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PRESIDENTIAL MEETING WITH  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
11:30 a.m. - JUNE 18, 1975  
The Cabinet Room

DID NOT ATTEND - JHC  
ATTENDED

A

*B*

*Cannon*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 17, 1975

MEETING WITH  
THE U. S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE  
AND  
THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Wednesday, June 18, 1975  
11:30 - 11:45 a.m. - (15 minutes)  
The Cabinet Room

From: William J. Baroody, Jr. *WJB*  
Theodore C. Marrs *JCM*

I. PURPOSE

To foster dialogue and promote discussion of major items of interest to the U. S. Catholic Conference and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS PLAN

A. Background:

In November 1974 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted a policy on the world food crisis at their annual general meeting. At that time they requested a meeting with the President with a view of the policy becoming a national call to the American public. Since November the meeting has been delayed in an effort to find a date when the Bishops and the President could all meet together.

In addition to the question of world food, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops presented other major issues which they wish to discuss: abortion and illegal aliens. The question of Southeast Asia refugees may be mentioned, but in this area there appear to be no significant differences in approach.



Quoting from the May 10, 1975 letter of Bishop Bernadin, the following comments on issues were made:

"There are several serious issues, of mutual concern, I am sure, which we would want to discuss:

o "World Hunger: we are aware of recent developments that have somewhat alleviated the food crisis. Nevertheless, it is clear that serious problems persist concerning the production and distribution of food in the world, and that these problems could easily and rapidly assume 'crisis' proportions again.

o "Southeast Asia Refugees: we recognize the strong position you have taken in providing assistance to those who have fled. Agencies of the Church have been deeply involved in the resettlement effort, and we are committed to cooperate with the Government, not only to secure material assistance for the refugees, but also to prepare American communities to receive them with true hospitality.

o "Abortion: we are deeply concerned about proposed changes in a number of Federal policies affecting abortion, currently being reviewed by the Domestic Council.

o "'Illegal' Aliens: the problem of those aliens without documentation is a matter of considerable concern to us, and we are aware that you recognize it as a difficult problem. The Conference has already recommended comprehensive legislation which, we believe, would be the key to solving the problem of those aliens who are here now, and would assist in preventing the recurrence of the problem in the future."

Because of the unusual nature and sensitivity of the issues, the positions of the Church on these subjects have been attached:

Illegal Aliens	Tab A
Abortion	Tab B
World Food	Tab C
Refugees	Tab D

This will be the second in a series of meetings with heads of churches. The President met with leaders of the National Council of Churches in January 1975. Subsequent meetings will be with Jewish and other religious denominations.



B. Participants:

The Most Reverend Joseph L. Bernardin  
Archbishop of Cincinnati  
President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and  
the U. S. Catholic Conference

Archbishop Thomas C. Donnellan  
Archbishop of Atlanta  
Treasurer, National Conference of Catholic Bishops and  
the U. S. Catholic Conference

His Eminence Terence Cardinal Cooke  
Archbishop of New York  
Member, Executive Committee, National Conference of  
Catholic Bishops

Bishop James Malone  
Bishop of Youngstown  
Member of the Executive Committee, U. S. Catholic  
Conference

Bishop James Rausch  
General Secretary, National Conference of Catholic Bishops  
and the U. S. Catholic Conference

The Honorable Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary of HEW

The Honorable Edward H. Levi, Attorney General

The Honorable Robert S. Ingersoll, Deputy Secretary of State

C. Press Plan:

White House and Press Photographers.

III. WHITE HOUSE STAFF

William J. Baroody, Jr.  
James M. Cannon  
James H. Cavanaugh  
Theodore C. Marrs  
John L. Borling  
Velma H. Shelton  
Lorraine A. Hodkinson



IV: FORMAT

1. Opening remarks by the President.
2. Attorney General Levi - presentation on illegal aliens.
3. Secretary Weinberger - presentation on abortion.
4. Secretary Ingersoll - presentation on the world food crisis.

V. TALKING POINTS

To be provided by The Domestic Council.

Attachments



Position Paper  
on  
Illegal Aliens

The United States opened its doors recently to 130,000 Vietnamese refugees fleeing the communist regime of South Vietnam. That action stirred some sharp comment, pro and con, but the government stood firmly, even proudly, by its decision.

The United States also has within its borders an incalculable number of unwelcomed aliens, non-citizens without the proper immigration papers. The presence of these illegal aliens has created a smouldering resentment among many Americans. Their presence poses a dilemma for the United States government of how best to deal with the situation.

For these aliens are refugees too, though not in the sense the Vietnamese are. The illegal aliens are fleeing poverty and starvation.

The Catholic Church, of course, is vitally interested in knowing who the illegal aliens are, where they are located, why they have come to this country and, now that they are here, what can be done for them and their families by enacting legislative reforms which will be equitable and humane and will also be effective in preventing a recurrence of the problem under consideration.

The alien may be of any nationality and may come from any country in either hemisphere. When he comes from the Western Hemisphere his motivation is predominantly economic in nature. On the other hand, he may have a family in this country whose laws, as they are now written, force him to be separated from that family for two and one-half years or more. He may also be a political refugee, but unless he comes from certain defined areas of the Eastern Hemisphere, he can be granted at most a haven in "limbo" but cannot be given permanent sanctuary in this country. In short, he is the victim of an oppressive political and/or economic system in his home country and a victim of discriminatory U.S.



immigration laws and practices which foster family separation (should he be the victim of a short-sighted, narrowly conceived definition of the term "refugee" as it is currently interpreted under our laws. All aliens, however, share one thing in common--they soon become victims of discrimination and exploitation in the very country where they have sought a normal life in an atmosphere of freedom.

In an effort to find a solution to this problem, the sponsors of some legislative reforms have as a first priority, moved to penalize the employer of the illegal alien so as to remove the economic motive for aliens to take up unauthorized employment. We feel that the sick society of the illegal alien must be treated in many ways, not merely one, for as outlined above, he suffers from a variety of ills, not merely an economic one.

We therefore recommend a comprehensive package of legislative steps, to be taken concurrently, which will:

(1) institute an equitable preference system applicable to both the Eastern and Western Hemisphere based primarily on family reunification and the admission of refugees;

(2) grant adjustment of status to all persons regardless of their country of birth;

(3) increase foreign aid and economic assistance to the countries of Latin America in general and Mexico in particular;

(4) create an across-the-board grant of amnesty with the necessary residency cut-off date for eligibility and adjustment of status, without chargeability against the numerical ceilings.

What is the rationale behind this recommendation in favor of amnesty?

First of all, it must be recognized that because of deficiencies over a span of many years in our foreign aid and economic assistance policies with regard to Mexico and other Latin American countries, because of our failure to prevent



the mass influx of illegal aliens and our failure to enforce existing laws (a practice which makes it economically attractive for both the illegal alien and the employer to enter into working relationships), the Government of the United States bears a heavy share of responsibility for the chaotic situation which exists today.

Secondly, without a meaningful amnesty program, it is entirely possible that the members of this illegal alien society will be driven further underground and that a permanent sub-culture will be created in the United States. In such a situation it is doubtful that even massive expenditures of time, money and effort on the part of the Immigration Service would ever lead to adequate controls. Would it not be more effective for the Immigration Service to expend its energy and funds in the area of prevention rather than in the area of apprehension and deportation?

