

THOUGHTS ON THE WORLD FOOD CRISIS:

Phil O'Keefe

PH

by Phil O'Keefe

'The world has enough for every man's need but not enough for every man's greed.' (Gandhi)

On a bleary Saturday morning in Bradford it might seem a little strange to open a Conference on the World Economic Crisis with a quotation from Gandhi. However, the message that there are sufficient resources for everyone in today's world has a more pressing importance now than it possessed a generation ago. The essential truth of the message must drive us to find some mechanism so that resources are equitably shared, so that, as Shakespeare observed,

'Distribution should undo excess',

This paper attempts to place the most serious aspect of the current economic crisis, the world food shortage, into a perspective of need and greed, a perspective of an artificial crisis created by the developed countries, a perspective of planned profiteering which, as M. Pierre Lardinois, the EEC Commissioner for Agriculture, has stated, will result in a situation in which more people will die from starvation than from war (Rafferty, 1974). It is necessary at the beginning of this paper, to describe the actuality of world famine, the spectre of hunger that haunts mankind. To do so, let us ask ourselves a series of questions and, later, provide some solutions to the problem of famine.

QUESTION 1. WHAT IS THE CURRENT FAMINE POSITION IN THE WORLD?

I sit, often idly, at a desk in the University of Bradford. Occasionally something stirs me from my comatose condition and inspires me to work. Thursday the 13th of February was such a day. A neatly printed copy of the FAO Early Warning System for Food Shortages appeared on my desk. Three countries were suffering from serious food shortages, eleven countries were

experiencing food shortages, one country was on the brink of food shortage and another eleven had given warning of poor harvests. Sitting in the splendour of Bradford, it is difficult to imagine the human reality of these facts and figures, but how many of us could really explain the meaning of hunger to our children, how many of us have ever lived famine?

The present world food crisis, originating from a combination of longer term problems and temporary setbacks, caught the world's attention in 1972. In that year, world output of food declined for the first time in 20 years; output of cereals alone fell by 33 million tons. To meet current demand, world output must increase by about 25 million tons. Wheat stocks fell from 49 million tons in 1971/72 to 20 million tons in 1972/73. Similarly coarse grain stocks fell and rice reserves were virtually exhausted. Although poor climatic conditions have existed over much of sub-Saharan Africa and the Asian Sub-Continent for the last seven years, climatic conditions are not the cause of the current food shortage (O'Keefe, 1975a). The real cause is the economic boom of the early seventies which has given us a highly buoyant demand for commodities and an inflationary situation accentuated by monetary instability and speculative activity. Although the strong demand for most of the food and agricultural commodities have improved the terms of trade of primary products, the gains in export earnings have not been evenly shared and the developed countries have gained more, (UN World Food Conference 1974). The commodity markets encouraged bullish speculation in food but such speculation is speculation on people's existence. Thai white rice, for example, f.o.b. Bangkok, cost US\$131 per tonne in January 1972; but by April 1974, had risen to US\$630 a tonne, a staggering increase of 380 per cent. Over the same period, the export price for US maize and wheat rose by 125 and 175 per cent respectively (Tinker, 1974). Acute famine is only one aspect of the current crisis; the other is chronic malnutrition. FAO estimates that 61 out of 97 underdeveloped countries produced or imported substantially less food in 1970

Reverse
 needles
 Economic
 what does
 the mean?

tion relies on western technology. The overall effect of this dependency relationship is that, while development continues in the rich countries, a concomitant, negative process of underdevelopment occurs in the Third World. For successful development in the western world, it requires that we extract the resources, the raw materials, from the Third World and force it into a dynamic condition, the development of underdevelopment. This situation is neatly summarised by world trade statistics which indicate that, although world trade did grow by 6.9 per cent between 1953 and 1967 the share of the underdeveloped countries dropped from 27 to 19 per cent in the same time span without a compensating increase in the home markets. The situation simply reflects the old adage that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. It is of paramount importance, however, that we consider the implications of this underdevelopment process and so ask the next question (O'Keefe, 1975b).

QUESTION 3. WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHEN THEY ARE UNDERDEVELOPED?

