

U.S. Congress

UNITED STATES



OF AMERICA

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 91st CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

VOLUME 116—PART 11

MAY 5, 1970, TO MAY 13, 1970

(PAGES 14097 TO 15504)

that they had missed their opportunity to do so at Inchon when the landings were taking place. At that very time Chinese field armies were readying themselves to cross the Yalu and move south, which they ultimately did at great cost to us. I have no doubt now that China continues to watch uneasily what we are doing in Southeast Asia. She continues to be concerned lest we renew the plans that we had fifteen years ago to land in the Haiphong-Hanoi area.

I recently listened to a discussion between two Chinese experts on the likelihood of Chinese manpower intervention. They seemed to think it not at all unlikely if Hanoi developed serious manpower problems. I read in yesterday's New York Times an article in which a senior officer of our State Department stated that when the Administration decided to send troops into Cambodia and it believed the possibility of Chinese Communist intervention "was remote enough to accept a calculated risk." It seems to me at this point in our efforts to disengage our forces in Southeast Asia that no risk is acceptable, however carefully calculated. What deeply concerns me now is that out of the frustration and dissatisfaction with the conduct of the war in Southeast Asia, and the inability of our tactical commanders to realize that long sought "victory", there may be those who would be tempted to the ultimate confrontation, the war with Red China. We would then be exactly where we were when General Ridgway made the decision to recommend to President Eisenhower that we not seize Haiphong-Hanoi. The only difference would be, and a very significant one it is, that we already are on land and well established and we could force the confrontation by merely moving north, exactly as we moved west into Cambodia. From the viewpoint of the American people this would be absolutely catastrophic in its implications. To point out but one, I was in Moscow in November to discuss the possibilities of East-West trade, and I discussed the present preoccupation of the Soviets with the Chinese along the southeastern frontier of Siberia. They are quite concerned about it and indeed some feel that a very serious confrontation is inevitable. However, as long as the Chinese are very likely committed to a role in Southeast Asia, there will be little pressure on the Soviet frontier. Indeed, if this condition prevails, the Soviets will be free to pursue their own goals in the Middle East. The war in Southeast Asia is very much in the Soviet interest. And in terms of the Middle East and what may come of that troubled area, is very much not in our interest. One of the most immediate benefits that would come to us from an extrication of our forces from Southeast Asia would be a lessening of tension in the Middle East, in my opinion.

In summary, I would like to emphasize once again the over-riding importance of understanding the strategic strength of the United States, and of building and maintaining that strength. To dissipate that strength through ill-advised and poorly thought-out tactical ventures is certainly contrary to the national interest. There will always be those who will counsel seeking military victory without regard to the outcome of the war on which we have embarked. They confuse the means with the end; and leave unanswered the question, what is the goal we seek in this war? And while we pursue one more tactical victory after another, we lead the country down the road to strategic disaster. Our relations with other nations, the state of our economy, and the domestic condition scream for constructive attention; yet, everything that we are doing is tearing our country apart and alienating us from our best friends. We must bring our Southeast Asian involvement to an end as rapidly as possible, for each day of delay

increases the likelihood of the one confrontation we should avoid at all cost, a war with Red China.

Finally, I would recommend that the following specific steps be taken at this time.

First, that an outstanding citizen, not now in government, be designated by the President, and given cabinet rank, with the responsibility to bring about a resolution of the Southeast Asian involvement. The present situation we are in is unworkable. The Department of Defense must on one hand support its forces in Southeast Asia while it develops a plan for their extrication. And the Department of State must continue to maintain relations with our Vietnamese allies to assure them of our continuing support while it seeks to develop plans to bring our Southeast Asian involvement to an end. I presently observed the solution I am proposing in effect in France in 1960-62. In that situation a minister was appointed exclusively for Algerian affairs. All those participating in the Algerian situation reported to him in carrying out his responsibilities and he finally brought that conflagration to an end. Besides, when a problem transcends the interests of several governmental departments, it is good business to put one man in charge of the development of a solution to the problem.

