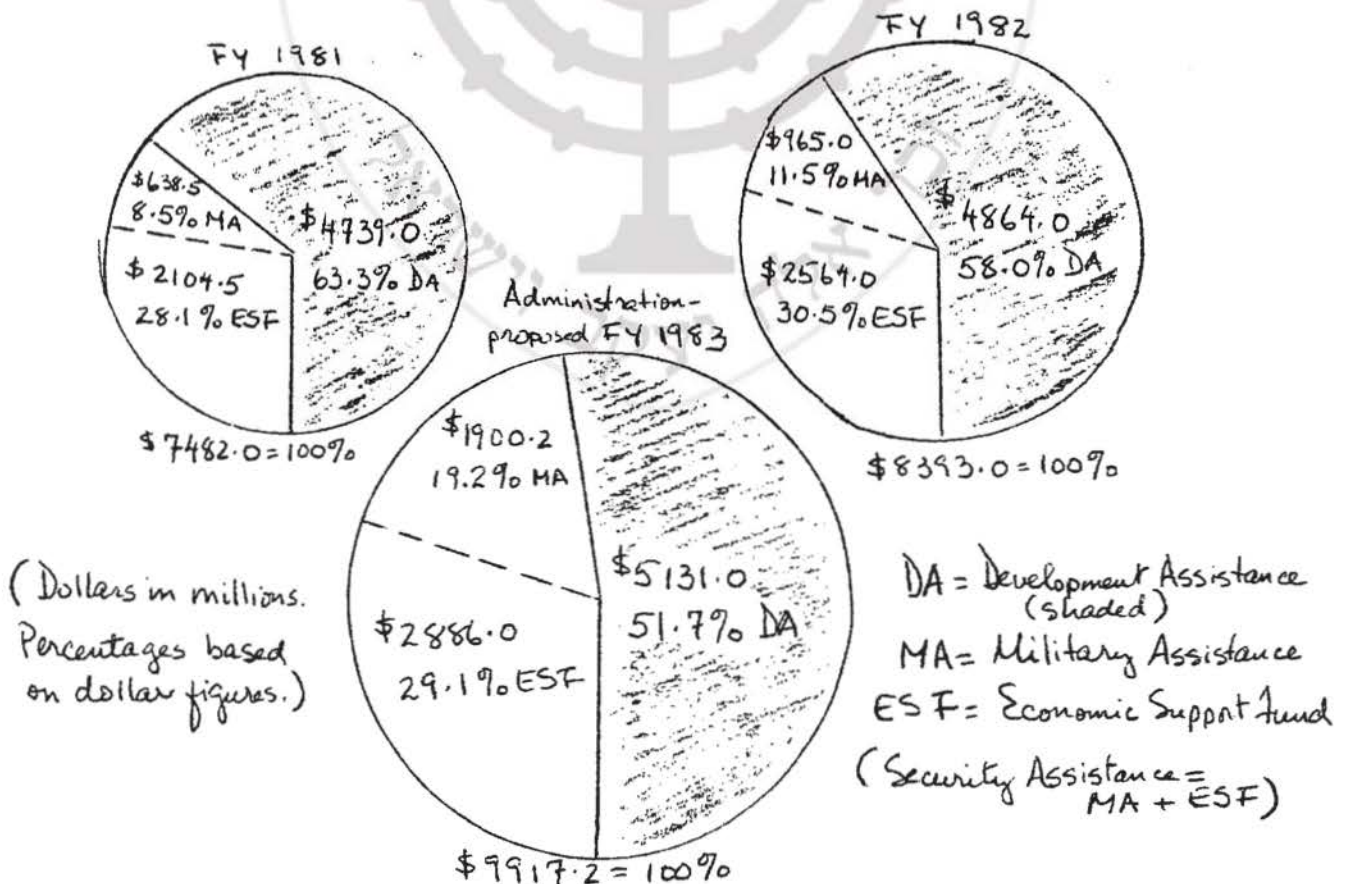
May 28, 1982

NOTE 82-18

SECURITY ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

On April 20 the Interreligious Taskforce on US Food Policy testified before a subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on the Administration's Fiscal Year 1983 (FY 83) supplemental foreign aid authorization request (see NOTE 82-2). Although Congress approved a two-year authorization covering FY 83 as well as FY 82 just before adjourning last December, the Administration is requesting increases in some programs above the FY 83 approved levels, particularly in security assistance (military aid and Economic Support Fund aid to political and strategic allies). The following graphs illustrate that approval of the FY 83 supplemental would result in a shift of about 12 percent from development aid to security assistance over the period FY 81-83.

The Taskforce indicated in its testimony, which was generally well-received, that it would be unable to support enactment of the FY 83 supplemental authorization unless changes were made by Congress to correct the imbalance. Our statement focused on the potential negative



effect of military assistance on development and on the limited ability of Economic Support Fund aid to address long-term development problems. A summary follows. (The full text is available from the Taskforce.)

Long-Term National Interests vs. Immediate Needs

By stressing security assistance and downplaying the role of development assistance, the Administration may be sacrificing longer-term national interests to more immediate needs. We believe that the most serious causes of instability and insecurity in developing countries are not external threats, but rather the persistent structural problems of hunger, poverty, and maldistribution of resources. Not only is security assistance not designed to deal directly with these long-term problems, but it may actually undercut efforts toward self-reliant development.

US Arms Sales and Military Assistance and Regional Instability

Both the Reagan Administration's policy directive of July 1981 on arms sales and its requested increase in military assistance reflect a disturbing emphasis on arms as a major component of US foreign policy. World arms sales have escalated over the past two decades, with the US a major supplier. Now the Administration has proposed a doubling of Foreign Military Sales credits, from \$750 million in FY 82 to \$1.7 billion in FY 83, along with a \$900 million increase in loan guarantees for military purchases. By making such large additional sums available on various terms for countries to purchase arms from the US, the proposed military aid increase, if approved, would contribute further to the upward spiral in world arms sales.

Developing countries have legitimate security needs which may, under certain circumstances, be served by military assistance. However, historically such aid has not been a consistently effective deterrent to conflict nor has it measurably increased the security of countries in volatile regions. Military assistance may actually increase insecurity by contributing to regional arms races.