I love Ken Dodd and the Diddy-men. I'll correct that - I love Ken Dodd and the Diddy-men as long as they do not 'marmalise' dissenting jam-buttoy mine workers. Marmalise is a word which sounds similar to the one with which we describe how people are underdeveloped - they are marginalised. Marginalisation means that they become border-line cases on the ecological limits of deserts and flood plains. The Tuareg in the Sahel, the ^{small farmers} campeñinos in Honduras, ^{and} the peasants in Bangladesh, are in such a position; they are vulnerable to disaster, but vulnerable because various pieces of legislation on land, world food prices etc. force them to the extremity of existence. They are marginalised into permanent poverty (Baird, 1975).

Underdevelopment and marginalisation promote an economic concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. To scientifically assess the problem of low income groups it is necessary to define the concept of poverty. Two levels of poverty can be defined, namely relative inequality and absolute poverty. The conventional approach to inequality is to define the problem

TABLE Ia.

Cross-classification of countries by income level and equalityHIGH INEQUALITY: Share of lowest 40% less than 12%

<u>Country (year)</u>	<u>Per capita GNP US\$</u>	<u>Lowest 40%</u>	<u>Middle 40%</u>	<u>Top 20%</u>
Kenya (1969)	136	10.0	22.0	68.0
Sierra Leone (1968)	159	9.6	22.4	68.0
Iraq (1956)	200	6.8	25.2	68.0
Philippines (1971)	239	11.6	34.6	53.8
Senegal (1960)	245	10.0	26.0	64.0
Ivory Coast (1970)	247	10.8	32.1	57.1
Rhodesia (1968)	252	8.2	22.8	69.0
Tunisia (1970)	255	11.4	33.6	55.0
Honduras (1968)	265	6.5	28.5	65.0
Ecuador (1970)	277	6.5	20.0	73.5
El Salvador (1969)	295	11.2	36.4	52.4
Turkey (1968)	282	9.3	29.9	60.8
Malaysia (1970)	330	11.6	32.4	56.0
Colombia (1970)	358	9.0	30.0	61.0
Brazil (1970)	390	10.0	28.4	61.5
Peru (1971)	480	6.5	33.5	60.0
Gabon (1968)	497	8.8	23.7	67.5
Jamaica (1958)	510	8.2	30.3	61.5
Costa Rica (1971)	521	11.5	30.0	58.5
Mexico (1969)	645	10.5	25.5	64.0
South Africa (1965)	669	6.2	35.8	58.0
Panama (1969)	692	9.4	31.2	59.4
Venezuela (1970)	1004	7.9	27.1	65.0
Finland (1962)	1599	11.1	39.6	49.3
France (1962)	1913	9.5	36.8	53.7

(Source: M.S. Ahluwalia, 1974).

TABLE 1b.

MODERATE INEQUALITY: Share of lowest 40% between 12% and 17%

<u>Country (year)</u>	<u>Per capita GNP US\$</u>	<u>Lowest 40%</u>	<u>Middle 40%</u>	<u>Top 20%</u>
Burma (1958)	82	16.5	38.7	44.8
Dahomey (1959)	87	15.5	34.5	50.0
Tanzania (1967)	89	13.0	26.0	61.0
India (1964)	99	16.0	32.0	52.0
Madagascar (1960)	120	13.5	25.5	61.0
Zambia (1959)	230	14.5	28.5	57.0
Dominican Republic (1969)	323	12.2	30.5	57.5
Iran (1968)	332	12.5	33.0	54.5
Guyana (1956)	550	14.0	40.3	45.7
Lebanon (1960)	508	13.0	26.0	61.0
Uruguay (1968)	618	16.5	35.5	48.0
Chile (1968)	744	13.0	30.2	56.8
Argentina (1970)	1079	16.5	36.1	47.4
Puerto Rico (1968)	1100	13.7	35.7	50.6
Netherlands (1967)	1990	13.6	37.9	48.5
Norway (1968)	2010	16.6	42.9	40.5
Germany Fed. Rep. (1964)	2144	15.4	31.7	52.9
Denmark (1968)	2563	13.6	38.8	47.6
New Zealand (1969)	2859	15.5	42.5	42.0
Sweden (1963)	2949	14.0	42.0	44.0

(Source: M.S. Ahluwalia, 1974)

TABLE Ic.

