Artists for Oxfam

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GREETINGS, A HAPPY OCTOBER TO ALL OF YOU

At last month's supper, we met with Billie Mason, director of International House, and she said she'd be glad to let people know about our next break-the-fast potluck supper/meeting which thanks to her will again be 8 Stimpson St. Providence(off Hope St): 6:30 pm. October 16th Wednesday. Thank you Billie for your support.

PLANNING MEETING At the home of Winnie and Denny, there will be a meeting to start working on the following events: OCT. 9th 6pm.

OCT 25th Fundraiser for rural developement in India
Nov.10th? Benefit for the people of Nicaragua-Books not Bombs
Nov. 21th Hunger Banquet-Fast for a world harvest
Dec. Benefit concert for a local 'soup' kitchen-Feed My People

IF YOU CAN, PLEASE COME TO THIS MEETING OCT. 9th-60 Forest St. Providence
THESE EVENTS WILL ONLY TAKE PLACE IF PEOPLE COME TO HELP PLAN.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT AMOS HOUSE SHELTERS: If you have been thinking of how to get involved in the community-to work with people who are less fortunate than we-this a wonderful opportunity. To help with the men's shelter call Jim 272-0220 272-1531. With women's shelter call Carol 272-0220. Even a few hours a week would be helpful.

Hunger

THE HUNGER OF MILLIONS IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

by JIM TULL

Just as our minds are numbed to the horror of what a nuclear explosion might bring upon our city, so too, must we strain to imagine the extent of hunger and starvation on our planet at this moment. In 1985, about 20 million people, most of them children, will die for lack of enough food to eat. Women, along with their children, are disproportionaly victimized.

It is hard to resist the temptation of placing the blame for this on something external to oneself-the 'rich', the multinationals, the U.S. government, or, more commonly, over-population, scarcity of food, etc. The truth, I believe, is that each one of us who cannot be counted among the undernourished or hungry is responsible for the plight of those who can. We are responsible both in the sense that we have the means to alleviate the suffering and also in the sense that we take part in causing it.

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone; it is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

General Dwight Eisenhower

Natural calamities, usually well publicized, are the cause of poverty and hunger in only a small percentage of all cases, and though the trauma may be prolonged, the impoverishing dislocation is usually tempory. Chronic hunger, on the other hand, is largedly the result of unjust human behaviour and is most often left alone by the media. Common misconceptions about hunger have served the well-off by placing the blame outside of our lives. Scarcity of food and/or land, over-population, inadequate farm technology, ignorance and lack of incentive are among the causes frequently assigned to world hunger. And while these conclusions might make us feel better than the truth does, they are myths-tragic myths.

Chronic hunger is the consequence of a complex economic arrangement sustained and in some sense directed by political and corporate elites representing the world's minority. This arrangement is the successor to colonialism, which, life slavery, has generally lost its moral legitimacy. Yet the successor is still basically a system by which the wealthy become wealthier by taking from the poor. Governments and multinational corporations, the political, military and financial elites of both the affluent countries and the Third World are the system's engineers. Poor people are severely exploited for their labour and land and poor countries for their raw materials and goods of trade. Within the U.S., the same arrangement is applied; the current crisis of the small farmer is only the latest reflection of this. In human terms, the problem is not simply greed, but also, in a real sense, theft!

It is not a myth that, for example, the U.S. government and American corporations directly contribute a great deal to world poverty and hunger. The whole truth however, demands that we as individuals-as consumers, as taxpayers, as human beings-examine our own participation in the injustice of hunger. This examination, for instance, might confirm the simple truth that the more we take for ourselves of the earth's resources the more, very often, we take from those in need. Consumers, taxpayers-individual people- are all that ultimately sustains governments and multinationals.

I am hopeful that our present economic arrangements will be in turn found marally unacceptable by the majority, and that civilization will thereby inch ahead. This will happen as individuals one by one become informed, withold their support of injustice, and begin to live an alternative. A good source of information on poverty and hunger, as a place to start, is available from Oxfam America: 115 Broadway, Boston, Ma. 02116 (locally Artists for Oxfam:Box 8, 77 Ives St. Providence, R.I. 02906 273-4499; Amos House: 415 Friendship St. Providence, 02907 272-0220)

"LET US SIT DOWN SOON TO EAT
WITH ALL THOSE WHO HAVEN'T EATEN"

Pablo Neruda