Finally, should an across-the-board type of amnesty be granted, the extremely serious and troublesome suggestion that every American citizen be issued a common identification card or "internal passport" need no longer be considered.

Public Law 92-603, which was enacted on October 30, 1972, requires the Social Security Administration to screen all applicants for Social Security cards as to their eligibility to take up employment. If the card is sought for other lawful purposes and it is not used for such purposes, the name and address of the cardholder is reported to the Immigration Service for investigation. Thus if amnesty were granted, for example, to all who are in the United States today or as of January 1, 1973, the effective date of Public Law 92-603, then the Social Security card would become the proof of the right to take up employment, regardless of the date of issuance. It would become the control factor, and there would be no need to recall or reissue a single card.

Through a tightening-up of the regulations promulgated under Public Law 92-603



and through the expansion of Social Security benefits to those occupational categories not yet covered, unauthorized employment would be minimized. As in the case of any law--the Fair Labor Standards Act, for example, or the Internal Revenue Code--the degree of enforcement is the gauge of the law's effectiveness.

The grant of amnesty in conjunction with the other above-mentioned steps becomes the key to solving the problem of those aliens who are here now and preventing the recurrence of this problem in the future.

As we approach the Bicentennial celebration of the founding of our country, let us adopt as our theme, in seeking a fair and humanitarian solution to this very serious problem, the familiar motto "Liberty and Justice for All."



## ABORTION AS PUBLIC POLICY

For more than a decade the question of abortion has been the center of intense public debate in the United States. This debate reflects in part the attempt of a society undergoing change and at times cultural disorientation to articulate values that it considers required in a just society. Abortion is a complex human problem that reaches into the depths of the human spirit and touches nearly every aspect of human existence. For this reason any public policy resolution of this question must rest on a thoughtful and balanced accounting of all factors.

### The Abortion Rulings of the U.S. Supreme Court

On Jan. 22, 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton<sup>1</sup> ruled that the Texas and Georgia abortion laws were unconstitutional, thereby invalidating virtually all other state abortion laws. In these opinions the Court determined that a woman possessed a personal right to obtain an abortion free from undue interference on the part of the state. At the same time the Court denied that any human rights effectively attach to the unborn child prior to birth.

The position of the Court has not been accepted and is the subject of continuing legal debate.<sup>2</sup> In response to "the demands of the profound problems of the present day" (Roe v. Wade, p. 50, slip opinions) the Court felt it possible to locate the personal right to an abortion within the confines of



the Fourteenth Amendment, but on failing to find an explicit mention of the rights of the unborn in the Constitution, the Court concluded that no such rights exist. In his dissent Justice White aptly described this determination of the Court as "an exercise of raw judicial power" (slip opinion, p. 2). As to the content of the Court's ruling Justice White further states, "I find nothing in the language or history of the Constitution to support the Court's judgment. The Court simply fashions and announces a new constitutional right..." (slip opinions, p. 2).

Roe and Doe are fundamentally deficient public policy statements on abortion. As such they can only represent a phase in the ongoing public debate. No authoritative pronouncements, however impressive, can sweep away the profound moral and legal issues that lie at the heart of the abortion controversy.

#### Public Attitudes on Abortion

In its abortion decisions the Court's majority flew in the face of manifest public opinion. From 1967 to 1970 twelve states had adopted moderate abortion laws following the American Law Institute (ALI) model and four states had adopted abortion-on-demand laws. Through 1971 and 1972, however, only one state enacted a new ALI type law and none an abortion-on-demand one -- the New York legislature even repealed its abortion-on-demand law (but Governor Rockefeller vetoed the act).<sup>3</sup> In the fall of 1972 public referenda were held in the states of Michigan and North Dakota and proposed abortion law changes were rejected overwhelmingly by the voters in both states. Ironically, just



prior to the Jan., 1973 Supreme Court rulings a public opinion study showed that women are more opposed to abortion than men.<sup>4</sup>

Most recently a public opinion poll conducted by DeVries and Associates in the late fall of 1974 found that almost three out of every four Americans believe that Congress should take legislative action to correct the Supreme Court's abortion decisions.<sup>5</sup> Despite the fact that the Supreme Court opinions had been in effect nearly two years when this poll was taken, this finding as to the dominant attitude of the public is consistent with the other major polls done over the last decade.<sup>6</sup>

#### The Formation of Public Policy After Roe and Doe

One of the tragedies of the Supreme Court decisions is that the people are inhibited in exercising their manifest will through many of the governmental processes that normally would serve that purpose. Justice White, noting that the Court had set up constitutional barriers severely delimiting the states' ability to legislate on abortion, concluded: "This issue, for the most part, should be left with the people and to the political processes the people have devised to govern their affairs" (Dissent in Roe v. Wade, slip opinions, p. 2)

The abortion issue remains in open debate in the market place. Yet, when in the case of such a fundamental issue involving life and death the avenues of political recourse have been constitutionally narrowed, the avenues that remain open should be respected and allowed to function.



In its abortion decisions the Supreme Court sketched in broad outline the legislative capabilities of the state legislatures. The Court left many issues unresolved, eg, the rights of the father or parental rights with respect to their minor children. Both the Congress and the state legislatures have subsequently enacted various laws. Some of these laws are being challenged in the courts, but to date the Supreme Court has not issued any major decisions on these further legal questions.

The Court, in striking down the Texas and Georgia abortion laws, in effect made it an option for the states whether they would enact new legal restrictions within certain general parameters. Most states have taken up the difficult task of framing new abortion laws.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, some individuals imply that the full factual meaning of Roe and Doe is self-evident, or they gloss over the fact that the Court issued only a negative ruling forbidding undue state interference in a private right,<sup>8</sup> or they sometimes even suggest that Congressional and state laws enacted subsequent to Roe and Doe represent little more than perverse or incompetent acts on the part of these legislative bodies. On the basis of such unfounded assertions they argue that no governmental body, ie, the Executive, Congress or the state legislatures, can in any way regulate the practice of abortion.

Such suggestions represent a lack of awareness or appreciation of the precise meaning of Roe and Doe, of the full play



of constitutional process, and they particularly demean the vital role the states play in our system of government. Such suggestions also betray a lack of awareness or sensitivity to the complexity of factors that the issue of abortion involves.

#### The Federal Government and Abortion

At times there is a tendency for certain federal bureaucracies and related agencies to assume the role of final arbiter in this post-Roe and Doe era, undertaking the task of lawmaker and judge in articulating public policy on abortion. The President should in no way encourage or approve this attitude, and where it appears in fact he should be firm in issuing a reprimand.

There is a role for various federal agencies to provide Congress with information pertinent to decisions before it. However, in a politically and morally sensitive question as abortion, these reports should exhibit an objectivity that fairly presents all facts and fairly represents all viewpoints. Two recent reports, for example, began with the notice that they intended to systematically exclude the viewpoint that abortion constitutes a significant ethical concern.<sup>9</sup> The question can only arise whether all the facts have been fairly presented.<sup>10</sup> These concerns are only deepened when the very existence of one report was announced on the floor of the Senate in the heat of a major debate on abortion legislation. The report was presented as being opposed to the amendment under



debate.<sup>11</sup> It would seem incumbent on the President that the agencies under governmental control be instructed to undertake research and their other activities in relation to the abortion issue with the fairness that the integrity of the governmental process requires.