LOW INEQUALITY: Share of lowest 40%, 17% and above.

<u>Country (year)</u>	<u>Per capita GNP US\$</u>	<u>Lowest 40%</u>	<u>Middle 40%</u>	<u>Top 20%</u>
Chad (1958)	78	18.0	39.0	43.0
Sri Lanka (1969)	95	17.0	37.0	46.0
Niger (1960)	97	18.0	40.0	42.0
Pakistan (1964)	100	17.5	37.5	45.0
Uganda (1970)	126	17.1	35.8	47.1
Thailand (1970)	180	17.0	37.5	45.5
Korea (1970)	235	18.0	37.0	45.0
Taiwan (1964)	241	20.4	39.5	40.1
Surinam (1962)	394	21.7	35.7	42.6
Greece (1957)	500	21.0	29.5	49.5
Yugoslavia (1968)	529	18.5	40.0	41.5
Bulgaria (1962)	530	26.8	40.0	33.2
Spain (1965)	750	17.6	36.7	45.7
Poland (1964)	850	23.4	40.6	36.0
Japan (1963)	950	20.7	39.3	40.0
United Kingdom (1968)	2015	18.8	42.2	39.0
Hungary (1969)	1140	24.0	42.5	33.5
Czechoslovakia (1964)	1150	27.6	41.4	31.9
Australia (1968)	2509	20.0	41.2	38.8
Canada (1965)	2920	20.0	39.8	40.2
United States (1970)	4850	19.7	41.5	38.8

(Source: M.S. Ahluwalia, 1974)

TABLE II

Estimates of population below noverty line in 1969

<u>Country</u>	<u>1969 GNP per capita</u>	<u>1969 - population (Millions)</u>	<u>Population below US\$75</u>	
			<u>Millions</u>	<u>% of total population</u>
<u>LATIN AMERICA</u>				
Ecuador	264	5.9	3.5	58.5
Honduras	265	2.5	1.0	38.0
El Salvador	295	3.4	0.6	18.4
Dominican Republic	323	4.2	0.7	15.9
Colombia	347	20.6	5.6	27.0
Brazil	347	90.8	18.2	20.0
Jamaica	640	2.0	0.3	15.4
Guyana	390	0.7	0.1	15.1
Peru	480	13.1	3.3	25.5
Costa Rica	512	1.7	0.1	8.5
Mexico	645	48.9	8.7	17.8
Uruguay	649	2.9	0.2	5.5
Panama	692	1.4	0.2	11.0
Chile	751	9.6	n	n
Venezuela	974	10.0	n	n
Argentina	1054	24.0	n	n
Puerto Rico	1600	2.8	n	n
<u>Average and Total</u>	<u>545</u>	<u>244.5</u>	<u>42.5</u>	<u>17.4</u>
<u>ASIA</u>				
Burma	72	27.0	19.2	71.0
Sri Lanka	95	12.2	7.8	63.5
India	100	537.0	359.3	66.9
Pakistan (E&W)	100	111.8	64.7	57.9
Thailand	173	34.7	15.4	44.3
Korea	224	13.3	2.3	17.0
Philippines	233	37.2	11.2	30.0
Turkey	290	34.5	8.2	23.7
Iraq	316	9.4	3.1	33.3
Taiwan	317	13.8	2.0	14.3
Malaysia	323	10.6	1.6	15.5
Iran	350	27.9	4.2	15.0
Lebanon	570	2.6	0.1	5.0
<u>Average and Total</u>	<u>132</u>	<u>872.0</u>	<u>499.1</u>	<u>57.2</u>
<u>AFRICA</u>				
Chad	75	3.5	2.7	77.5
Dahomey	90	2.6	2.3	90.1
Tanzania	92	12.8	9.3	72.9
Niger	94	3.9	2.3	59.9
Madagascar	119	6.7	4.7	69.6
Uganda	128	8.3	4.1	49.8

/cont...

TABLE II /cont..

