

strength has grown, and there is an increased sense of Korean national self-reliance. All this has been at the price of a tremendous loss in human values and human rights. One must ask how much of the price has been exacted by President Park's paranoia and passion for power. It is charged that corruption is so rampant that those in power cannot afford to be caught out of power. Then too there is the Korean military, which has been so overfed by U.S. military aid during the past twenty-five years that it has grown out of all proportion to the other elements of society. Since 1950 U.S. military aid totaled \$3.7 billion, and the amount budgeted for fiscal 1974 is \$309.2 million. By comparison, economic aid for fiscal 1974 is budgeted at \$181.7 million, the largest part of which is \$152.8 million for PL 480 food commodities.

During this period Korean churchmen have played a noteworthy role. In May, 1973, the much publicized Theological Declaration of Korean Christians was issued. This document, which has been compared to the Barmen Declaration of the German Churches under Hitler, has inspired Christians of all lands. Christians of Japan have publicized it extensively through a full-page ad in the Sunday *New York Times* and have distributed it to local churches in Japan and in this country. When the Reverend Park Hyung-Kyu was arrested in July, 1973, the Korean National Council of Churches established a Special Investigation Committee to support him and his colleagues. In November, 1973, a Conference on Human Rights was held by the Korean National Council of Churches, and it issued a strong statement stressing Christian concern for human rights, the rights of women, the rights of laborers, and the rights of journalists. Statements by religious and civil leaders were issued in November and December demanding the restoration of democratic order in Korean society, and by a group of ministers serving in the Urban Industrial Mission in Korea a few days before the January 17 Confession of Faith by the eleven pastors. At the end of July Roman Catholic Bishop Daniel Chi of Wonju forcefully condemned the government of President Park as "forged with violence, intimidation and fraud." In an equally courageous act, on August 5, 1974, the leaders of six major Protestant denominations visited Premier Kim Jong Pil and demanded the end of the Emergency Decrees and amnesty for those imprisoned under them.

The Park government says it has not sought to oppress the Church or limit freedom of worship. A number of Korean churchmen, however, have refused to accept a narrow definition of Christian witness. At great personal risk they have challenged the totalitarian nature of the

government and the resulting loss of human rights. Because a disproportionate number of churchmen are involved in the protest, the Park government has attacked the Church, contending it is influenced by Western ideas of democracy that do not fit Korea. It is also charged that churchmen are angry because they are out of power or that they seek special immunity to criticize without punishment. Such charges are hardly credible, since the Korean Church has a well-established reputation for patriotism and represents a cross section of Korean society.

Out of the last year has emerged a worldwide ecumenical solidarity in support of Korean Christians and others who are suffering because of their devotion to human rights. The sympathetic involvement of Asian churches, particularly those of Japan, has been of particular importance. While the future is uncertain, great encouragement can be drawn from the persistent efforts by Christians and others to achieve greater freedom and justice for all Koreans.

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## **EXCURSUS V**

### **Dieting for Others**

Bread for the World recently invited American Christians, and any others who will join them, to change their eating habits by abstaining from meat (especially beef) on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week. While the proposal has received much favorable publicity, it has also raised critical questions. In order to put the proposal into perspective it is necessary to say something about Bread for the World. Then we can get to the questions.

Bread for the World is a new Christian citizens movement in the USA that has just gone national and expects to build local branches of committed members across the nation. The organization has two chief purposes. First, to inform the leadership and members of the widest possible spread of Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox churches about the facts of hunger, malnutrition, and starvation among the poor both at home and abroad. We believe that most American Christians will want to do something when they know how hungry most people in the world are now and when they realize that, unless there are drastic changes, increased population and

inflation will make world starvation widespread in the next decade.

The traditional response to such realities is charity. For decades the churches have channeled the gifts of their members not only to feed hungry people but also to help them with tools, fertilizers, and appropriate technologies to help them feed themselves. Bread for the World urges the churches to support even more generously their denominational programs of relief and their ecumenical agencies such as Church World Service, Catholic Relief Service, and Lutheran World Relief. But even greatly increased voluntary giving may be compared to the Christmas basket for a poor family with no regular income for the other 364 days of the year.

This leads to the second purpose of Bread for the World. World hunger requires governmental action by the United States and intergovernmental cooperation through agencies such as the United Nations. Unless Congress acts wisely and generously, it will not be long before Americans will be deciding who is to live and who to starve. Members of Bread for the World aim to acquaint their representatives and senators with their concern. They resist the special agricultural and business interests that too much determine United States policy.

Bread for the World concentrates on the Christian congregations of America while welcoming the help of all others willing to give it. The hungry are so much at the heart of the gospel of Christ that our movement must never degenerate into mere social service. Christ's name is taken in vain without the cup of water and the bread shared in that name. That is why Bread for the World asks its members to meet regularly for prayer and joyous celebration of life. Through such gatherings the Church can learn to witness to a simplicity of life against the greedy consumerism that has nearly overwhelmed us all.

In this context Bread for the World invites Americans to abstain from eating meat *at least* three days a week. We have suggested Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, but Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday will do as well. The point is not to return to ecclesiastical legalism or to vegetarianism, or to ascetism as such. This is something all American Christians can do now to identify themselves as persons who do not want to continue to eat, on the average, 1,850 pounds of grain a year per person while 400 pounds per year is the average available in the poor countries of the world. (Some get by on less than 200 pounds of grain per year.)

Now to the questions that have been raised:

- Don't you know that poor people even in this country can't afford meat four days a week?

Yes, but we also know that some of the fattest,

most overfed people in the world are members of our American churches.

- Don't you know that even if you are successful the grain saved won't necessarily go to feed the hungry?

Yes, we do know that, which is why the reduction in meat eating must be a part of the larger program outlined above.

- Don't you know that people need meat to be healthy and, besides that, we like it?

No. Many vegetarians are very healthy, and most nutritionists urge us to eat less meat for better health. I like meat too and have found I enjoy it more when I don't eat so much of it.

- Don't you know that the farmers and beef producers will be hurt financially if your program catches on?

Yes, they may be hurt economically, but our free enterprise system, I am continually told, is based on a free market economy. In any case, it is better to reduce our grain consumption voluntarily now than to be forced to do it later when we find we cannot continue to use more and more calories of energy to produce less and less calories of food.

- Don't you know that reducing population is the only way to solve the food problem?

No, it is only one of the necessary long-range solutions. Equally important long-range answers are distributive social justice within and among the nations, labor-intensive techniques for agriculture, health services, and education. The fact is that people already born will starve in the millions if we Americans don't take the hunger problem seriously now and begin to act.

- Can't we ease into this?

Yes, if you insist. Eat more veal and less beef. More chicken and less pork. And eat fish, so long as it lasts, since it doesn't use up precious grain.

- Anything else? (Admittedly that is not an objection, but I did want to get in this last answer.)

Yes. Write Bread for the World, 602 East Ninth Street, New York, N.Y. 10009, for their pamphlet "An Alternative Diet for People Concerned About World Hunger"; become a dues-paying member.

**Eugene Carson Blake**

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## QUOTE/UNQUOTE

It seems most appropriate to the editors of this journal, dedicated as it is to dialogue, that they be particularly sensitive to the importance of