The various federal bureaucracies should observe laws enacted by Congress. In one major instance the DHEW for over a year was paying for abortion as a method of family planning in contravention of the clear intent of Congress. Only a Congressional inquiry brought that situation to light. Other laws and directives have been issued by Congress in relation to abortion. These should be observed.

The question is posed whether the state has an obligation to fund abortion. We think not.

First, the state possesses a broad discretionary power to spend, enter into contracts, and dispose of property. The general welfare of the people which governs this activity has a broader vision than the personal right of a woman to decide to have an abortion free from state interference. Roe and Do created no affirmative duty on the part of the state to fund this new found right.

Further, while the fundamental moral issues surrounding abortion are still being strongly debated in our society, it is altogether inappropriate for the state to use tax money to enable an individual to perform an action that is classified under the right of privacy, but in fact is little more than a preferred life style.<sup>12</sup>



Abortion is able to be differentiated from other medical procedures on the basis of the scientifically verifiable fact that a developing human life is destroyed, whether that life is factually designated a conceptus, a blastocyst, an embryo, fetus or premature infant,<sup>13</sup> or whether that life is philosophically ascribed full or only partial personal qualities.<sup>14</sup> Other medical procedures involving consent between a physician and patient do not have as their principle object the destruction of another human life. Even though the Supreme Court has ruled that this nascent human life does not possess the full rights of a citizen until birth, this does not relieve the government of the responsibility of acknowledging that nascent human life factually exists in the pre-natal condition and on that basis alone to create reasonable distinctions of law.

Moreover, the state would be justified in making a reasonable distinction between elective abortions and those that are medically necessary to save a woman's life, declining to pay for the former. In a similar fashion the state could decide through such a program as Medicaid to pay for appendectomies, which are medically necessary, but not for cosmetic plastic surgery, which is not medically necessary.

This distinction between elective and medically necessary abortions is generally recognized. Those who deny this factual distinction in the context of the abortion debate engage in semantic gymnastics.

For these reasons the President should take no action



that would encourage or sanction the use of tax moneys to pay for the performance of abortions.

On April 3, 1971 President Nixon ordered that the policy on abortion at U.S. military bases correspond to the laws of the states where those bases are located. In our opinion, this order is still appropriate. The residual powers to regulate abortion that the Supreme Court allowed the states to retain should be respected. While we disagree with the Court's delineations on this matter, the wisdom of the people should still be able to have some effect. The various military and federal agencies and programs under the President's control should not be separated from this source of insight on such a complex issue as abortion.

#### A Human Life Constitutional Amendment is Needed

The dignity of the unborn child is neither conferred nor taken away by any man or woman or by any government or society. That dignity is rooted in an objective individuality that inherently tends toward the openness and transcendence men commonly call personhood.

A government that exercises the choice on a systematic basis of excluding protection for a particular stage of human life undercuts its own foundations. The U.S. Supreme Court has foreclosed the possibility that the natural rights of the unborn child be recognized in law. Such a situation is intolerable and must be corrected.

As the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has stated



on many occasions, the rights of the unborn child deserve protection under the law. Most recently we have stated our position that the Supreme Court's abortion decisions should be corrected by amending the U.S. Constitution. Any consideration of a constitutional amendment should include at least the following:

1. Establish that the unborn child is a person under the law in the terms of the Constitution from conception on.
2. The Constitution should express a commitment to the preservation of life to the maximum degree possible. The protection resulting therefrom should be universal.
3. The proposed amendment should give the states the power to enact enabling legislation, and to provide for ancillary matters such as record-keeping, etc.
4. The right of life is described in the Declaration of Independence as "unalienable" and as a right with which all men are endowed by the Creator. The amendment should restore the basic constitutional protection for this human right to the unborn child.<sup>15</sup>

The U.S. Congress has been holding hearings on the merits of a constitutional amendment to correct the errors of Roe and Doe. State legislatures have been petitioning Congress to enact an amendment. While this governmental debate with respect to abortion and public policy proceeds forward, the Executive should exercise great care that regarding activities under its charge the integrity of all governmental processes be fully respected and maintained.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113, 93 S. Ct. 705, 35 L.Ed. 2d. 147 (1973). Doe v. Bolton, 410 U.S. 179, 93 S. Ct. 739, 35 L.Ed. 2d 201 (1973).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Richard Wasserman, "Implications of the Abortion Decisions: Post Roe and Doe Litigation and Legislation," Columbia Law Review, Vol. 74, No. 2 (March, 1974), 237-268.

<sup>3</sup>By the conclusion of 1969 ten states had enacted major legislative reform, all more or less following the ALI proposal (Oregon followed a somewhat different model): Calif., Col., N. Car. - 1967; Ga., Md. - 1968; Ark., Del., Kan., N. Mex., Ore. - 1969. In 1970 six more states reformed their laws, of which S. Carolina and Virginia followed the ALI model, Alaska, Hawaii, New York and Washington the abortion-on-demand model. No further legislative changes occurred until 1972 when Florida enacted an ALI type law.

<sup>4</sup>This study was reported in, "Women Lead Opposition to Abortion," The Evening Star and Daily News, April 17, 1973, A-3. This finding is confirmed in other major polls (see nn. 5 and 6 below).

<sup>5</sup>This poll was commissioned by the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, Inc.

<sup>6</sup>Professor Judith Blake, who has analyzed public opinion on abortion since 1962, was quoted in the March 4, 1974 issue of U.S. News and World Report as saying, "the country remains conservative. There has been no change at all in public opinion... If there was a referendum today asking people to approve abortion if the woman doesn't want a child, there is no way it could pass. People don't think women should have abortion just to get rid of a child." See Prof. Blake's major studies, "Abortion and Public Opinion: The 1960-1970 Decade," Science, Vol. 171 (Feb. 12, 1971), 540-549; "Elective Abortion and Our Reluctant Citizenry: Research on Public Opinion in the United States," in The Abortion Experience: Psychological and Medical Impact, eds. Howard J. Osofsky and Joy D. Osofsky (Hagerstown, Md.: Medical Department, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), pp. 447-467.

<sup>7</sup>As one commentator notes, on close examination the seeming precision of the Court's legislative guidelines "proves largely illusory." John Hart Ely, "The Wages of Crying Wolf: A Comment on Roe v. Wade," The Yale Law Journal, Vol. 82 (1973), 922. The state legislatures have had the challenging task of fleshing out the Court's general legislative framework.



C

THE WORLD FOOD PROBLEM AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

The World Food Conference in Rome last year served to focus attention on one of humanity's major problems, namely that hunger and malnutrition exist in the world on a massive scale despite the potential agricultural capacity to satisfy the world's food requirements. The first resolution adopted by the Conference reflected both a deep humanitarian concern and also a great vision, expressing a goal to which all of the peoples of the earth can give assent:

"Today we must proclaim a bold objective-- 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."

Furthermore, the Conference reached general agreement on the basic outlines of programs to 1) supply short and intermediate term emergency food aid to food deficit poor countries, 2) to expand food production of the producing countries, 3) to accelerate production in the developing countries, 4) to improve food distribution and financing, 5) to enhance the nutritional quality of food production, and 6) to develop food reserves to insure against food emergencies.

Since the Conference, some advances toward these objectives have been made: 1) a number of commitments made have



begun to take insitutional form; 2) positive initiatives taken by certain governments, including the United States, have benefited some desperate nations; and 3) certain policy issues about the food problem have been further clarified.