<u>Country</u>	<u>1969 GNP per capita</u>	<u>1969 population (Millions)</u>	<u>Population below US\$75</u>	
			<u>Millions</u>	<u>% of total population</u>
Sierra Leone	165	2.5	1.5	61.5
Senegal	229	3.8	1.3	35.3
Ivory Coast	237	4.8	1.4	28.5
Tunisia	241	4.9	1.6	32.1
Rhodesia	274	5.1	1.9	37.4
Zambia	340	4.2	0.3	7.5
Gabon	547	0.5	0.1	23.0
South Africa	729	20.2	3.1	15.5
Average and Total	303	83.8	36.6	43.6
Average and Grand Total	228	1200.3	578.2	48.2

Key:

n = negligible

(Source: M.S. Ahluwalia, 1974)

so that only existent western technologies are considered to offer effective solutions (Payne, 1974). The solutions offered, however, make minimal demands for a redistribution of resources but, instead, sell western technology as a panacea, a panacea that preserves underdevelopment. Although our view of malnutrition has changes considerably over the last few decades from concentrating on the protein gap to concentrating on energy requirements, we have developed and exported to underdeveloped countries an inappropriate technology for increasing food production. Between 1950 and 1970 many billions of dollars in food aid, in development grants, in loans and technical assistance, via the voluntary agencies, individual governments and international organisations, were wasted in a protein fiasco. No-one knows how many people have died from chronic malnutrition over the last generation because food aid wrongly concentrated on protein instead of energy. Sometimes, as well as indirectly harming people by diverting resources away from the energy gap, the protein fixation of nutritionists has been directly damaging. Western scientists have arrogantly assumed that all other races have a similar metabolism to that of Europeans whereas most Africans and Asians are unable to tolerate lactose, ^{milk sugar} We do not know how many debilitated, undernourished people have suffered abdominal pain, diarrhoea and death from enthusiastic handouts of powdered milk (Tinker, 1974; Müller, 1974).

1973
 original
 article
 by
 well.
 1973
 limitation
 1974/15

M. Henry Labonisse, Executive Director of UNICEF has spelt out what this situation means. The evidence is strong that a child's mental development depends on how well it is fed. If a child suffers from malnutrition in its first few years of life ^{there is a chance that} the chances are that it will be mentally backward for life. Multiply that by 200 million children and, quite apart from common humanity, you have an enormous waste of human potential (Lean, 1974).

evidence in this is conflicting

Such a realistic analysis of the world poverty allows us to re-examine why a world food crisis arose, the next question we must answer.

QUESTION 5: HOW DID THE WORLD FOOD CRISIS ARISE?

Famine is often experienced in neocolonial territories; the orientation towards monocultural cash cropping of non-food produce, the control of land by multinational agribusiness and the marginalisation of the peasantry are constant companions to underdeveloped countries. However, the peasantry do make adjustments to these conditions, adjustments that we will consider later. The real cause of the current food crisis, though, is in the developed world rather than in the underdeveloped world. We accept that the position of the developed world vis-a-vis the underdeveloped, leaves the latter in a vulnerable position, but this vulnerability has been exacerbated by a crisis of overproduction in the western world. The present shortages are the result of past overproduction relative to effective demand during the 1960s; an abundance of cereals was produced which could not be sold on the market so, faced with a declining price, investment in agriculture was reduced.

good Such a situation emphasises that real needs must be met through a planned system of production and not rely on archaic market forces.

To say that someone was playing with the market, to say that someone was playing with human lives, means that we must apportion blame. To apportion blame we must look at the pattern of the grain trade. These figures are shown in Table III where it becomes very apparent that the North American Continent accounts for over 90 per cent of the surplus grain. If we look at the stocking of arable land in North America, we can account for the artificial nature of the world crisis.

The world export price of wheat had been diminishing noticeably since the middle of the 1960s. The price index (based on 100 in 1963) was 94 in 1969 and 90 in 1970. From that point on the amount of land planted with cereal decreased. The area of land cultivated with wheat in Canada during 1970 was 50 per cent of what had been cultivated in 1969. In the USA, the cultivation was 74 per cent of what had been cultivated in 1967. The effects of these restrictions, not only in the United States and Canada but

TABLE III

Changing patterns in the grain trade*

<u>Region</u>	<u>1934-38</u>	<u>1948-52</u> (million metric tons)	<u>1960</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1973^a</u>
North America	+ 5	+23	+39	+59	+91
Latin America	+ 9	+ 1	0	+ 5	- 3
Western Europe	-24	-22	-25	-27	-19
Eastern Europe and USSR	+ 5	not known	0	- 4	-27
Africa	+ 1	0	- 2	- 7	- 5
Asia	+ 2	- 6	-17	-34	-43
Australia and New Zealand	+ 3	+ 3	+ 6	+ 8	+ 6