Impact on Developing Countries Economies

By encouraging an enhanced military capacity in developing countries, military aid promotes additional domestic spending for defense and tends to divert scarce resources from economic development. Studies have shown that increased defense spending in developing countries is associated with slower economic growth, inflation, and a shift of resources from agriculture to manufacturing to support the larger military establishment. Such a shift may result in a drop in food production and a worsening income distribution between rural and urban areas. These consequences can be profoundly destabilizing, and indeed tragic in terms of human suffering of the poor and hungry majority.

Defense spending, encouraged by military assistance, may also add significantly to the skyrocketing debt burden of developing countries. While the causes of external debt are many, arms imports and related expenditures account for an estimated 10 percent of the total developing country debt.

The proper remedy for spiraling debt and diversion of resources is not, however, to make military aid available on easier terms. Aid terms should be burdensome enough to discourage countries from purchasing arms in excess of what they need for defensive purposes or from becoming dependent on US military aid.

Impact on Political and Social Processes in Developing Countries

Military assistance frequently reinforces the authority of the military in developing countries, with sometimes chilling implications for those involved in popularly-based efforts for political, economic, and social change. Fifty-four developing countries are currently ruled by military or martial law regimes, 41 of which have records of serious human rights violations. These governments only too often use weapons and training methods supplied by the US against their own citizens.

Economic Support Fund is Not a Substitute for Development Aid

The Administration has increasingly chosen ESF as its preferred channel for economic aid. ESF is not, however, a substitute for, nor interchangeable with, development assistance. We believe that ESF should be treated as the exceptional channel, to be used sparingly and for short-term purposes.

There are several limitations on what ESF can be expected to accomplish of a developmental nature. ESF is highly concentrated in a few countries, primarily in the Middle East, and not necessarily the neediest ones. Moreover, ESF levels of aid are adjusted to US political and strategic priorities rather than, in the first instance, to either the capacity of the receiving government to use the aid wisely or the ability of the US Agency for International Development (AID) to manage the funds. Finally, most ESF is designed to meet immediate needs; only a small proportion is targeted for longer-term development purposes. About 70 percent of ESF during the period 1975-79 was either in the form of balance of payments support or commodity import credits, neither of which is targeted assistance. Project aid, or alternatively, grants and loans for a specific sector such as agriculture, can be far more effective in promoting self-reliant development.

Taskforce Recommendations

The Taskforce offered the following recommendations to the Subcommittee:

- + Recast the Administration's FY 83 request to address long-term development needs, not simply short-term security considerations. Specifically, reject proposed increases in security assistance and apply some of the requested funds instead to development programs of AID, UN agencies, and the multilateral development banks.
- + Call for US leadership in exercising restraint in arms sales and in promoting multilateral discussions to establish controls on the international trade in arms.

NOTE 82-18
page four

- + Require the Administration to give greater attention to, and report to Congress regularly on, the impact of proposed arms sales on the economic and social development programs of potential recipient countries.
- + Reject the Administration's request to furnish arms on easier credit terms to specified developing countries facing economic difficulties.
- + Reaffirm the expectation that governments meet legislated human rights criteria to be eligible for US military aid.
- + Resist Administration attempts to weaken or repeal human rights safeguards on aid to specific countries.
- + Reassess periodically countries receiving ESF aid to determine whether longer-term need warrants conversion to development aid.

For further information call the Taskforce toll-free at 800/424-7292.
Washington, DC area residents please call 543-2800.



FOOD POLICY NOTES



INTERRELIGIOUS
TASKFORCE ON U.S. FOOD POLICY

GEORGE A. CHAUNCEY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.
CHAIRMAN

May 27, 1982

NOTE 82-17

THE ADMINISTRATION'S CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIATIVE MIXED REACTIONS AND UNCERTAIN OUTLOOK

President Reagan last February 24 unveiled before the Organization of American States a much-heralded plan for US assistance to the 28 Caribbean and Central American countries which comprise the so-called Caribbean Basin. Linking the well-being and security of the region to the United States' own interests, the President outlined a package of economic aid, trade concessions, and investment incentives, a year in the making, known as the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). The plan is intended to assist Caribbean Basin countries to escape from their current "economic siege" brought on by high oil prices, low commodity prices, and global recession. The emphasis on promoting market-oriented policies and private initiative is in line with the development policies outlined by the President at the Cancun summit last October and embodied in the Administration's aid request for Fiscal Year (FY) 83.

In explaining the need for such an effort, President Reagan cited what he called "imported terrorism and armed attack" in the region. The economic measures of the CBI, along with proposed increases in military aid in a separate request, are meant to combat perceived outside threats to political stability in the region and to promote internal stability through economic growth and development.

An Overview

In broad outline, the proposed measures of the CBI are as follows:

- + \$350 million economic assistance in the form of quick-disbursing Economic Support Funds (ESF)*. The funds are meant to help offset balance of payments deficits and to enable the private sector in these countries to finance imports which would otherwise be difficult to arrange because of scarce foreign exchange. The largest share of the aid--\$128 million--would go to El Salvador, with \$70 million slated for Costa Rica, \$50 million for Jamaica, and \$10 million for the Eastern Caribbean islands.
- + A 12-year period of "one-way free trade" for Caribbean and Central American exports to the US. The measure applies to the 13 percent of current exports from the region not already eligible for duty-free status under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). (The GSP grants preferential treatment to selected developing country exports.) Textiles and apparel are excluded from duty-free eligibility, and

*Budget support and credits for imports of industrial materiel, consumer goods, and agricultural inputs.

sugar exports are to be granted a modified duty-free status. The proposed measure also aims to increase growth by reducing the percentage of value that must be added to products within the exporting country in order to qualify for duty-free treatment.

- + Tax incentives for investment in the Caribbean Basin. A 10 percent investment tax credit is to be offered to US corporations and US shareholders with at least 5 percent interest in foreign corporations for new investments in the Caribbean Basin region.

The CBI, which is being considered as a supplemental request for FY 1982 (which ends September 30, 1982), contains no military assistance. A separate supplemental request for military aid--\$35 million for El Salvador and \$17 million for Honduras--has been submitted and is currently under review by Appropriations Subcommittees.

Taskforce Reaction and Recommendations

As advocates of self-help development, the Taskforce welcomed the opportunity which the CBI presents for a more focused effort to help US Caribbean and Central American neighbors help themselves. Differing in major ways, however, with the Administration's reading of current problems and their underlying causes, we have taken issue with the remedies prescribed by the CBI.