It is to this clarification of policy issues that these remarks are addressed, in order that the American public can better understand the food problem and the issues implicit in it. Three elements will be addressed: the scope of the problem, its moral dimensions and an appropriate response.

## I

The world food problem does not exist in a vacuum. The problem fits into a matrix of several complex issues all of which loom large on the world's agenda. It is linked with questions about international development, population policies, income distribution and land reform, affluent life styles and global power politics. For the purpose of this analysis of the problem's scope, two dimensions are raised: starvation and malnutrition.

A. Starvation: The fact that great numbers of people are dying for lack of food is objectively intolerable. Experts differ about the exact number of people who are in this plight with estimates about the numbers of fatalities resulting from the famines in South Asia and the Sahel ranging between one million to tens of millions. But as Ambassador Edwin M. Martin, U.S. coordinator for the Rome Conference, recently noted, in the destitute condition of these regions, keeping



statistics is a luxury starving people cannot afford.

This level of human suffering is especially appalling considering that the world supply of foods was and is sufficient to prevent starvation, but the victims were too poor to buy what they needed. The food problem, then, in these regions, is that no adequate means have been devised to provide and distribute food to these poorest nations.

The participating governments at the World Food Conference agreed to "make all efforts to provide commodities and/or financial assistance that will assure in physical terms at least 10 million tons of grain as food aid a year, starting from 1975, and also to provide adequate quantities of other food commodities." The Secretariat of the Conference stated that "in practice, total yearly food aid should approach at least the average level of 14-15 million tons attained in the Sixties. In years of bad harvests, the need for emergency food aid would be substantially higher, and total food requirements may even exceed 17 million tons..."

Therefore, in defining the scope of the problem, it is crucial to understand that the 10-million-ton figure was "a minimum quantity to take care of 'hardcore' food aid requirements," and not the ceiling level of food aid that will be required.

B. Malnutrition: Famine has always stalked humanity; it is unpredictable as to location and intermittent in its intensity. Malnutrition, on the other hand, has become virtually institutionalized in some regions of the world. For



hundreds of millions of people, severe dietary deficiency is a permanent way of life. That such conditions exist when their location is known and the necessary nutritional knowledge is in hand is a violation of basic humanity. What is lacking is a sufficient commitment in both the developed nations and the less developed nations to address this problem.

Some recent news reports have indicated that the convergence of several factors, among them good weather and additional aid from food exporting countries, has significantly reduced the food problem. This has led some to feel the problem has gone away. However, it must be kept in mind that, while certain favorable factors have improved, the global food problem "remains one of the great threats to the future of humanity."



## II

A second element in clarifying the dimensions of the food problem is the need properly and precisely to define the nature of the moral choice confronting us. The way in which we define the problem is critical because it is in light of this that we understand our moral responsibility and subsequently frame our national response. This is especially important because of the implications for the United States as the world's largest exporter of food, and because of the importance of intelligent public debate in the decision-making process.

Some national leaders have consistently presented the food problem to the American public as a humanitarian challenge. But there is widespread disagreement as to the part humanitarian motives should play in international life, and particularly as to the degree of sacrifice such motives should compel or induce. Therefore, it is important to see the issue not simply in terms of charity, but primarily in terms of the demands of social justice in an increasingly interdependent world.

Social justice is concerned with the structures and the systems of production, distribution and financing which determine how we allocate scarce resources and adjudicate competing claims, nationally and internationally. The humanitarian view depicts our moral responsibility in terms of a voluntary program undertaken in a spirit of generosity. Justice, on the other hand, recognizes the rights of others and expresses the various kinds of responsibility required to meet these rights.



The global food problem concerns people's right to eat; to say others have a right to eat is to pose our problem in terms of obligation rather than choice. If we fail in charity, the verdict is that we have not been generous; if we fail in justice, the verdict is that we have fallen short of minimal moral duty. Government policies are necessarily formulated on the basis of some conception of justice, however limited, whereas charity informs and inspires policy decisions only infrequently and unsystematically. Thus the issues of public policy comprising the world food problem must be decided systematically on the basis of some assumptions or agreed upon concepts of justice.

The distinction between charity and justice is not simply semantic. To define the personal and policy choices we face in terms of charity is to distort and to distract us from the key policy questions. In the conventional understanding of the term, charity would call upon us to share our surplus goods with those who are in need. This leads to an inadequate assessment of the food problem since U.S.-owned surpluses of the major food grains, as statistically defined, have drastically declined over the past three years because of world inflation and shortsighted domestic farm policies.

The actual policy choice we face no longer fits into this conventional mode. The question today, in the short run, is whether to produce more food than we need domestically and can sell abroad in order to avoid having people in distant lands starve or remain chronically undernourished. Similarly, the



long-term and fundamental need to help the poorer countries better to feed themselves will call for a correspondingly long-term and substantial commitment of aid from the richer countries, the burden of which falls inescapably on their taxpayers.

### III

The third factor which needs clarification concerns the kind of national response we make to the food problem in the world, a response appropriate to its physical scope and its moral dimensions. Such a task will require the combined intellectual, political and moral attention of many sectors of our society, and interaction with counterparts in other countries and agencies of the international community.

The United States Catholic Conference has the mission of publicly disseminating the broad moral principles which should inform such policy making. It has no mission nor indeed any competence to specify the economic and technical details of such policy. However, as we go to our constituencies calling for public support, personal sacrifice and private initiatives, we need a framework of an articulated national food policy adequate to the dimensions of the problem we face in the globe and capable of linking personal and non-governmental actions to broadly defined public purposes and programs

We believe that the broad outlines of such a policy can be suggested, if it is accepted that it must be placed in an international context. United States farm policy should not



be content with merely satisfying domestic needs and commercial export demands. It must take account of our moral obligation to do everything possible to alleviate the food problem in depressed regions in the Third World. The policy should thus seek to reconcile three factors: 1) the need to maximize U.S. production of food in order to alleviate conditions in countries where starvation and malnutrition are daily facts of life; 2) the need to assure adequate food supplies in the United States at reasonable prices and; 3) the need to assure American farmers of reasonable returns for the desired quantities of needed commodities.

Three levels of response suggest themselves: 1) immediate food aid; 2) long-term agricultural development; and 3) a world food reserve.

#### A. Food Aid

If the deliberations of the World Food Conference are to be taken seriously, two factors must be considered: 1) because of the projected size of the world food needs, U.S. food assistance must be expanded beyond the Administration's programs; and 2) these food needs must be given priority over other considerations such as foreign policy objectives and development of export markets.

First, we are asking in effect that U.S. farm policy aim at a level of food production sufficient to meet not only domestic requirements and commercial export demand but a surplus to guarantee a due response by the United States to the needs of the food-deficit poor countries. Achieving such a



high level of production will presumably mean higher prices to encourage cultivation of marginal acreage. And the transfer of surplus food to the poor countries will require government appropriations to purchase food from the growers. Thus, the citizen both as taxpayer and as consumer is likely to be affected adversely. We believe the cost to the taxpayer will be small compared to other ongoing programs of domestic welfare and military defense. The effect on the cost of living needs to be analyzed by agricultural and marketing experts, but it too may turn out for most consumers to be marginal in view of the efficiency of U.S. agricultural production, the relative affluence of Americans, and the relatively high proportion of transport, packaging, processing and marketing costs (which will be unaffected) in retail prices. The present Administration has pledged itself to maintain a level of at least four million tons of food aid annually but this must be regarded as a minimal commitment. The United States, which has committed itself in the current fiscal year to 5 1/2 million tons must be prepared, in principle, to provide even more if the requirements of the poor countries as determined by the experts of the competent international agencies, exceed the ten-million-ton planning figure adopted by the Rome Conference.