* Plus sign indicates net exports,
minus sign net imports.

a Estimated

(Source: US Department of Agriculture)

also in Australia and Argentina, are reflected in the amount of wheat harvested, a reduction of almost 25 per cent. Actual yields in millions of tons are given in Table IV. The fluctuation of land under cultivation emphasises the response to the market forces and parallels the reduction in the wheat harvest. This information is contained in Table V (UDRY 1975).

Prices went through the roof. The world price index for wheat rose from 90 in 1970, to 96 in 1971, to 110 in 1972, to 214 in 1973 and on to 321 in the first quarter of 1974. Speculation by Japanese, among others, stimulated the rising prices. The price explosion encouraged the cultivation of fallow land but although acreage was increased, yield was not. In Canada, for example, for the 1973/74 harvest the area cultivated increased by 16 per cent, but yields by only 2 per cent; similar figures for the USA are 14 percent and less than 3 per cent. The crisis has been generated by agribusiness playing the market. The analysis presented should stimulate us to ask the next question, a question about the immediate future.

QUESTION 6: WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

FAO asked the world surplus food producers to set aside 8-12 million tons of wheat before June 1975 to carry over the current food crisis. Although the current shortfall in grain supply has been reduced to 2 million tons from the figure of 7.5 million tons accepted at the Rome Food Conference, the future is bleak. Only Iran gave a firm commitment to a world food bank. Of late, the American Food Aid Programme has been increased from US\$891 to \$1600 million, but this rise does not account for the inflationary prices of cereals. Hopefully the EEC, Canada and Australia will increase their aid. In fact, four clear proposals came out of the Rome Conference, namely,

1. to improve the farming in the poorest countries so that they become more self-sufficient;
2. to improve food consumption in those countries;
3. to create a World Food Security System that will give

*under
two table
3 figures
realt.*

TABLE IV

Wheat Harvest
(millions of tons)

	<u>1969/70</u>	<u>1970/71</u>
U.S.A.	30.7	37.5
Canada	18.6	3.0
Australia	10.8	7.6
Argentina	7.0	4.2

TABLE V

Land under cultivation (USA)
(million hectares)

<u>1965/66</u>	<u>1966/67</u>	<u>1967/68</u>	<u>1968/69</u>	<u>1969/70</u>	<u>1970/71</u>	<u>1971/72</u>
7.3	7.1	3.6	5.0	8.1	9.5	7.7

adequate warning of potential famine;

4. to establish 'liberal' trade policies.

The first two proposals concern the underdeveloped countries themselves; the second two proposals concern the developed world. We might treat the second two proposals first and then return to the underdeveloped countries for the real answer.

To expand food production by 20% in the next ten years, the aim of
7-7-77
FAC, would require US\$^{1 billion}35,500 a year. That might seem to us a vast sum yet the world's annual bill for armaments is running at US\$207,000 millions per year and America and Russia each spend twice more a year on defence than this expenditure in survival would cost. Table VI gives a breakdown of the costing for the investment in survival. With the current supply of petrodollars circulating it is feasible that such a fund might exist, but it is worth stressing at this juncture that the current oil price is the first realistic price that has been paid for oil; the rise of oil prices to US\$10 per barrel four times as great as the price paid in mid-1973, reflects the value of this essential raw material. We should not too hastily judge the Arab reluctance to part with the petrodollars faced with recent intimations of possible US invasion, and a knowledge that the developed countries stimulated the present food crisis. It seems that there would be great difficulty in creating a world security system.

When we consider the hollow offers of more liberal trade policies we need just glance at the facts to show the mythology behind the reality. The failure of developed nations has been abysmal over the last ten years. Imports among them grew from £22,000 million to £61,000 millions. The expansion of ^{exports} imports from underdeveloped countries grew from £8,000 millions to £15,000 millions widening the gap from 2.75 to 1 at the start of the decade to 4 to 1 at the end. The reality is the harsh reality of under-development.