The Taskforce believes that many of the problems presently facing the Caribbean Basin region are not unlike those confronting countries throughout the Third World. Long-term efforts which address the needs of the poor majority in particular remains a key element in self-help development. Economic growth, while important, does not guarantee the improved well-being of the poor in these countries. Neglect of basic human needs, we believe, is a primary cause of political instability. By providing only quick-disbursing Economic Support Fund aid and no longer-term, more targeted development aid, the CBI seems to us unlikely to serve longer-term development objectives.

In a statement submitted to Congress, the Taskforce recommended ways in which the CBI could be amended to reflect and serve better the varied needs of the region. Following is a summary of our recommendations.

Economic Aid

1. Improve the effectiveness of the aid in meeting individual country needs by converting a portion of the \$350 million ESF to development aid and by spelling out groundrules for how ESF can be used.
2. Redistribute funding by earmarking in the legislation amounts for each country in a way to assure a better balance among Caribbean Basin countries.
3. Extend the aid package to at least three years. The CBI request, if approved, would bring total economic aid to the region to \$702 million in FY 82 followed by a decrease of \$141.53 million in FY 83.

4. Commit the US to continued firm support of multilateral organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States, and UN specialized agencies.
5. Channel a portion of development assistance funds through non-governmental agencies already involved in people-to-people efforts in the area. This could improve the CBI's ability to respond to the broad range of need in the region.

Trade

While the one-way free trade proposal may open some possibilities for economic development in the region, in the Taskforce view a number of questions regarding its impact both on the poor in the Caribbean Basin region and on US workers remain unanswered. Our primary concern is whether increased incentives for exports will lead to more hunger and malnutrition should agricultural activities in the region shift away from production for local consumption to production of crops for export. Moreover, already-increasing bids for protection from US manufacturers suggest that promised US markets for Caribbean Basin goods may not materialize.

We also have questions about the loss of jobs in the US given lower labor costs and the new trade concessions for exports from the region. While trade measures can indeed help stimulate economic growth, proposals for adjustment assistance for US workers who might be hurt by the CBI are also needed. The Taskforce believes that the trade provision needs further refinement to avoid these and other possible negative effects.

Investment

The Taskforce is urging that the investment tax credit proposal be deleted from the CBI. Past performance of tax incentives suggest that they are neither very effective nor efficient in generating new investment. Because they cannot distinguish between already-planned investments and those which are truly new, they reward all investments, creating a windfall for some companies at taxpayers' expense.

The proposed tax incentive would be an open invitation to all types of foreign investment regardless of their expected contribution to long-term development or their impact on the poor in the Caribbean Basin countries. Some types of foreign investment could benefit the poor. However, the history of the area is full of examples of corporate exploitation which add to current political turmoil and anti-American sentiment in the region. Offering tax incentives to corporations that may repeat these kinds of practices or may disregard the well-being of the indigenous people threatens to further aggravate today's problems.

The lack of investor confidence which comes from the fear of political instability is widely held to be one of the greatest barriers to new investment. This has led to capital flight from the area in recent years in amounts greater than the revenues that could be expected to

result from the CBI. Rather than increasing tax incentives in an attempt to overcome the political risk of investment, the Taskforce advocates economic and social measures which enhance the participation of the poor in development efforts as the most effective way of promoting regional stability.

Congressional Reaction

The CBI has received a mixed reception in Congress where it is now making its way through a lengthy and complicated legislative process. Because of the variety of provisions included in the CBI, various committees have jurisdiction over different parts of the bill. Hearings have been held in both the House and Senate where, despite a measure of support, several major concerns have surfaced.

With unemployment rising in the US, many Members of Congress are reluctant to support tax and trade provisions that might encourage American businesses to move to the Caribbean or give industries there a competitive advantage. Others see the impact of these tax and trade measures as very uncertain, feeling that the CBI will stimulate little new investment in Central America because of the lack of political stability there.

Some Members have criticized the plan because it includes no additional money for bilateral or multilateral development programs in sectors such as agriculture, health, and education. Rep. Michael Barnes (D-MD), Chairman of the Inter-American Affairs Subcommittee warned that the Administration is sending "conflicting signals" by arguing the need for economic assistance to the region at the same time that it is planning to reduce US contributions to the soft-loan window of the Inter-American Development Bank, which makes low interest loans for development programs in poor nations of Latin America. Concerns have also been raised about the likely outcome of a large one-time infusion of funds followed by decreasing amounts of bilateral assistance in FY 83.

Both Republicans and Democrats have questioned the country allocations of the \$350 million. Some view the plan simply as an attempt to increase aid to embattled El Salvador, since fully one-third of the aid would go to that country. Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-CA), speaking for the Congressional Black Caucus, pointed out that total economic assistance intended for the Caribbean islands, Guyana, and Belize is less than the amount planned for El Salvador. He alleged that the CBI is really "a Central American plan."

Legislative Progress

The CBI is presently making its way through the first stage of congressional review and action. On May 11 House Subcommittees on Inter-American Affairs and International Economic Policy and Trade met to review and report to the full Foreign Affairs Committee the economic assistance proposal. A substitute for the Administration's economic aid provisions, introduced by the chairs of the subcommittees, Michael Barnes and Jonathan Bingham (D-NY), respectively, addresses concerns about CBI inattention to the long-term development needs of the region.

It proposes converting 25 percent (\$87.5 million) of the \$350 million in Economic Support Funds to bilateral development aid, for use particularly by US private and voluntary organizations and cooperatives. Further, it specifies that 80 percent of the ESF aid be used to generate local currencies, which, to the maximum extent feasible, should support development projects. It would also establish a \$75 million ceiling on assistance to any one country and require a balance between private and public sector uses of funds.

The two subcommittees differed in separate votes on the Barnes-Bingham substitute. The measure passed the International Economic Policy and Trade Subcommittee by a 5-4 vote, but failed in Inter-American Affairs, 3-6. The latter did pass an amendment establishing a ceiling on the amount of funds allocated to the various countries in the region, decreasing aid to El Salvador to \$75 million, and increasing aid to the Caribbean countries. (Both versions thus modify the Administration's country allocations.) The subcommittees' actions send conflicting recommendations to the full Foreign Affairs Committee, where differences were expected to be resolved during the week of May 24. The Taskforce is urging support for the Barnes-Bingham substitute.

