

HUNGER - 1969

Because of the widespread existence of hunger and malnutrition not only throughout the world, but within the richest country in the world, as attested to by reliable sources including the investigations of the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs; the joint testimony on May 26, 1969, of representatives of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the National Council of Churches before the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee and studies by independent investigators; and as reported by an investigating team of doctors to a U.S. Senate Sub-Committee on Poverty in the following words: "In sum, we saw children who are hungry and who are sick—children for whom hunger is a daily fact of life and sickness in many forms an inevitability... 'malnutrition' is not quite what we found... they are suffering from hunger and disease and directly or indirectly they are dying from them... which is exactly what 'starvation' means"; and...

Because hunger and malnutrition are needless and morally outrageous in a country whose economy is moving toward a gross national product of one trillion dollars, whose problem in the production of food is one of surpluses rather than scarcity, whose capacity to provide all its people with the opportunity for a well-balanced diet is unquestionable and whose tradition and moral commitment has always been the maintenance of life, and the pursuit of the good life for its citizens; now therefore, The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, convened in Biennial Assembly in Miami Beach, Florida in October, 1969, earnestly asks the United States government, on behalf of its United States affiliates, to:

1. Recognize the urgency of its responsibility to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless and to give these human needs the highest priority rating.
2. Institute and develop well-coordinated programs on a national level and give support where advisable to responsible private agencies which alone do not have sufficient resources.
3. Reform and improve not only the Surplus Food program but also the Food Stamp program, adequately funding them so that:
 1. A fully nourishing rather than an inadequate diet is available.
 2. The eligibility standard shall be national and shall not vary from state to state. It shall permit purchase of an adequate diet plus other necessities. The standard should be revised annually to reflect changes in the cost of living.
 3. Certification of eligibility should be as simple as possible, should respect the dignity and privacy of the applicant, create no delay, and incur the least possible paperwork for the certifying agency.
 4. Coupons should be issued more often than once a month so as to give recipients more than one opportunity to pick them up; and there should be several distribution centers easily accessible to the recipients at convenient hours.
 5. The purchase price schedule should be modified so that no participating household pays more than 25% of its income for the stamps.
 6. The Secretary of Agriculture should have the authority not now granted him in law to set up and operate a food stamp program in areas that refuse to request one.
4. Encourage federal and local governmental authorities through their now established agencies, or when necessary through additional resources, to make certain that prices are marked on each item and that when placed on sale, the former price and sale price per unit shall be clearly indicated; furthermore, identical merchandise shall be priced similarly in stores under the same ownership or chain in

underprivileged neighborhoods as in middle and upper-class areas; that advertised sales or “specials” in these stores are available for all peoples, regardless of where they live; that the quality of merchandise is maintained in all such stores irrespective of where they are located. Consumer protection, which is necessary for all peoples, should be especially strict in ghetto areas and must cover the whole range of living conditions whether these be food quality, prices and packaging, rents charged, “truth in lending” or other essentials of living costs.

5. The U.S. affiliates of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods further and again urge their Government to continue and to expand United States efforts to reduce hunger throughout the rest of the world. The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods likewise expresses the hope that all Sisterhood women will become deeply concerned as thoughtful, sensitive citizens—wherever they may live—with this grave problem in their own and other countries and will develop programs of study and action to dramatize and overcome the tragic depletion of human life and resources through hunger, malnutrition and starvation in a world of plenty.