

U.N. WATCH

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Global Funding

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), a tenuous affiliate of the U.N., made low-interest long-term loans to more than fifty developing countries in the eight months ending March 1, 1981. In addition, large loans ranging from \$130 million to \$650 million were granted to China, Egypt, India, and Pakistan. Another half-billion dollars was distributed to about a hundred developing member nations.

The function of the IMF is to maintain economic stability among nations. The USSR is not a member.

Global Doom

"Global 2000: Report to the President" has been distributed worldwide to government agencies and organizations interested in the environment, population control, water resources, and food. The study was ordered by President Carter in his first year in office to anticipate changes in world conditions by the year 2000. Presidents often do this sort of thing. Eisenhower had a commission on Goals for America and Johnson had a study group on the Great Society.

The report is as pessimistic as the 1972 Club of Rome projection, "The Limits of Growth." For the near future we can expect a world population of 6 to 7 billion, up from 4; more food worldwide but less available where it is needed; less water and greater and more widespread pollution; shrinking forests as wood is used for fuel; and an irreversible decline in petroleum resources and production. The report advises immediate consultation among nations to avert disaster and unrest.

U.N. specialized agencies, like the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization are fully aware of the dangers and have been wrestling with them for years. But obstacles to international cooperation surfaced when the World Environment Center in New York City sent copies of the report to most U.N. members.

The Russian daily *Izvestia* commented that "Global 2000" ignored a major world problem, the arms race; Third World countries felt priority should have been given to the New International Economic Order; and a few respondents asked where the money would come from for the necessary technology. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce disliked the alarmist approach, and most industrial nations did not respond at all.

Global Health

By the year 2000 the World Health Organization (WHO) hopes to provide primary health care for every individual. At present 80 per cent of the world's population does not have access to organized health services, and a billion suffer from malnutrition and parasitic diseases.

WHO is a specialized agency of the U.N., with headquarters in Geneva and six regional offices (Washington; Copenhagen; Alexandria, Egypt; New Delhi; Manila; Brazzaville). To people in the fields of medicine, public health, sanitation, and disease control, the work

of WHO is legendary. It is responsible for eradicating smallpox and is close to bringing malaria under control, yet its working budget is under half a billion dollars.

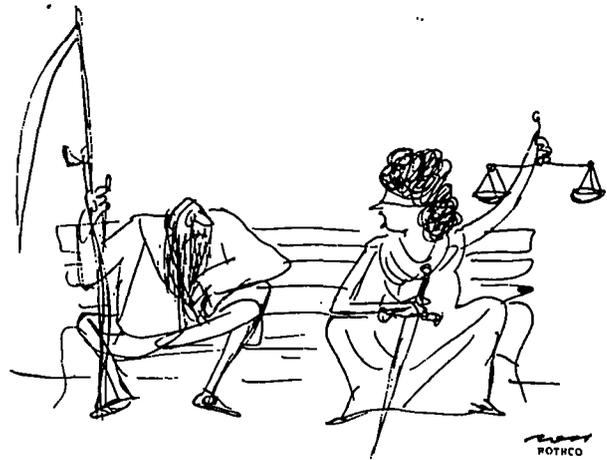
Primary health care (PHC) is not as dramatic a cause. It requires the cooperation of governments, local health authorities, and popular acceptance—particularly in rural communities. PHC is concerned with food, housing, clean water, family planning, and the eradication of endemic diseases.

Global Negotiations

The General Assembly president, Rudiger von Wechmar of West Germany, made the world economy a key item on the Assembly's agenda. In private talks and public speeches he tried to convince the delegates of the developed nations that a crisis was at hand.

As might be expected, the attitude of the U.S. is crucial to the discussions. The Carter administration agreed there were problems, in theory at least; but in the so-called North-South dialogues, the U.S. representatives were reluctant to make any concessions.

As a candidate, Ronald Reagan expressed his distaste for U.N. activities, calling the Third World hostile to capitalism. His choice for U.N. ambassador has written that helping less developed countries can lead to totalitarian tyranny. His secretary of agriculture remarked that food was America's "greatest diplomatic weapon" (later changing the offending word to "tool"). Global negotiations will go on, of course, but their effectiveness remains an unknown quantity.



"I'm just as tired as you—maybe more!"

Global Murder

While the U.N. Human Rights Commission was chastising Chile and admonishing Israel, Amnesty International issued its annual report for 1980, listing thirty countries in which government agencies had a hand in murdering men and women for political reasons. The list includes Iraq, Iran, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Chile, Guatemala, and the Philippines. In all, 110 nations were cited for torture, detention without trial, and psychiatric abuse. Amnesty sent forty-five missions to thirty-three countries to gather information on human rights violations.

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