The House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade completed its mark-up of the trade measures on May 5, recommending passage of the Administration's request, but adding footwear and leather goods to the list of products exempt from duty-free status. The full Committee, which will consider both the trade and the tax proposals, has not yet scheduled hearings. An amendment which would safeguard Caribbean Basin food production for local consumption against displacement by expanded export cropping is expected to be introduced by Rep. Tom Downey (D-NY). Several days of hearings were held during the week of May 17 in the House Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee, at which the Taskforce presented testimony.

Outlook

The legislative future of the CBI remains uncertain. Of the three sections, the economic aid portion seems most likely to be adopted although with some modifications. As the year wears on, there is also talk of separating the various titles of the bill and proceeding with those which can move most expeditiously. The Taskforce will continue to monitor the situation and will issue updates as developments warrant.

For further information call the Taskforce toll-free at 800/424-7292. Washington, DC area residents please call 543-2800.

Interfaith Action for Economic Justice

NOTE 84-5

February 3, 1984

DOMESTIC HUMAN NEEDS BUDGET CUTS

The Reagan Administration's FY 85 budget proposal, submitted to Congress on February 1, requests deep cuts in nutrition, income maintenance, housing, energy assistance and health programs for low income people. The White House proceeded with the cuts despite bipartisan congressional protest over proposed cuts included in a draft budget document leaked last month.

As in the last three years, the Administration proposes significant cuts in domestic programs in FY 85: \$9.2 billion, 40 percent of which would come from programs targeted to low income people. The total cut in domestic programs would rise to \$32.5 billion by FY 89.

Appropriations for all low income programs would decline by 10 percent below the "current services" level for FY 85, the amount needed to maintain FY 84 service levels. The non-entitlement or "discretionary" programs would bear the brunt of the reductions in FY 85: some 21 percent below current services level.

The proposed cuts and changes in domestic human needs programs for fiscal year 1985 are as follows:

Difference between
Administration Request and
Current Services Level
(Appropriations)

Income Maintenance

AFDC	- .660 billion
SSI	- .067
Work Incentive Program	- .285

AFDC proposals include mandatory workfare and job search; eliminating the Work Incentive Program (and placing former participants on the Job Training Partnership Program); mandatory wage withholding in child support enforcement; limiting assistance to minor mothers not living with their parents; and prorating shelter and utility costs for shared households.

The Administration assumes that civilian unemployment will decline from 8.1 to 7.8 percent from FY 84 to 85. Outlays for unemployment compensation would decrease by \$1.45 billion from FY 84.

Nutrition:

Food Stamps	- .354 billion
Child Nutrition and WIC	- .213

The actual proposed food stamp cut is \$.592 billion; the \$.354 billion figure assumes adoption of the proposed AFDC cut, which would mean an increase in food stamp benefits for those families who lost AFDC benefits. Mandatory workfare and job search, and holding states liable for all overpayment errors above 3 percent of total benefits, are the two principal food stamp changes recommended.

In child nutrition, the Administration proposes to place the Child Care Feeding Program and the Summer Food Program in a new block grant with funding frozen at FY 85 levels in the future. This change would mean a 20 percent reduction below current services levels by FY 87. In addition, application for free and reduced price meals would shift from school authorities to state welfare offices; the Nutrition Education and Training program would be eliminated; and the price for school lunches would be indexed to the cost of living, resulting in increasing charges to students.

The most harmful proposals involve WIC. The Administration is requesting \$133 million less than what is needed to fund the program for the rest of FY 84. (The FY 84 Agriculture appropriations bill provided only partial year funding.) This change would force 500,000 participants off the program starting this spring. For FY 85, the Administration is requesting \$217 million less than the current services level.

Health

Medicaid	- 1.039 billion
Health Block Grants	- .030
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant	see explanation

The Medicaid proposals include imposing co-payments on recipients for hospital stays and physician visits; and extending the 1981 reconciliation limit on Medicaid grants to states, which would reduce Medicaid payments by 3 percent. Other estimated savings are based on proposed tightening of AFDC eligibility and benefits, which could force some families off the program. These families then would also lose their Medicaid eligibility.

Funding for the Maternal and Child Health block grant actually would increase by 2 percent from the FY 84 level of \$399 million; however, this increase would still represent a cut from the FY 83 level of \$478 million. The Administration also proposes to eliminate the Urban Indian Health Programs, the community health representative programs, and new Indian Health facilities.

Housing

Subsidized Housing	-4.495 billion
Public Housing	- .078

The Administration again is proposing a housing voucher program to assist 251,000 households, primarily through the Section 8 program. No new funds are requested for the regular Section 8 construction program, and \$2.0 billion in previously appropriated funds would be rescinded.

Employment

Employment and Training - .234 billion

Under this category, the Administration proposes to eliminate the Work Incentive Program; establish a subminimum wage for youth for summer employment; and fund the Job Training Partnership Act at the FY 84 level.

Energy Assistance

Low Income Energy Assistance - .091 billion
Weatherization

The Administration did not request any appropriations for either LIEA or Weatherization for FY 85; instead, funding would be held at FY 84 levels. Furthermore, the Administration recommends that the LIEA program be financed by a new "Petroleum Overcharge Restitution Fund," which would receive revenues determined to be illegal oil overcharges and allocations.

Impact on Certain Groups

The Reagan Administration's FY 85 budget would have a disproportionately adverse effect on women, children and minorities. Cuts in AFDC, Medicaid and Medicare would be especially harsh for single-parent families headed by women. The House Budget Committee estimates that funding for programs that primarily serve children and youth would be reduced by \$2.15 billion in outlays below current services levels. Assistance programs for the unemployed and working poor would be sharply reduced--or eliminated, as in the case of the Work Incentive Program. Other recommendations for Medicare, Social Security, and civilian and military retirement programs would reduce income assistance to the elderly.

Interfaith Action's Response

We will continue to oppose all cuts in domestic human needs programs targeted to the poor. At a minimum, we will urge Congress to provide "current services" level funding--those funds necessary to maintain programs at their current caseload levels in 1985. More important, we will advocate an increase in appropriations for these programs to meet the widespread need exacerbated by the recent recession and continuing high unemployment.

This year the deficit will be the central budget issue. The domestic programs for the poor still represent less than 10 percent of the federal budget, yet they continue to be blamed for "big government spending" and the growing deficit. We must impress upon Congress that

providing assistance to meet people's basic human needs is a non-negotiable responsibility. Meeting this responsibility need not increase the deficit. By restoring some equity to federal tax policies and restraining the unprecedented growth of the military budget, we can easily afford to meet basic needs.