For the poorest Americans who already have difficulty feeding themselves adequately--the unemployed, the elderly poor, large urban families in the low income brackets--there should be provision for income or food supplements. This is already a problem which might be aggravated by the policies



we are advocating and one which, as the Catholic Bishops pointed out in their pastoral statement of last November, must never be lost sight of. (See also, the "Statement on Feeding the Hungry--Toward a U.S. Domestic Food Policy," United States Catholic Conference, April 16, 1975.)

Second, we believe the time has come to abandon the concept of food aid as it has been understood for the past 20 years, that is, as a means primarily of getting rid of unwanted suprluses in a way which incidentally serves some more or less short-term bilateral foreign policy objectives. We do not concur with those who maintain that our foreign policy should incorporate the strategic importance of using our advantage in food production to "court" allies. Rather, we share the view of those who consider our world position in agriculture to be a sacred trust. Food is an endowment to be shared, not a weapon or diplomatic instrument. The religious community can participate in building public support for food aid for a starving world; we cannot, nor should we, build a constituency for using food in an exploitative or manipulative way.

What would be the characteristics of an appropriate U.S. food aid plan? Three general principles should undergird such planning: 1) The starting point to design a specific plan must be the projected global food needs. The U.S. food aid commitment would be dependent upon the determination of these needs. 2) the U.S. share of this global total should be proportional to our national wealth and agricultural capability. In agriculture, America's extraordinary productivity, advanced technology and traditional response to those in need suggests that



our proportion would be in such a magnitude as to provide a challenge and an inspiration to other nations. 3) The allocation of U.S. food aid should be to those nations most seriously in need of assistance. The United Nations listing of such nations should be the basis for such allocations.

#### B. Food Production and Rural Development

The long-run solution is to increase food production in the food deficit poor countries themselves: The Rome Conference addressed this problem in great detail, both in respect to additional production and nutritional quality. A coordinator was established by three concerned international agencies to ascertain what the wealthier countries are prepared to provide. The United States has already, in the current fiscal year, expanded the programmed foreign aid level for this purpose substantially and has promised to concentrate U.S. bilateral aid in this sector of economic development. The United States has also announced that it would contribute some \$200 million to a \$1 billion international fund for agricultural development organized by oil producing countries. These steps are warmly welcomed by Americans concerned with the problem. What is needed is a national commitment articulated by the political leadership at the highest level of government and with broad public support to sustain these commitments for years if necessary until the food supply problems addressed at Rome are given a permanent solution.

#### C. International Grain Reserve

A general consensus appears to have formed in support



of a world grain reserve. The United States has announced that it is prepared to hold an important part of an agreed level of world reserves. Whether these reserves are to be held by some international agency or nationally controlled is an important detail which will have to be worked out. The basic requirement is for adequate reserves, whether in private hands or government ownership. If the former, strict and internationally agreed government controls will be needed to insure against reserves being drawn down purely on the basis of commercial considerations to accommodate large foreign purchases as happened in 1972.

It is clear that the reserve system will benefit not only the poorer countries. Recent studies have demonstrated that the painful rise in prices of food grains and soybeans in 1972-73 with their adverse effects on American consumers with low incomes could have been largely avoided if measures had been taken to prevent the sharp drawdown of stocks in the United States by increasing domestic production sooner. A reserve system will help to stabilize prices as well as to meet emergency needs arising from crop failures in other countries.



Conclusion

The religious communities of the United States face a direct, explicit and urgent challenge in the world food problem. It is already clear that they, along with other voluntary associations, are willing to participate in significant and substantial voluntary efforts to feed persons who are starving or suffering from malnutrition.

But this is not enough. While the religious communities should be challenged by the food question, the challenge should frankly recognize that the dimensions of the problem and the scope and intensity of a necessary response require more than voluntary efforts. The religious communities must mobilize citizen support for governmental programs; to do so, a program must be clearly framed in its proper scope and moral dimensions. A demonstration of how this can be done is provided by the concerted and successful efforts of private groups and agencies last year to support an appropriate level of U.S. funding for International Development Agency.

No amount of private or voluntary action can substitute for the required level of governmental leadership, commitment and action. This is especially so at this time in history. In the wake of the U.S. humiliation in Vietnam and at a time of widespread uncertainty about U.S. leadership in world affairs, a strong and visible commitment by U.S. leadership on the food problem can do much to reestablish our nation's credibility among many people around the world who are too destitute to be impressed by military power and strategic commitments.



AD HOC SENATE COMMITTEE:

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

UNITED STATES SENATE

Statement of:

United States Catholic Conference

on

The Global Food Crisis

Rev. J. Bryan Hehir  
Associate Secretary  
International Justice and Peace  
United States Catholic Conference



December 18, 1974

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is J. Bryan Hehir; I am the Associate Secretary for International Justice and Peace at the United States Catholic Conference. Our office functions as the foreign policy section for the Catholic bishops of the United States and I speak in the name of the U.S. Catholic Conference this afternoon. Let me first express our appreciation, Mr. Chairman, to you and to the other members of the committee for sponsoring these hearings on the problem of hunger and population and for inviting us to testify.

I wish to address briefly four points on the world food crisis:

- (1) the definition of the policy problem we face
- (2) the distinct but complementary roles of governmental and non-governmental agencies
- (3) the dimensions of a legislative agenda on food
- (4) the relationship of public policy and public opinion.

#### I. DEFINING THE POLICY PROBLEM: JUSTICE OR CHARITY

It is essential that we define properly and precisely for public discussion and policy decision the nature of the moral choice which confronts us as the world's largest food exporting nation in a world stalked by the spectre of starvation. Administration spokesmen have consistently presented the issue to the American public as one of humanitarian charity. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that the more appropriate way to conceive and discuss the issue is in terms of the demands of social justice in an increasingly interdependent world.



The difference between public understanding of the food crisis in terms of justice rather than charity is not, I submit, simply a semantic distinction. To define the personal and policy choices we face in the food crisis in terms of charity is to distort the empirical problem, to dilute the moral decision we confront and to distract us from the key policy questions. In the conventional understanding of the phrase, humanitarian charity refers to sharing our surplus goods with the needy. This is an inadequate assessment of the food problem because in fact we have passed from a situation of national surplus to one of scarcity over the past three years. The actual policy choice we face in the food crisis is whether we will choose to share when the nature of our choice is between scarce food domestically and starving people internationally. In a situation of scarcity the policy issue is how to adjudicate competing claims to scarce resources; such adjudication is an issue of justice. Posing the question in terms of charity does not make this choice clear in the public mind; moreover, the term charity does not make evident the nature of our moral responsibility in the face of this choice between scarce food and starving people.

Humanitarian charity depicts our moral responsibility in terms of an option or a voluntary program. To say we are called in charity to feed the hungry is to say we are being asked to be exceedingly generous. The language of charity reduces our moral responsibility to this level of going far beyond what we have an obligation to do. To pose the food



problem as an issue of justice is to sharpen the moral dilemma we face as a nation. Charity is concerned with the needs of others and our freedom to choose to help them. Social justice is concerned with the rights of others and our responsibility to meet these rights. The global food crisis is about the right to eat; to say others have a right to eat is to pose our problem in terms of an obligation we have rather than an option we face. If we fail in charity, the verdict is that we have not been exceedingly generous; if we fail in justice, the verdict is that we have fallen short of minimal moral duty. The language of charity is too vague to specify the real moral issue of the food crisis.