These
are
questionable
in detail
probably
OK
from

good
that
what
about
deficit
all
example
of cost
increases
of tractor
parts for
use of
cotton, etc?

TABLE VI

Breakdown of UN Food Programme Costs

	<u>US \$ Thousand Million</u>
General Agricultural Investment	18.0
Overseas Aid for Agriculture	6.0
Water and Land Development	2.5
Crop and Meat Development	1.0
Credit Programmes	1.2
Fertiliser Development	3.0
World Bank Deficit	2.5
Special Feeding Programme	1.0
World Food Reserve	<u>0.3</u>
	<u>35.5</u>

If neither of the solutions to the world food problem offered by the developed world seem feasible, then let us ask the next question.

QUESTION 7: WHAT CAN THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES DO THEMSELVES?

The size of the problem is immense. Conventional trade cannot bridge the gap and underdeveloped countries cannot find the vast amount of foreign exchange needed; we estimate that some £7,000 million per annum are needed for cereal requirements alone.

We accept that these countries are in a dynamic, negative condition of underdevelopment but are they doing nothing to help themselves? Do they wait until the developed world declares a disaster or do they make their own adjustments to the situation? Evidence is rapidly coming to the fore that extremely intelligent adjustments are being made to these hazardous situations by the peasant population. It is only when their disaster situation exceeds their resource potential that outside aid is requested. However, the very resource potential is limited by dependency and underdevelopment. Thus Wisner writes of the current famine in Cape Verde,

'Direct drain of labour power, as important as it is in Cape Verde ..., is only a beginning. In Cape Verde, other burdens are superadded: a domestic economy forced to concentrate on non-food or food export crops; internal migration to the cities; research and farm extension services focused exclusively on the problems of large-scale, export-orientated farms; neglect of the supportive care for the rural worker ... The growing insult is that, in Cape Verde, Portugal refused even to acknowledge the existence of drought and famine ... (even though the peasants' party) had announced these conditions as early as 1971' (Wisner, 1975).

The size of the problem is immense
conventional trade cannot bridge the gap
and underdeveloped countries cannot find the vast amount of foreign exchange needed
we estimate that some £7,000 million per annum are needed for cereal requirements alone
We accept that these countries are in a dynamic, negative condition of underdevelopment but are they doing nothing to help themselves?
Do they wait until the developed world declares a disaster or do they make their own adjustments to the situation?
Evidence is rapidly coming to the fore that extremely intelligent adjustments are being made to these hazardous situations by the peasant population.
It is only when their disaster situation exceeds their resource potential that outside aid is requested.
However, the very resource potential is limited by dependency and underdevelopment.
Thus Wisner writes of the current famine in Cape Verde,
'Direct drain of labour power, as important as it is in Cape Verde ..., is only a beginning.
In Cape Verde, other burdens are superadded: a domestic economy forced to concentrate on non-food or food export crops; internal migration to the cities; research and farm extension services focused exclusively on the problems of large-scale, export-orientated farms; neglect of the supportive care for the rural worker ...
The growing insult is that, in Cape Verde, Portugal refused even to acknowledge the existence of drought and famine ... (even though the peasants' party) had announced these conditions as early as 1971' (Wisner, 1975).
RESTRICTION
one
substantive
concerns
peasant
interest
held
land
self-employment
(e.g. pigging - cropping
Catch-up cropping
feeding etc.)
and
propagandises
by the national
power-holders
who
believe
intelligently
(e.g. (MGE)
or are
blindly (e.g.
C.A.S.S.) interested
(e.g. Chet)

Again it can be seen that outside interests restrict the peasant population holding them under a yoke of hunger. Despite a large body of scientific literature emphasising peasant risk assessment, the western world still regards the peasant as an ignorant lazy person (Cf. White, 1974).

The trap of famine increases rather than decreases the permanency of underdevelopment. In the fifty or so years between 1920 and 1973 the number of persons engaged in agriculture in the developing world rose from approximately 240,000,000 to 450,000,000. In the same space of time, the acreage of agricultural land increased by only a quarter. Even when there is opportunity in the countryside, young men often find the town more appealing; they would rather court the hazard of unemployment than work on the land. It is the Dick Whittington syndrome, but there can only be one Lord Mayor at a time. The urban population of underdeveloped countries grew at an annual rate of 4 per cent between 1920 and 1960 - twice the rate of developed countries during their time of development. In Europe in the 1850s, when 15 per cent of the population lived in towns, urbanisation increased by 1.2 per cent a year; at a similar stage of development the underdeveloped countries are experiencing a growth rate of 2.7 per cent.