The first stage of the federal budget process is passage (by May 15) of the First Budget Resolution, which sets spending ceilings and revenue targets. While Congress is in recess this month, now is a good time to contact your representatives, urging them to reject all proposed cuts in programs for the poor and to restore funds to provide adequate assistance for persons in need.

For a recorded update on this and other economic justice issues, call us toll free at 800/424-7292. If you have specific questions, call 202/543-2800.



Interfaith Action for Economic Justice

NOTE 84-4

February 3, 1984

HUMAN NEEDS AND WORLD SECURITY BILL

As we enter the fourth year of Ronald Reagan's presidency, the "new beginnings" he advocated during his election campaign have been firmly established. Here at home, the Reagan approach has meant deep cuts in almost every means-tested social welfare program. At the same time, the Pentagon enjoys record budgets and prospects for even greater amounts of money.

The foreign aid program is no different. Small increases in development assistance--those programs designed to meet pressing human needs--have failed to keep pace with inflation, which amounts to de facto cuts. Meanwhile, the Reagan Administration has accelerated efforts to arm the developing countries, providing weapons and economic support to right-wing governments throughout the Third World.

For Interfaith Action, the balance between security-related and development assistance in foreign aid has been the overriding international human needs issue for the past three years. Despite the efforts of many concerned citizens, public interest and church groups, the disparity between development and security assistance continues to grow. Even small increases in development assistance have been met with large increases in security assistance. Finally, in FY 84 development assistance levels actually decreased.

This year Interfaith Action will continue to give top priority to reversing this trend, advocating policies and programs that meet the needs of the most vulnerable of the Third World poor. To focus attention on the problem of foreign aid funding priorities, and to mobilize the American public, especially the religious community, Interfaith Action has endorsed an initiative launched by Bread for the World, the Human Needs and World Security Act (HR 4440).

The Human Needs and World Security Act

Introduced at the end of the 1983 session, HR 4440 represents a first step toward bringing foreign assistance programs back to a more reasonable balance between development and security-related assistance. It would mandate significant increases in human needs-oriented development assistance for FY 85 and place a cap on military and security-related assistance for FY 85 at levels enacted for FY 84. Introduced by Reps. Tony Hall (D-OH), Jim Leach (R-IA), James Jeffords (R-VT), and Michael Barnes (D-MD), the legislation has garnered a total of 42 co-sponsors in the House. The bill has not yet been introduced in the Senate.

Specifically, the bill would:

- * Increase funding for selected human needs-oriented development assistance programs by \$170 million dollars. Earmarked for funding boosts are UNICEF, the AID health account, Peace Corps, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the Inter-American Development Bank small projects account.
- * Mandate \$50 million in emergency food aid to drought-stricken African countries. Because of the critical nature of the African situation, this provision may be separated from the total bill and placed on a "fast track" in the form of a supplemental appropriation.
- * Limit military assistance and security-related assistance during FY 85 to levels enacted during FY 84. This limit would apply to arms sales loan guarantees, grant military aid, and Economic Support Fund aid.

Ideally, HR 4440 would reverse the trend toward militarization of foreign aid. Passage would at least provide a year-long respite from that trend. However, the Reagan Administration is expected to continue the push toward a security-related foreign aid program. In its view, foreign aid is primarily a tool of US foreign policy, not a major resource for development.

Background

Through its preference for security assistance, the Reagan foreign aid program has fostered growing militarism in the Third World, too often reinforcing the power of repressive regimes. Proponents claim that US allies have fallen behind their adversaries in military strength due to declines in military and security-related assistance. Accordingly, they say, US allies need aid to "catch up." These officials claim, furthermore, that security assistance reduces the national defense burdens of recipient nations, thus freeing resources to deal with social problems and economic development.

However, recent experience casts serious doubt on that claim (see HUNGER 32, "Security Assistance and the Poor..."). Frequently, US-supported militarism has led to even greater budget imbalances, leaving combined spending for health, education and welfare as only a small part of the budget compared to military outlays. Moreover, increased military spending has consistently discouraged economic growth and development, especially in rural areas. Military conflict is also a principal cause of food shortage and often exacerbates famine.

In our view, a foreign aid program based on military assistance cannot deal with hunger and poverty--the root causes of social and political unrest. Military and security-related assistance can only serve to mask temporarily their effects and eventually leads to escalating military commitments. US interests can be served more effectively by meeting human needs through development programs.

Although development could mean considerable progress toward political stability in the Third World, the Reagan Administration is by-passing some important development opportunities. Moreover, owing to the Administration's preference for bilateral aid, US participation in multilateral organizations has suffered.

Legislative Outlook

The 1984 session is scheduled to consist of only 68 legislative days, and priority legislation will have to move on a "fast track." Accordingly, the House Foreign Affairs Committee will be debating the FY 85 foreign aid authorization shortly. Markup is tentatively planned for early March. Legislative strategy may require that HR 4440 be translated into amendments to the foreign aid authorization bill.

However, authorization is only the first legislative hurdle for HR 4440. The appropriations process, which begins later in the year,

House Foreign Affairs Committee

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Gus Yatron PA 6	Stephen J. Solarz NY 13
*Don Bonker WA 3	*Gerry E. Studds MA 10
Andy Ireland FL 10	Dan Mica FL 14
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Toby Roth WI 8	Olympia J. Snowe ME 2
Henry J. Hyde IL 6	Gerald Solomon NY 24
Douglas K. Bereuter NE 1	Mark J. Siljander MI 4
Ed Zschau CA 12	

* Indicates co-sponsor of HR 4440

is the final test of the measure, as Congress chooses how to split up an already-embattled budget. Because authorizing language is important in setting the tone of the foreign aid package, it is essential to enlist the early support of as many House Foreign Affairs Committee members as possible.

What You Can Do

It is imperative that members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee hear from constituents supporting HR 4440 as soon as possible.

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Communications should urge co-sponsorship (unless he or she has already acted) and should stress three major points:

--Express concern over the imbalance in foreign aid and the huge shift occurring during the past three years.

--Point out that, in many instances, security assistance is counterproductive and actually undermines development assistance.

--Stress the security-related benefits of concerted development efforts that address the destabilizing effects of poverty and inequity.

For a recorded update on this and other economic justice issues, call us toll free at 800/424-7292. If you have specific questions, call 202/543-2800.