Finally, the approach to the food question in terms of charity focuses our attention on the wrong issues. Charity stresses personal motivation and voluntary programs. Social justice is concerned with the structures and systems of production, distribution and financing which determine how we allocate scarce resources and adjudicate competing claims, nationally and internationally. The social justice approach to the food question raises the issues of public policy, public priorities and competing forms of power which set the framework of decision-making on our food policy. Charity has a role in illuminating our obligations, but it is a subordinate role; we can worry about going beyond our obligations in charity only after we have understood the dimensions of the obligation first in terms of social justice.

The need of the moment is for a definition of the food



problem which will help us assess the realities of domestic scarcity without dissolving the dimensions of our international responsibility in a starving world. An accurate definition of the problem and an adequate response to it will require the combined intellectual, political and moral efforts of many sectors of our society.

## II. DETERMINING THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

It was precisely to stimulate such a comprehensive response to the immediate needs of the food crisis that Father Theodore Hesburgh, President of Notre Dame University, and other leaders of the religious community called upon President Ford last month to release two million tons of grain before Christmas and another two million tons next Spring. The President's response to this request thus far has been to endorse and encourage private non-governmental efforts, but to withhold any substantial new commitment by the United States government.

Mr. Chairman, there is no question that religious communities are faced with a direct, explicit and urgent challenge by the food crisis. I would argue that we cannot maintain our internal identity or our public credibility if we fail to face the food crisis as people of faith. Furthermore, I think it needs to be said explicitly in this forum today that religious communities, along with other voluntary associations are more than willing to embark upon a significant and substantial effort to mobilize our constituencies, commit our resources and coordinate our activities to respond to the needs of starving



people. But it is imperative to make clear that no amount of private or voluntary action can substitute for a certain level of governmental leadership, commitment and action. As religious communities we can best make a contribution to the systemic food crisis in the context of a broadly based strategy of public policy which seeks to help the nation as a whole understand and meet its responsibilities in a shrinking and partially starving world.

The absolute necessity for action by our government in the form of a comprehensive and coherent food policy is based upon two factors: the scope of the food problem and the shape of the issues it entails. First, the dimensions of the immediate need faced by the countries directly threatened with starvation are so great and the time frame for effective action is so short that only governmental actors can coordinate and sustain the kind of program which will avert disaster before the next harvest. The programs of the religious agencies are already underway and we seek to expand them, but we are under no illusion about our ability to meet the full dimensions of the problem. Secondly, apart from the scope of the problem, the fact remains that some of the types of assistance most critically needed, e.g., additional foreign exchange, can only be provided by expanded governmental action. The religious community should be challenged on the food question, but the challenge should not disguise the dimensions of the problem and the essential need for coordinated public and private action.

As we go to our constituencies calling for public support,



personal sacrifice and private initiatives, we need a framework of an articulated food policy which will allow us to present a case for a coherent, coordinated strategy adequate to the dimensions of the problem we face in the globe and capable of linking personal and non-governmental actions to broadly defined public purposes and programs. Such a food policy requires immediate action by the executive branch now and further legislative initiatives in the next session of Congress.

### III. DIMENSIONS OF A LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Such a legislative initiative, we believe, will require at least three levels of action touching food and foreign policy, food and domestic social policy and the role of corporate actors in the process of food production and distribution.

First, food and foreign policy: the Catholic bishops of the United States adopted a legislative policy proposal last month which includes support for an international assistance program ranging from substantially increased emergency food aid, through middle range efforts to establish a grain reserve, to long range measures of providing financial and technical assistance to developing nations. Since these hearings are designed in part to highlight the problem of immediate needs, let me say a word about the specifics of expanding food aid:

- (1) we urge a program of expanding our present assistance by not less than four to five million tons of emergency aid;
- (2) recognizing that increased food aid will be channeled through the PL 480 program, we strongly urge that in the coming legislative session the structure of



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this program be revised to prevent the use of food primarily as a tool of our foreign policy rather than an instrument of assistance to the most needy nations of the world;

- (3) specifically, we find no justification for the patterns of food assistance in FY 1974 by which South Vietnam received approximately seven times the aid given to Bangladesh, while Cambodia received about twelve times the amount allocated to the Sahelian countries.

We can build a public constituency, Mr. Chairman, to support food aid for a starving world; I do not think we can or should build a constituency for using food primarily as a political weapon.

Second, food and domestic social policy: a forthcoming international policy of food assistance will have domestic, social and economic implications. I am arguing in this paper that domestic scarcity does not excuse us from international responsibility, but it will be necessary to face the domestic reality. Stories which several members of this committee have heard of the elderly eating dog food, of children no longer able to afford school lunches and of a rash of petty thievery in supermarkets by people who have never stolen in their lives presents the human face of domestic food scarcity.

We will not get public support for what must be done internationally unless we correlate an international food policy with a domestic food policy. The underlying premise of the international policy I have just sketched is that food is a unique commodity--not simply another product but a sacred resource so closely linked to the right to life for millions today



that it takes more than business, as usual to exercise responsible stewardship over this commodity. To argue for emergency assistance and the establishment of a grain reserve is to affirm the principle that when the normal functioning of the market system does not or cannot guarantee food for hungry people, we must be willing to modify the market system to meet basic human rights and needs.

It may be necessary to do this in our domestic policy also if those least able to pay, the old, the poor, the unemployed and also the middle class are not to bear an excessive burden of our international policy. The first principle guiding a domestic legislative program should be an equitable sharing of the international responsibility we have. Secondly, to implement this will require increasing food stamps for certain groups, expanding the school lunch program and meeting the needs of the unemployed. Thirdly, among those requiring specific consideration are American farmers who must be guaranteed a just and stable income for their product.

Third, corporations and food policy: a thorough legislative program should look at the role of the giant corporations in the food production and processing industry. Their role has both international and domestic implications. The fact that a handful of corporations have control of most of the world's food supply and because of their private status are not obliged to provide any public accounting of their activities for such a vital resource poses a serious question of public policy.



#### IV. PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC OPINION

It is evident that a broadly conceived and adequate response to the food crisis in the form of public policy will require wide public support in a time of economic recession. While the choices between domestic and international needs--the choice between scarce food and starving people--is both complex and conflicted, I believe public support exists for a program which is both just and generous. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that since the Rome Conference the Administration's policy has lagged behind the trend of public opinion, not led the way for it.

Again and again in the food conference and in the last month the response of the Administration seems to be that the domestic constituency will not support an expanded program of food aid. Yet the public response to the small scale programs of religious bodies and private groups indicates a much broader base of support and a more generous vision than the American people are being credited with by their government. Specifically, I would make two points about the experience and role of the Catholic community in this problem:

- (1) our experience, including special collections, conferences and community action, indicates that even in the face of scarce food domestically the majority of Americans are not willing to accept starvation for millions abroad as a tragic but inevitable fact; there is support in the public for an aggressive program to meet the savage spectre of starvation; that support can be crystallized by a coherent, intelligible food policy;
- (2) as a Church we pledge continuing efforts to solidify and expand the base of support for a just and generous food policy; we will take the question to our community with the passion and power which the issue deserves.



