

WORLD HUNGER

By REV. ARCHER TORREY (Hwangji, Korea)

Those of us who live in developing countries cannot but be pleased when we receive literature from the developed countries calling on Christian people to be sensitive to the problem of world hunger, to engage in days of fasting, to promote improved crops, to encourage birth control, and the like.

However, one begins to get suspicious. It looks as if every single effort to solve the hunger problem only succeeds in concealing the real problem. It is like saying that we must control malaria but we mustn't touch the mosquitoes.

The hunger problem is the land problem. To whom does the face of the globe belong? There is enough room on this globe for all its people, all its activities, and all its food. But the greed for land, which is written into law in country after country and protected by the most holy sanctions, is the original sin which has destroyed the balance and will continue to frustrate every effort to solve its derivative problem, the hunger problem.

In Hong Kong the population density is mind-staggering. But because the land surface in Hong Kong belongs to the Crown - or to China on lease to the Crown - and is rented to all occupiers, no one is irrational enough to waste space and there is sufficient room for industry, business and agriculture. In spite of the fastest growing population in the world (high birth rate and high immigration rate) unemployment is relatively low and the Colony is in less trouble than most metropolises.

South Korea, with only 20% of arable land and one of the highest population densities in the world, has not only no starvation but a steadily rising standard of living, in spite of having to support one of the world's largest military machines. There are no landlords in South Korea, and the law is carefully designed to prevent a recurrence of landlordism.

Japan has similar controls on land use and a rising standard of living in spite of a large population and very little arable land. Bangladesh, with 12 times the agricultural potential of South Korea and only 50% larger population density, cannot feed her people. The reason is landlordism.

A number of carefully documented studies over the last several decades have also shown that normal human fertility is dependent upon a normal protein intake. When pasture lands are enclosed and people are forced to limit themselves to cereal consumption, an abnormal rise in human fertility takes place. Killing the babies is hardly an intelligent solution, and mechanical or chemical birth-control devices are responsibility-shifting devices. (One effort to apply this knowledge without solving the basic problem consisted of administering the fertility-control chemical apart from its normal protein-food surrounds. This cheat resulted in irreversible blindness. God is not mocked.)

Let us lay the blame for the hunger problem where it belongs, at the door of those who "lay field to field until there is no room." The Biblical prophets from Elijah on fought over this. How can we be silent? Worse, how can we blame the people - or the babies! Let us come to our moral senses!

* * *