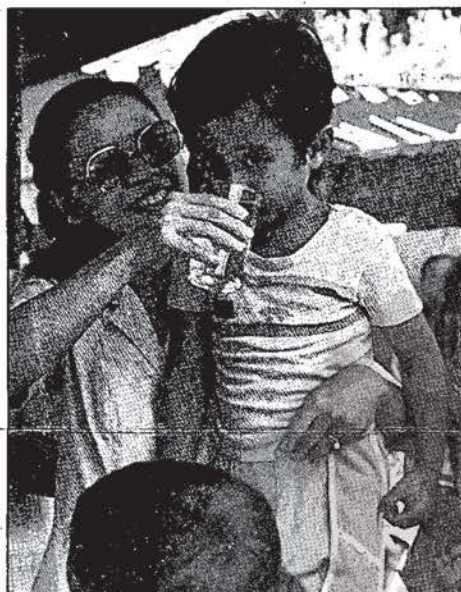


New Hope for the World's Children

By Mary Ruth Herbers • Bread for the World Issue Analyst

Background Paper No. 73

April 1984



Information in this paper is from "The State of the World's Children 1984." Copies of the full report as well as films, publications and educational materials are available from the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 331 E. 38th St., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Whether from dirty water, contaminated food or other sources of infection, diarrhea is common in poor countries. Most parents regard it as a normal part of a child's growing up. The diarrhea usually lasts only a few days. But in about 10 percent of the cases, something goes seriously wrong.

Perhaps the child stops eating, as the mother withholds food from a child with diarrhea. Or perhaps the child's appetite is dulled from infection. Or the child is already malnourished and cannot recover quickly. Whatever the cause, the infection persists and the body continues to lose fluids. Soon, 5 percent of the child's weight has been lost. Most of these children will recover, although their growth may suffer a serious setback.

But for some, the diarrhea continues. As anxious parents watch, the child's skin becomes dry and the thirst unbearable, though the child is too weak to cry. Shock sets in, then stupor. Blood pressure drops and the kidneys fail. Blood cells collapse. Of the 17 million children who die each year — equal to the total under-age-5 population of the United States — two-thirds die in this way.

Existing techniques could save up to 7 million of these children's lives annually, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and protect the health and growth of many millions more. Most of the 41,000 children under age 5 who die daily throughout the world die of the effects of malnutrition, infections and repeated bouts of diarrhea. James Grant, UNICEF executive director, estimates that half of these could be saved if four simple, inexpensive methods were available in their areas: oral rehydration therapy to replace lost body fluids, use of growth charts to spot "subtle" malnutrition, immunizations against childhood diseases, and promotion of breast-feeding of infants instead of bottle-feeding.

Lancet, a medical journal, calls the four methods "potentially the most significant medical breakthrough of the century." In 1983, Congress passed a resolution giving child health advances "the full support and encouragement of the Congress."

These developments in basic health care make a revolutionary change in child health possible. The spread of education, communication and social organization makes such a change practicable. Both health care and access to information are needed, because an illiterate mother with no access to information or health care cannot help her child alone.

In 1960, less than 35 percent of girls in the developing world went to primary school and had the chance to become literate. Today, more than 80 percent have that chance. Twenty years ago, radios were a novelty among the poorest people in the world. Today, statistically, there is at least one radio for every two homes.

In the past, most people thought that significant economic growth was necessary to improve lives and reduce the number of infant and child deaths. In industrialized countries, the greatest improvements in child health followed economic expansion and improved living standards — better food, water, housing, sanitation, education and income. Improved health and medical services were of secondary importance. In the United States, for example, only after better nutrition had almost totally eliminated child deaths from measles was an effective measles vaccine developed.

In the developing world, the greatest reductions in child deaths have resulted from new technologies, such as antibiotics, immunizations and epidemic control, and not from economic growth. Between 1950 and 1975, the infant mortality rate in the poorer half of the world fell by 50 percent, from 200 deaths to 100 deaths per 1,000 births. (By comparison, the rate in the United States in 1975 was 16 deaths per

(continued)



The Human Needs and World Security bill, the focus of Bread for the World's 1983-84 Offering of Letters campaign, would increase funding for the programs outlined in this background paper. It calls for a \$50 million increase for both UNICEF and the AID health assistance programs. (At least 80 percent of AID funds and approximately 50 percent of U.S. contributions to UNICEF fund child health activities.) The bill also would curb the rapid growth of military-related security aid to developing countries by capping it at 1984 levels. Such aid takes up funds that otherwise could be spent to meet basic needs and causes, and aggravates hunger by intensifying military pressures on poor nations. (See background papers 68 and 69.)

Funding for UNICEF and AID health programs has not allowed these agencies to expand services to meet pressing needs. Proposals to expand programs of ORT in Guatemala, Mexico and Jamaica, for example, cannot be implemented with current available AID funds.

In 1983, the Administration requested a cut in the amount the United States contributes to UNICEF, from \$43 million to \$27 million. Although ignored by Congress at that time, the Administration is again requesting an identical cut despite UNICEF's outstanding record of achievement in child health.

AID health assistance, which funds programs to train community health volunteers, had its funding reduced from \$135 million in 1981 to \$125 million in 1983.

Letters in support of the Human Needs and World Security bill (H.R. 4440 and its Senate counterpart, when introduced) are crucial to allowing these programs to expand their child health activities.

1,000 births.)

Today, the rate has fallen to 93 in the developing world (compared to 12 in the United States), still too high. And world recession, debt crises, poor terms of trade and high unemployment all indicate that economic development of poor countries will be slow in the years ahead. To accept the argument that only overall economic development can lead to further reductions in infant and child death rates is to accept that daily, tens of thousands of children will still die of preventable malnutrition, infections and diarrhea.

Improvements in child health and well-being can be achieved in poor countries at low cost. China, Sri Lanka and South Korea all have lowered their infant mortality rates to approximately 50 deaths per 1,000 births. They did so by building community and government support and by training people to be medical paraprofessionals in their own communities, not by establishing expensive and sophisticated medical systems.

Following are descriptions of the four techniques which, acting together within local health care systems, have the potential to overcome impediments to child health and survival in developing countries.

Oral Rehydration Therapy

The greatest risk to normal health and development of children in poor countries is dehydration from infection-related diarrhea. Until recently, intravenous feeding under strict medical supervision was the usual remedy prescribed, putting it beyond the reach of poor people or people in remote areas. Now, using oral rehydration therapy (ORT), the drinking of a sugar-salt mixture in the proper concentration, dehydration can be prevented or corrected in almost all cases. For example, in a remote region of Bangladesh, a study of more than 30,000 cases of diarrhea found that 95 percent of them could be treated successfully with ORT.