The effort for us and for the government will be arduous, complex and long-term, but the alternative is unacceptable. The human significance of the food crisis is illuminated by a quote from Dostoievski: a century ago he said the death of one innocent child was enough to destroy belief in God. In the face of the food crisis, we know about how many innocent children may die and we even know why they die. To know that possibility and not to oppose it with all the intellectual, moral, political and economic power we can muster is enough to destroy belief in ourselves as a humane, compassionate people and nation. Nothing short of our best effort should be used to avert that personal and political trauma.



U.S. SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Statement of: United States Catholic Conference

on

PL 480 Food Program

Rev. J. Bryan Hehir  
Associate Secretary  
Office of International Justice  
and Peace

February 18, 1975



Statement of Rev. J. Bryan Hehir

United States Senate Committee on Agriculture

February 18, 1975

For the purposes of these remarks, two points about the "Food for Peace" (PL 480) program will be highlighted: first, the unique characteristic of food; and second, a new rationale for PL 480. The concluding remarks will refer to national priorities and public response.

In the first instance, food is a unique commodity, similar to other commodities, but not identical to other commodities that are processed through the normal operations of the market system. The uniqueness of food prompts the question: what does it mean for Americans to be the leading food producer and exporter in a world with millions of hungry men, women and children? How do we understand that role?

For our nation, situated as it is in the center of world affairs, it is a premise that food is an element of our foreign policy, because of the problems in our balance of trade and our alliance commitments, for example, with Western Europe and Japan. However, to accept the premise does not exhaust the significance of food in the exercise of our nation's responsibility in foreign affairs.

To be more specific, certain remarks of Administration spokesmen, such as, food is a matter of money and markets, or food is a tool of our foreign policy kit, point up the insufficiency of the foreign policy premise in our international conduct. These statements are accurate, but they are patently inadequate because they do not sufficiently



acknowledge the fact that food is a unique commodity.

While it is true that food is a commodity that is to be traded in the world market and it is part of our foreign policy kit, it is also a lifeline. The United States stands in a position similar to that of the Arabs in the world. We control, along with Canada, more of the world's exportable food supply than the Arabs do of the supply of oil. The outstanding difference, it must be argued, is food is a commodity which satisfies a basic human need and people cannot postpone indefinitely satisfaction of that need. As difficult as it is for us who are on the vulnerable side of the oil question and as many changes as this situation may require of us, we, at least, have the options to make the adaptations in life style to substitute other energy sources and to reduce consumption rates. When the need is for food, satisfaction of that need cannot be substituted for nor postponed.

India's experience earlier this year offers grim evidence of this reality. While the United States was deliberating about the amount of food aid it was willing to allot the poorest nations, India, one of the most severely affected countries could not wait, and the Indian government was forced to go into the commercial market and purchase more than three million tons of grain, thereby using its already scarce financial resources and delaying purchase of other necessary commodities and capital goods.

We find ourselves in a unique position in this era of interdependence that is generally acknowledged as the new framework for international affairs today. Dostoevski, a



century ago, talked about what it meant to live in an interdependent world even before the term became a reality. He argued that the death of one innocent child was enough to destroy one's faith in God. The difference between us and Dostoevski is that we know precisely how many innocent children die. We can even calculate with reasonable accuracy how many may die of hunger while we are deliberating here.

Faced with that awesome reality, we are therefore in a sobering position: while food is part of our foreign policy, it is in reality much more than that, and it is that extra quality that must be factored into the policy process.

The principal implication of this reality is that the law of the market, like every human creation, has its limits. If we know consciously that using the free market as the sole or overwhelmingly major instrument for the distribution of food means that we know how many people will die, and we have a possibility to prevent their deaths, then we are obliged to modify the market system.

This brings me to my second point, a reexamination of PL 480. This program, extending over a period of twenty years, is an example of our nation's willingness to modify the market system, that is, to provide concessional loans for food purchases and outright gifts of food for humanitarian purposes. What is called for now is for us to restate with a clear purpose a new and restructured rationale for the PL-480 program.



The program has had a multiplicity of purposes. While it is presented frequently for popular consumption as a humanitarian program, in the initial legislation in 1954, Congress cited a number of reasons: expansion of international trade, development and expansion of our export markets for food, promoting the goals of our foreign policy, and finally, alleviating hunger. These purposes provide a variety of norms for how we distribute the food commodities we have allocated to PL 480.

The allocation under Title I of the Act, is designed to provide concessional sales of agricultural commodities to what the administration calls "friendly countries."

(1973 Annual Report on PL 480, p.13) It is significant that over the period 1970-73 more than 50% of the aid went to three countries in Southeast Asia. (South Vietnam 13%; Korea 17.8%; Indonesia 15%), while the total allocation to all of the countries of Africa and Latin America was only 10%. The point is not that the Asian nations are not in need, rather, the practice suggests that a nation must not only be hungry but also be strategically well-placed to qualify for substantial amounts of food assistance.

Title II of the Act, grant aid for emergency, relief and economic development/<sup>has</sup> constituted less than 25% of PL 480. Here again the patterns of distribution indicate that for a country to receive substantial food aid its human needs must be coupled with its strategic location. During the period 1970-73, six countries in Asia (South Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Philippines and South Korea) received essentially



the same amount of Title II, in the aggregate about \$30 million annually, as the some 30 nations classified by the United Nations as the most desperate in the world.

What is called for at this time is a clearer definition of the humanitarian intention and purposes of PL480. Clarity of guidance in the policy is essential when food is as scarce as it is and the scope of hunger is so widespread. The new and restructured rationale for PL 480 which is called for means separating very distinctly food used for purposes of justice and charity, and food used as part of our foreign policy.

The amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act last December--the so-called 70-30 split--was a step in the direction of distinguishing these purposes, where the Senate stipulated that at least 70% of Title I of PL 480 must be allotted to the some 30 nations designated by the United Nations as those most severely affected and in need. The distribution of the remaining 30% is left to the discretion of the Administration. The Senate is to be commended for its initiative in this regard and is to be encouraged to reinforce this provision in the future. And furthermore, Congressional efforts in this direction of pursuing justice should be articulated more clearly to the general public. In this way, Title I would be designed to feed people in justice because they have the right to eat, not because they have the right and are strategically well-placed. Title II in such a restructured policy would be clearly regarded as a program dealing in charity in the conventional understanding of this term, that



is, a humanitarian relief program used for emergency situations.

The concluding note in this testimony concerns national priorities and public response. In view of the serious global needs for food among many nations, funding for both Title I and Title II, under a restructured rationale needs to be increased up to the program levels of 1972 as a minimum. This undoubtedly will require a close monitoring of national policies and reviewing of budgetary priorities. For example, a recent study by the National Farmers Union suggests that the present shortage was in some measure the result of policy decisions by our government. The study reports that while PL 480 shipments were being drastically curtailed, payments to U.S. farmers increased sharply for holding cropland out of production setting an all time high of \$3.5 billion in 1972. It is alleged that the potential food that was lost because of this policy of the government was more than equivalent to meet the needs of the current crisis.

On the budgetary side of the issue, Father Hesburgh poses the question in the classic terms of "guns or butter". When he asked President Ford to release an additional four million tons of grain last December, he said, "It will cost two-thirds of one Trident submarine."