Second, as a matter of highest priority, we must develop plans for the extrication of our forces from Southeast Asia and the cessation of hostilities. Any such plan should be based upon the retention, for some period of time, of the present logistical enclaves that now provide the backbone of our defensive structure in Indochina. These enclaves which I have discussed with this Committee before would give us both a bargaining counter at the peace table, provide for an orderly withdrawal of our forces, and would produce an immediate decline in the casualty rate. I would like to point out that in the resolution of the Algerian conflict, France provided for the retention of such base facilities as Mers-El-Kabir until the ultimate resolution of the Algerian problem. I believe the enclave strategy to be even more valid now than when I first proposed it before this Committee. Certainly, it would have prevented our escalation into Cambodia, and I would be glad at the conclusion of my testimony to answer any questions you may have on this matter.

Third, considering the critical condition of our society, one in which our young people are sent off to give their lives for their country and yet they are not allowed to vote, and one in which we urge them to work within the system, I think it is of the utmost importance that steps be taken without delay to give the right to vote to those 18 years of age.

Fourth, and finally, as soon as these measures have been taken, an all-out effort should be made to coordinate the measure taken to improve our domestic condition. For the same reason that I recommended that an individual of cabinet rank be appointed to deal with Southeast Asia on an ad hoc basis, I would now recommend a cabinet post for the individual charged with dealing with our domestic problems.

HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

Mr. MONDALE. Mr. President, the true test of this Nation's will to end hunger and malnutrition is whether we can insure an adequate diet to every child in America. We have failed to do so in the past, and the tragedy of hunger and malnutrition in this country is largely a result of this failure.

In an article published in the April 5, 1970, edition of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, Lewis Patterson discusses the ex-

tent of malnutrition among our children and the effects of this condition. As Mr. Patterson points out in this excellent article:

The children of poverty, through generations, have become the parents of poverty. And the studies, here and abroad, indicate what doctors have nodded at all along: that a kid with a distended belly, plus bone-skin arms, is an underfed, under-protein eater. And a front-rank draftee for malnutrition.

Mr. Patterson points to the existence of hunger in my own State, as well as throughout the Nation. He reminds us that hunger and malnutrition is truly a national condition, one that knows no boundary lines.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this important article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE POOR, HUNGRY CHILD—FEED HIM OR FACE THE EFFECTS OF MALNUTRITION

(By Lewis Patterson)

There is more than mere humanity involved in the upsurge effort in St. Paul and across the nation during the last few months to see that hungry undernourished children are fed—in schools, at day care centers, in hospitals—the latter even before birth.

An increasing number of national and local leaders in government, as well as private citizens, are saying that feeding the poor is the foremost necessary step in breaking the back of poverty.

Several years ago, at the advent of poverty programs, it was believed that teaching job skills to those Americans at the bottom of the economic heap, the low income people and welfare recipients, would solve the problem.

Then it was discovered that a great many of them could not learn.

Why? Malnutrition is the word. Not enough food. Not enough of the right kinds of food.

Dr. Ray Hepper, professor of pediatrics at the University of Maryland, nailed it down last July with the first clear-cut, definitive study in the U.S. of the ultimate effects of malnutrition on kids who are almost always hungry. And there are millions of them, almost everyone now agrees, from local social workers on up to President Nixon.

It would seem to be a solid guess that those who are fighting hardest for enough food for the poor—for an estimated 6.6 million American kids who are candidates to be victims of malnutrition are still basically impelled for humane reasons.

But it seems clear that more and more Americans—for whatever reasons—are beginning to recognize that poverty breeds poverty, and that poverty is costly in terms of welfare appropriations, public medicine, and crime.

You don't have to sit through very many public welfare meetings to get the drift of this idea.

To put it simply: The children of poverty, through generations, have become the parents of poverty. And the studies, here and abroad, indicate what doctors have nodded at all along: that a kid with a distended belly, plus bone-skin arms, is an underfed, under-protein eater. And a front-rank draftee for malnutrition.