The oral rehydration salts can be made in local health centers, prepared by factories or prepared at home. The simplest formulation is 8 teaspoons of sugar and 1 of salt combined in 1 liter of water. The cost, literally, is pennies.

— In India, a population of 18,000 people in 13 villages has reduced infant mortality rates from diarrheal infections by half in less than two years after ORT was implemented.

— In Costa Rica, child deaths by dehydration dropped by more than 80 percent in National Children's Hospital in the first year that ORT was introduced.

— In Egypt, thousands of mothers have reduced the overall preschool death rate from diarrheal disease by 50 percent, using homemade salt and sugar solutions.

The dramatic success of ORT has led 30 nations to begin programs, and 34 are beginning factory production of the salts.¹ UNICEF produces packets for 87 nations. The challenge remaining is to provide support for health care workers and parents in understanding and using the salts. Lack of parent confidence sometimes has limited the effectiveness of ORT campaigns.

Growth Monitoring

Regular monthly weight gain is the most important sign of normal growth, especially for children under age 3. Only about 1 percent of the world's children are visibly malnourished. More than 25 percent suffer from malnutrition with no visible symptoms.

In a study in the Philippines, 58 percent of mothers of malnourished children said they thought their babies were growing well. A child who receives only 60 percent of needed calories may not look hungry. However, malnourished children not only grow more slowly, but their intellectual development can be delayed and, in cases of severe deprivation, permanently impaired. They also are more susceptible to illness, creating a cycle of infection and malnutrition difficult to overcome.

Studies in India, Pakistan and Indonesia show that more than half of the cases of malnutrition are in households which do not lack adequate food. The mother of a malnourished child frequently doesn't realize it, particularly if the child's appetite has been depressed from illness. Making the problem visible can help mothers protect their children's health by promoting normal growth for millions of vulnerable children.

Growth charts costing less than 10 cents each enable a mother to record and

monitor her child's growth. Weight gain is good, weight loss is a serious danger signal. The charts are valuable educational tools for teaching mothers how to protect their children's healthy growth. The visible symbol of monthly weight gains rewards a mother for the normal growth of her child and is an early warning device for the mother of an ailing child.

In Thailand, a program based on the home use of growth charts by parents in several villages helped to completely eliminate acute malnutrition and reduce moderate malnutrition by 44 percent during 1981-82, even though no additional food was provided.

Breast-Feeding

Evidence overwhelmingly supports the advantages of breast-feeding over formula feeding to promote and protect infant health in developing countries. Not only is breast milk more nutritious and hygienic than formula, it also helps the child fight infection with immunological agents passed from mother to infant.

Milk and formula, on the other hand, often are a source of contamination and infection from unclean water, dirty bottles and exposure to tropical heat. And poor mothers often over-dilute expensive formula with water which may not be safe, thus compounding the problem of infection with lack of sufficient nutrition. Bottle-fed babies in these conditions are likely to be malnourished and easily infected.

— In Chile, a recent study found that two to three times as many bottle-fed babies died as did breast-fed infants during the first year of life.

— In the Yemen Arab Republic, bottle-fed infants studied were eight times more likely to be malnourished than breast-fed infants.

— In Papua New Guinea, severe malnutrition among children fell from 11 percent to 4 percent when a campaign to promote breast-feeding increased the practice from 65 to 88 percent among local mothers.

Breast-feeding has declined in parts of the developing world, partly because of aggressive promotion of formulas. In 1981, to counter this trend, the World Health Organization (WHO) prepared an international code of marketing for breast-milk substitutes. Many concerned people boycotted products of the Nestle Corp., a major formula exporter, to encourage its implementation of the WHO code. In January 1984, Nestle agreed to the WHO provisions and the boycott was ended. Campaigns such as this to defend and promote breast-feeding are an important part of maintaining child health.

Immunizations

Every six seconds, another child dies from a preventable disease. Immunizations against the six major childhood killers — measles, tetanus, whooping cough, diphtheria, polio and tuberculosis — cost about \$5 per child. It would cost about \$500 million a year to immunize all of the children born in developing countries.

(continued)

In Honduras, diarrhea has been the leading cause of infant and child deaths. The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) funded a massive public information campaign to combat it.

A 60-second radio announcement urged use of Litrosol, oral rehydration salts packaged locally. Other radio announcements talked of the importance of hygiene in preparing a child's food. At the same time, posters encouraging breast-feeding and the use of Litrosol were distributed. Litrosol was given to mayors, midwives and health care workers who displayed flags outside their homes identifying them as distributors of the rehydration salts.

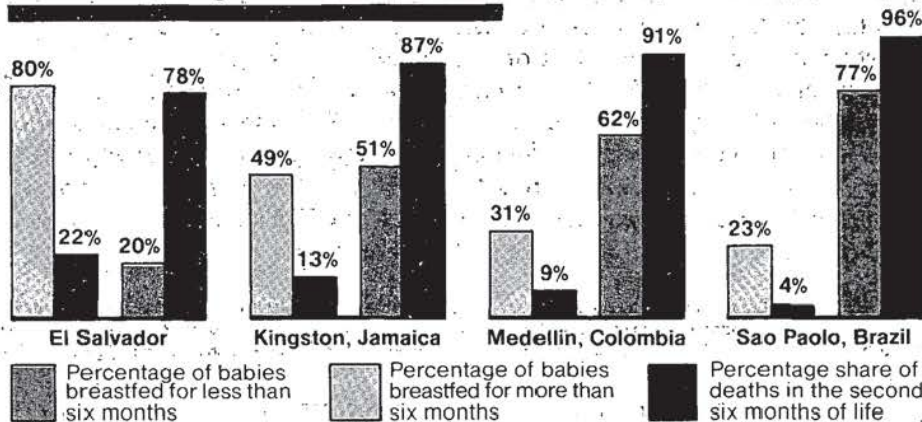
A year after the campaign was begun, an evaluation of the AID program found that 95 percent of the women surveyed knew about Litrosol and how to use it. More importantly, the death rate from diarrhea in children under age 2 fell by 40 percent within a year and a half.



