

It should be clear, then, that "overpopulation" is not the real cause of hunger. Does this surprise you? Let's take it a little further.

Remember the list of "overpopulated" countries, a list composed of hungry people on four continents? There are several countries that would have been on that list 25 years ago, but aren't there now. They are China, Cuba, North Vietnam and North Korea. Over a fifth of the

Hunger is not a lack of food. Hunger is a lack of money.

world's people live in these nations. All have had socialist revolutions within the last 25 years.

The people there are no longer starving. If you find that difficult to believe, check out the sources listed at the end of this booklet. They offer recent information on the food production and other economic aspects of these nations.

So our list takes on a new meaning. The two billion hungry people of the world live in areas that were colonized by the Western countries and are still closely bound to them, or live within the Western countries themselves. *Hunger is a "Free World" phenomenon.*

What does this tell us now about overpopula-

tion and hunger? We can learn much from an interesting comparison: China, Brazil and the United States are more or less equal in size. China has 700 million people, the United States has 200 million, and Brazil has 90 million.

If lots of people means overpopulation, and if overpopulation means starvation, then China should be incomparably worse than the other two.

But instead, Brazil has 40 million hungry people, America has 30 million, and China has virtually none!

A closer look at Brazil will show why so many people of the "Free World" are hungry. Brazil has, according to Latin American scholar John Gerassi, "more arable land than all of Europe." But most of this land is controlled by a tiny elite and by wealthy corporations from America and other Western nations. What do these landowners grow on their enormous plantations? Coffee

Brazil's largest export is coffee. There is no food value in coffee, but there's a lot of profit in it. Unfortunately, the profit all goes to a handful of big landlords.

The situation is the same for the rest of the Third World. While landless people starve, the immense plantations and foreign-owned estates

occupy the most fertile land and produce only one or two cash-crops for export.

Land that could produce basic foods goes to grow cotton and tea in India, coffee and cotton in Guatemala, bananas and coffee in Honduras, rubber in Indonesia, sugar, coffee and cotton in Mexico . . . the list could go on and on.

All this tells us why there is hunger in a world with so much food.

It tells us that most food production in the "Free World" is seen from a capitalist standpoint: it's supposed to make money for the farmer. If you can't afford it, then you can't have it. That's why in India big farmers sometimes let their wheat harvests rot in the silo when they can't get a good price, even though whole provinces are starving. It's why in America, with 30 million underfed people, the government holds down the harvest to keep prices high.

Overpopulation is a hoax. Hunger in these "Free World" countries is not due to the limits of Nature. The people are poor and hungry because too often the great resources of their land are gobbled up for the benefit of a wealthy few.

Their hunger is not a matter of too many people. It is a matter of too much theft.

3

GETTING OUT FROM UNDER

"We may have to announce that we will no longer ship food to countries unwilling or unable to bring their population increases under control."

"The relevant question is not, 'If you have all those babies, how will you care for them?' but 'Why can't we get enough to care for our children?'"

But there's a problem with their approach. These experts assume that people are poor and hungry because they have large families. If that was true, then forcing people to have few or no kids, as brutal as it sounds, would be the way to improve their situation. Only, *it's not true.*

In the first place, the overwhelming majority of Third World people make their living from the land. This means that large families are actually an *advantage*, because when you've got to farm by hand, having more people around to help means being able to grow *much more food*. American farm families in the 19th century were no smaller than Third World farm families today.

Hunger is caused by exploitation

There's a second reason why people in underdeveloped countries have many kids: few of them survive to adulthood. This is important for parents, not only because they love their families, but also because grown-up children will be their only support when they get old.

Beyond all these things, though, is the basic reason why population control is no solution for hunger: hunger is not caused by overpopulation. It's caused by *theft*; theft of land, theft of resources, theft of real control from the people themselves. Hunger is caused by *exploitation*.

People are not poor because there isn't enough wealth to go around. They are poor because wealth is unequally distributed, throughout the world and within a country. And population control will do nothing to change that inequality—if anything, it will *preserve* it. Forcing population control on underdeveloped countries will only ensure that they remain underdeveloped.

Population control will only condemn the peoples of these lands to their present misery. Preventing more miserable people doesn't make people less miserable.

How can poverty, and thus hunger, be overcome—this is the real question.

The solution for Third World nations is that the people control the economy and resources of their own land.

This is an extremely important point. In most of the underdeveloped countries, the richest resources—the best farmland, the mines, the oil-fields—are owned by foreign businesses or a tiny native elite. These powerful overlords cooperate with each other. They use these resources for their own benefit, and not for the benefit of the great masses of the people. This is why so many of the "Free World" underdeveloped countries remain poor, and underdeveloped, and hungry—they are *prevented* from developing! They are exploited.



Ending exploitation makes development possible for people. It allows them to plan the use of their resources for everyone, and to use them well. Farms can be run scientifically, using machines and even chemicals, using them carefully to help and not hurt people—or the land. Industries can be developed that will make products people really need. All of this leads to something else: population growth that is slower because people no longer find it necessary to have large families to produce enough food to live. And they can make the choice *themselves* to limit the size of their families.

These things have actually happened in poor countries which were exploited and did something about it. China, Cuba, north Vietnam, and