It is no secret that the grade school drop out is not going to contribute as much, if anything, to the national economy as the high school or college graduate. And it is no use—in the face of overall statistics—to point out the exceptional poor boy in 100,000 who broke the barrier and rose to fame and fortune is the answer.

Dr. Hepner informed the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs of the study he directed which involved one-third of the 300,000 children in the city of Baltimore. Children of the poor were laboratory tested against performance by control groups of children from higher economic levels.

Dr. Hepner said that this only mass study in the U.S. of the effects of hunger and malnutrition showed that the children of the poor had a mean intelligence quotient of 75. This compared with 90 for the other children.

The shocker to Minnesota's Sen. Walter Mondale and other members of the committee—even though they had found shocking hunger conditions first hand in Appalachia and various southern states—was Dr. Hepner's comment on the children of the Baltimore poor:

"It is quite clear (through comparison with similar studies abroad) . . . "that their comparative status is well below that of children of the same age group of Ethiopia, similar to those of children of West Pakistan and bordering on that of children of Thailand and Southeast Asia." All of which are termed underdeveloped countries and all of which have received financial aid from the United States.

Dr. Hepner said further: "Clear evidence in animal studies, and increasingly convincing evidence from child studies overseas, show us that malnutrition of many types during the developmental period of the brain produces permanent intellectual damage."

He said the study was brought on by concern over "the excess need for special education classes" in Baltimore. He also said the chances were less than one in 100 that the low IQs of any of the individual children were caused by reasons other than malnutrition.

How does all this tie with St. Paul and with Minnesota generally?

There has been no such study in Minnesota to measure the number of children who suffer because of lack of food, especially of protein foods—meat, cheese, milk—rather than diets of potatoes and bread.

But there are indicators:

Take the worst for a starter. Some 1,045 Minnesota families representing 4,056 persons—families not on welfare—have take-home pay of \$20 a month in cash after rent or mortgage payments, sustained medical costs (such as diabetes), and child care expense for working mothers.

Some 160,000 persons in Minnesota are welfare recipients. But it should be said that some of these will break the barrier because the biggest group are widowed, divorced or abandoned mothers whose children make up more than half the total. The mothers make up about one-third of the total and most of the rest are handicapped persons. But again, if history repeats, as poverty breeds poverty, many of the welfare children will be welfare parents.

But don't people on or off welfare who are eligible for food stamps or commodities they can pick up at the county seat eat well?

Until last October an elderly person with an income of \$138 a month—or a welfare recipient receiving that amount—\$35 a month was the budget for food. But he could increase this by taking \$18 of that \$35 to the food stamp center. By handing over the \$18 he could get \$24 worth of food stamps, a gain of \$6—up to \$41 a month. In some states he could stand in "the poor lines" at grocery stores and pay for his selections.

So what has happened? Now he can gain \$10, instead of \$6.

The Senate Select Committee headed by Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D., and including Sen. Mondale, went on a tour of poverty areas, followed by a sizeable crew of reporters. They pointed out poverty conditions, and especially hungry kids.

Mondale, especially, was pretty bitter and pointed out what could be done with the \$40 billion a year expended on the Vietnam war. He didn't fail to point out that a Look Magazine writer, a veteran of time spent in Vietnam, wrote that it would make no difference if the United States pulled out now, or two or three years from now, that the situation would be the same, that the Vietnamese had no faith in the South Vietnamese leaders and "would rather American troops went home." And that the magazine backed up its senior editor with an editorial supporting the idea.

But aside from that, Mondale wrote a long letter a year ago to Gov. Harold LeVander outlining what he learned.

"Hunger in Minnesota," Mondale told LeVander, "is as difficult to measure precisely as hunger in the nation as a whole, but some of the general measures make it possible to judge that a problem does exist in our state."

Mondale told LeVander that the Bureau of Labor Statistics concluded that a family of four in an urban area needed \$6,000 a year to feed its members properly and still meet other expenses.

He said that an estimated 600,000 Minnesotans live in families that receive \$3,000 or less in gross income per year and "must suffer some degree of nutritional deprivation."