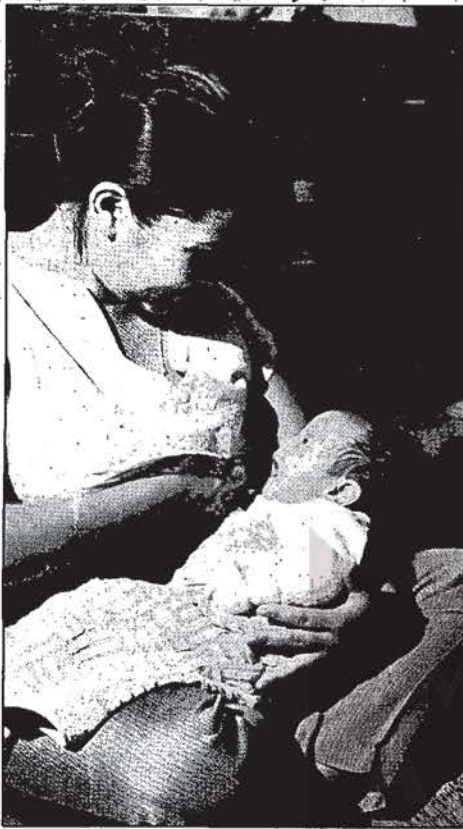
In the isolated mountain villages of Nepal, the toll of infant and childhood diseases is very high. However, since 1976, the government has been working to build integrated health services. One thousand six hundred village health workers work in health posts organized in one-third of Nepal's 75 districts. They assist in malaria control, mother and child health care, oral rehydration therapy, health education and vaccination campaigns. After two years of the campaign, the infant mortality rate in two of the villages surveyed had fallen by a quarter, from 102 deaths to 76 deaths per 1,000 births.

The government also has 714 full-time paramedics in 492 district clinics. These intensively trained health workers regularly visit each family in the area and teach parents about oral rehydration, nutrition, sanitation and hand-washing. A survey of their efforts over the same period showed that infant deaths were cut in half — from 123 to 65 per 1,000 births. Both AID and UNICEF strongly support such governmental and community cooperation in improving health care for the poorest people.

Breast-Feeding and Child Survival



Source: J.D. Wray, *Feeding and Survival: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Infant Morbidity and Mortality*.
 (Background paper prepared for WHO/UNICEF meeting on Infant and Child Feeding, October 9-12, 1978.)



Before 1975, most of the babies born at Banguio General Hospital in the Philippines were bottle-fed. Newborns were separated from their mothers and fed powdered milk formulas in the nursery. That year, Dr. Natividad Relucio-Clavano, convinced that the decline in breast-feeding was a serious threat to the health and lives of infants, changed that. She began a hospital and later a national campaign which included returning newborns to their mothers immediately to encourage feeding and stopping the automatic distribution of free samples of milk powder.

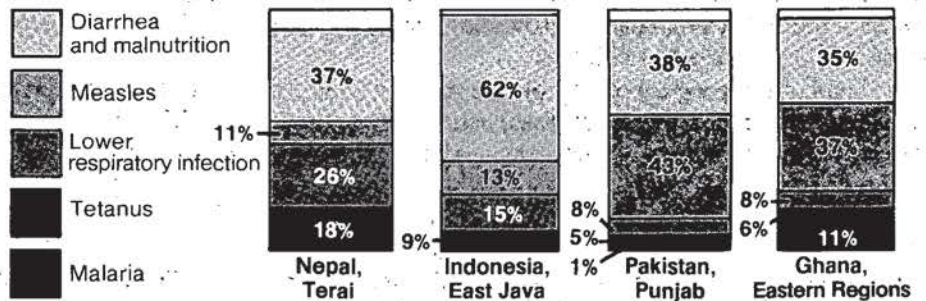
Within the first three months of the campaign, infant illness fell from 25 cases to three. Hospital staff joined Dr. Clavano in educating doctors, nurses and medical students in the benefits of breast-feeding. Furthermore, the maternity staff, no longer occupied with preparing formula and sterilizing bottles, gave more attention to mothers and babies.

As a result of these changes, clinical infections among the babies were reduced 88 percent, diarrheal infections were reduced 93 percent and the number of infant deaths fell by 95 percent. Of the 38 babies who died of diarrhea in the hospital over a four-year period, all had been bottle-fed.

UNICEF and AID include encouragement and support of breast-feeding as an integral part of all maternal and child health services.

Why Children Die

Percentages of infant and child (ages 0-4) deaths due to preventable diseases in selected countries.



Source: Robert N. Grosse. *Interrelation between health and population: Observations derived from field experiences. Social Science and Medicine*. Vol. 14c, No. 2, June 1980, P. 103.

Clearly, it should be a priority of any child health care system to protect against these diseases. However, no more than 10 to 20 percent of the world's children are now immunized.

As with the other three techniques, immunization is possible but requires parental education and community involvement, training of health workers, organization of the campaigns and wise management. The services are best used when coordinated with other aspects of health care and community development. Programs must both provide vaccines to today's children and educate each new generation of parents. Furthermore, present expenditures on immunization activities of \$72 million worldwide would need to be increased at least sixfold to reach the goal of universal immunization.

Expanding Child Health Care

Many agencies are promoting those four life-saving methods of child health care. World political and religious leaders from the United States to India to the Philippines have joined in supporting this child health "revolution," as UNICEF's Grant calls it, and the work of agencies such as UNICEF, the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), and the World Health Organization. Of 70 supportive nations studied by WHO, 49 have made specific and detailed plans to put these techniques into place with large numbers of trained health workers.

The potential for dramatic improvements in the health and well-being of the world's children makes this one of the most exciting challenges of overcoming hunger and poverty in today's world. Improvement in child health is one facet in the total effort to improve the quality of life and opportunities for people in poor countries. As such it contributes to the overall development of a society by contributing not only to the health and potential of a nation's citizenry, but also by improving the community and governmental organization necessary to social development.

The hope of saving lives and improving health for hundreds of thousands of children also offers a glimpse of the Kingdom of God. You can take part in celebrating this hope by educating others on the potential of expanding simple and low-cost health care to the children of poor nations.

As a member of Bread for the World, you can actively participate by informing your members of Congress of your support for UNICEF and AID health activities and the importance of adequate funding for these agencies. Urge support for specific measures to increase funding for these programs. Encourage others to share in the hope of offering life and health to our hungry brothers and sisters across the globe.

The countries are Ethiopia, Lesotho, Morocco, Mozambique, Zambia, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru, Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, Syria, Tunisia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, China, Kampuchea, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea and Vietnam.



All photos that appear in this background paper are from UNICEF.

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