Current urban unemployment is 24,000,000; in African alone, urban unemployment is 27 per cent (Power, 1974). The lack of heavy manufacturing industry results from the western cartel control of resources in underdeveloped countries; this control must be broken if the urban areas are to survive. If the urban areas do not survive, then they become parasitic on the surrounding countryside and the horror of famine grows.

Of course, we ~~are~~ ^{are to be} we are not looking accurately at the problem. If only they would control their population, if only they wouldn't breed like rabbits, then everything in the garden would be rosy. At the present moment, the world population is increasing by more than 75 million people per year 75 million extra mouths. Can the world support such a large

just how
the
struggle
against
historic
famine
will
develop
in
the
future

manufacturing
is
growing
but
it
is
not
enough
to
keep
up
with
the
population
growth

by about 6-10% a year

urbanization is increasing

increase, such a jump in demand? Most authorities would argue that this is impossible, but they tend to be number jugglers. A recent study in the Scientific American, September 1974, has estimated that it is possible to feed between ten and thirteen times the world's present population at twice the minimum recommended caloric intake if suitable adjustments were made in energy consumption. It is worth stressing that China has in fact introduced one of the most successful birth control programmes in the world but only after she gained control of her own resources.

If population control is not the answer, then can we suggest that the underdeveloped countries follow more closely the earlier suggestions summed under the heading of The Green Revolution. Although ^{agricultural} growth rates of 3.4 per cent were projected between 1963-75, the actual rate was 2.6 per cent. This is because the Green Revolution is a high input technology depending on ideal ecological, economic and political conditions, ~~an industrial infra~~ structure, ~~a market economy~~, and good weather. *

As a development strategy, it works down from an industrial conception of the world rather than up from the peasant experience - the experience of the majority of the world's population who possess less than 2.5 hectares of land. Unlike the population control solution which treats the symptoms not the causes, of the food crisis, the Green Revolution seeks to prolong the causes of the food crisis by strengthening the developed world's grip on the underdeveloped. The question should not be how green is the green revolution, but how revolutionary is the green revolution.

With clear concepts of underdevelopment, dependency, marginality ~~and~~ poverty before us, we come to provide some solutions to the problem of development, the problem of the food crisis. The first conclusion must be that penetration of the underdeveloped economies by the developed world is damaging and, therefore, must be curtailed. Secondly, for real development to take place it must be founded on a self-sustaining force of local self-reliance or self-help. Thirdly, the orientation must be towards the rural sector because that is where the mass of peasants exist. Fourthly since

Population control is not the answer. It is worth stressing that China has in fact introduced one of the most successful birth control programmes in the world but only after she gained control of her own resources.

Green Revolution is a high input technology depending on ideal ecological, economic and political conditions, an industrial infrastructure, a market economy, and good weather. As a development strategy, it works down from an industrial conception of the world rather than up from the peasant experience - the experience of the majority of the world's population who possess less than 2.5 hectares of land. Unlike the population control solution which treats the symptoms not the causes, of the food crisis, the Green Revolution seeks to prolong the causes of the food crisis by strengthening the developed world's grip on the underdeveloped. The question should not be how green is the green revolution, but how revolutionary is the green revolution.

the order of which you are writing from

poverty, and

surplus agricultural labour is a problem in most developing countries, low cost labour using rather than capital using techniques should be employed to the exclusion of the advanced but irrelevant western technology. Fifthly, since even labour using agriculture does not provide full time employment, as we understand full time employment, it is necessary to provide employment generating minor development work and rural industry with low capital requirements. Only when such a strategy of development occurs will famine danger be averted. If we then wish to play the food market we will only be starving ourselves, for the underdeveloped world will have solved their problem.

Handwritten notes:
You should
to
Clive
Thomas
idea on
development =
need
from
global
capitalist
which
is not
as easy as
as you make
it sound!

15th February, 1975