The food problem poses for us a choice, a national choice. The issue is that the choice must be put to the general public clearly, so they can make the decision. None of us can claim to know how they will decide, but it is essential in the interest of the public good, that the



question be posed.

From the experience within the Church, indications are that people respond with overwhelming generosity if the question is put clearly: the question of starving people over there and scarce food here. The presumption that the general public will not support a program in justice and charity at a time of scarcity is simply not confirmed by the evidence.

For example, in a diocese in the midwest severely hit by unemployment, the bishop recently prepared a cassette tape describing the world food crisis and circulated it among the parishes. Although he did not call for contributions for overseas aid, the diocese has averaged \$1000 a week since the first of December.

Over the last six months I have spoken in a number of cities across the country and I have tried to do what I think the situation demands, simply frame the question in terms of a matter of choice--starving people or scarce food. I have never had an audience, randomly selected, that did not indicate they were capable of a generous response to a program designed to reflect a balance of justice and charity.

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## SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT:

### U.S. CATHOLIC INVOLVEMENT

Since World War II Catholic Church agencies have been responsible for the resettlement of one million persons in the United States. In the past eight years alone, Migration and Refugee Services of the United States Catholic Conference has assisted half a million. In previous refugee crises--Hungary, Cuba, Czechoslovakia--Catholic agencies have resettled well over half of the total number of refugees. Catholic resettlement is expected to play a similar crucial role in the case of the Southeast Asian refugees.

U.S. Catholic leadership initiated preparations for a possible influx of refugees as soon as the military situation in South Vietnam began to deteriorate. Efforts have been both motivational and programmatic. In a letter to all the bishops of the country, made public April 16, Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, President of USCC, urged that special collections for refugee assistance be taken up in all 165 Catholic dioceses in the country. Many have done so, and more will in the near future. On the same date John E. McCarthy, Director of Migration and Refugee Services, USCC, was named national coordinator of the Catholic Church's Southeast Asian refugee resettlement work. On April 28 Archbishop Bernardin wrote to all bishops citing a "desperate need" for homes and jobs for the refugees and urging diocesan authorities to begin to catalogue their resources for such assistance. In a statement May 8, at a time when many negative reactions to the refugees had been voiced publicly, Archbishop Bernardin issued a plea for their acceptance by Americans. "It is natural that we should wish to put the war behind us," he said. "But it is inconceivable that we should turn our backs on the suffering which continues."

#### Role of Migration and Refugee Services

Migration and Refugee Services, USCC, is the agency responsible at the national level for Catholic refugee resettlement in the United States. The agency works closely with government and voluntary agencies on the one hand and with Diocesan Resettlement Directors and Catholic Charities personnel on the other to render assistance to persons in need of aid. In the present emergency, it has placed fulltime staff in each of the military camps in this country being used as refugee staging centers. It has conducted a series of regional meetings--in San Francisco, Orlando, Kansas City, New Orleans, Newark, and Boston--to acquaint Diocesan Resettlement Directors and



Catholic Charities officials with the nature and mechanics of the resettlement program. In collaboration with communication elements of USCC, it has conducted a continuing program of public information, aimed at both the Catholic and general publics and designed to elicit a favorable response to the refugees.

Migration and Refugee Services assists people without regard to religion, race, or political affiliation. The criterion is human need.

### History, Funding, Offices

Founded in 1920, under the then-National Catholic Welfare Conference, the Department of Immigration was later renamed Migration and Refugee Services, U.S. Catholic Conference. In 1965 it was reorganized and expanded to encompass the resettlement and refugee functions of Catholic Relief Services--USCC, and of the Catholic Committee for Refugees. At that time, Migration and Refugee Services was given responsibility at the national level for all immigrant, migrant and refugee activities conducted by the Catholic Church in this country, and was given the task of administering its services with an "open door" attitude, with no reference to race, religion or national origin.

Migration and Refugee Services operates today on an annual budget of more than \$500,000. The bulk of its expenses are met by a grant from the Bishops' Welfare and Emergency Relief Fund, supplied by the Laetare Sunday Collection taken up annually in each Catholic parish in the country. A small fraction of the operating budget comes from direct contributions to Migration and Refugee Services.

The agency provides comprehensive programs of assistance free of charge, regardless of the complexity of an individual's problems or how long the assistance is needed.

Day to day operations are executed and directed by the national Migration and Refugee Services office in Washington, D.C. Further administration of programs and assistance is carried on through regional offices located in New York, Miami, El Paso, Texas, and San Francisco. On the local level, Migration and Refugee Services works closely with offices in each of the 165 dioceses in the U.S. through the National Catholic Resettlement Council.

### Services and Objectives

Migration and Refugee Services objectives are twofold:

--1. To plan and administer the activities of the Catholic Church in the resettlement, adaptation and assimilation of the immigrant and refugee--the newcomer to a different



society; and

--2. To coordinate its efforts with diocesan offices, State Catholic Conferences, related governmental and non-governmental agencies, and with other interested organizations.

Migration and Refugee Services is the official representative of the Catholic Church on immigration and refugee affairs before the legislative and administrative branches of the U.S. government.

Representation varies from acting as counsel to individual persons without legal status in the United States, to advisory and consultative capacities before the Department of State on policy procedures. The staff of Migration and Refugee Services also testify regularly before Senate and House committees on legislative reform of immigration laws. Through contact with the House and Senate subcommittees on immigration, nationality and refugees, and with the various departments of the federal government, Migration and Refugee Services encourages enactment of legislation and programs that will directly benefit the migrant and refugee, such as family reunion priority.

Migration and Refugee Services provides daily assistance in preparing affidavits of support for prospective immigrants; provides for the establishment of preference status under the quota system; acts as a liaison for arranging medical examinations and appointments for formal visa applications at U.S. consulates throughout the world; and provides initial reception services for newcomers at major entry points into the country.

Migration and Refugee Services conducts a worldwide orphan program for foreign-born children, through the Catholic Committee for Refugees (CCR). Since 1945, adoptive homes have been found for 6,000 orphan children. They have come from Austria, Hong Kong, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Jamaica, Malta, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Japan, Korea, Lebanon, Lithuania, Morocco, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, San Marino, South Africa, the Ukraine, Yugoslavia and Vietnam. In the recent Vietnamese "babylift," the agency was responsible for a little over 300 of the children brought here--all of them previously approved for adoption in this country.

National and International emergency programs are planned and administered by MRS through its national and international affiliates; for instance, the administration and



coordination of the Cuban and Czechoslovakia refugee programs. During the Cuban crisis, 20,000 refugees arrived annually, and the resettlement rate was approximately 400 refugees per week from the Miami area.

Migration and Refugee Services is a member organization of the International Catholic Migration Commission, created in 1952. Working with numerous affiliated agencies in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa, it can more readily provide general information services regarding the processing of immigrants applying for admission into the United States. Among the cooperating agencies are: St. Raphael's Verein in Germany, Secours Catholique in France, Officio Centrale Per L'Emigrazione in Italy and Caritas, Hong Kong.

Migration and Refugee Services provides daily assistance to travellers in preparing and assembling documents, preparing visa application forms, obtaining passports and providing general information on travel procedures. Daily assistance to visitors to this country includes help in filing applications for extensions of temporary stay, in linguistic problems, in preparing government forms, in applications for change of status, in general accommodation and orientation procedures involving American customs. Direct service is ordinarily given to approximately 100,000 individuals every year.