Mondale suggested that many poor Minnesotans—the working poor as well as those on welfare—do not go to the county seats to pick up the "surplus" foods commodities handed out, or buy food stamps, because they were shamed, in some cases harassed or discouraged by county officials.

He told LeVander that the basic questions were: How many of the 170,000 school children in schools without school lunch programs are undernourished?

He asked how many children who should, by law, be receiving free school lunches are not. He also asked similar questions concerning welfare recipients and the working poor and added that, "We do not know . . . but we should, and I hope we will find out."

Mondale ended his letter to LeVander with this:

"As public officials, we share responsibility for the pitifully inadequate public efforts to meet the needs of the poor and the hungry in America. But assessing blame will not feed anyone. What we must share in the future instead is a firm resolve to move together in a nonpartisan attack which will draw all of our resources—local, state, federal, and private—into a united drive against hunger. I look forward to working with you in this effort."

A spokesman in Mondale's office said Saturday that LeVander never answered the letter of a year ago. Mondale's letter got fairly wide publicity.

But there has been response to the tour of the Select Committee to poverty areas.

St. Paul has been hailed for its advance in the school lunch program and both state and national officials have praised the work of Mrs. Virginia Ball, in charge of St. Paul's program.

A year ago no St. Paul elementary schools had hot noon lunches. Monday, Prosperity School will join the list of those that do and this will leave 17 elementary schools that do not. Some of these are in poverty areas that need it most. Mrs. Ball said the problem is that six of the remaining schools are to be replaced under the construction program and that the others have no space for either kitchens or serving areas.

Farley Bright, assistant commissioner in the state Education Department, though he highly praised the work of Mrs. Ball, said lack of facilities is no excuse for a school not to have a noon hot lunch program.

He could very well have been thinking of Minneapolis which has been especially laggard. Forty-nine of its 69 elementary schools have no school lunch program.

Many are in poverty areas.

Bright said the government will provide 75 per cent of the cost of providing facilities—kitchens and eating areas.

Mrs. Ball said the problem in St. Paul for the remaining 17 schools, is "poor space, old buildings with no room for kitchens, no room even to serve."

"But we're studying and figuring and we'll come up with some way to do it," she said.

This is not to excuse St. Paul—certainly not Minneapolis—nor any part of the State—but there are still 810 schools in Minnesota that have no school lunch programs.

But the point the critics make is this: How many in those school districts that have no noon lunch programs are kids that don't get much to eat?

Ethel Heaberlin, state nutritionist, shuffling through reports, came on a clipping from a national magazine which included pictures of the now familiar scene of kids in Biafra and India—the distended stomachs and arms and legs with bones covered with skin but little or no flesh.

"There was a little boy in a breakfast program in St. Paul—it wasn't that bad, but it was nearly that bad," she said.

Carl Holt, administrator of the food programs for the state Education Department said he talked to a 5-year-old child at a breakfast program and learned the child had not eaten since the morning before—at the school.

Mrs. Ball said, "The statistics and the paper work can get dull but I always remember the first child who said to me. "This is the bestest lunch I ever had."

Bright commented on an earlier report that Holt was removed from his position at the insistence of the U.S. Agriculture Department, reportedly because Minnesota had to turn back unused funds—not school lunch—but other federally supported programs.

"We have good relations with the Agriculture Department," he said. "The fact is our programs are so increasing that we are doubling the staff. Holt will go out to sell the programs to schools and communities, another man will take over the administration."

This is part of the story, largely in one area of providing food to the poor.

There are many other areas: special milk programs, food stamps and commodity programs, the school breakfast programs in St. Paul and Minnesota generally, food for senior citizens, trying to assure healthy births through feeding and care of pregnant mothers, conditions in Indian schools and on reservations, the whole gamut of kids who are hungry and the amazing number of families who don't have enough to eat and are too proud or too ashamed to ask for food stamps or to go to the county seat to get the hand-out of so-called "surplus" foods in a nation in which almost all foods are surplus.

LEAD POISONING

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, for a long time, I have been interested in the hazards of lead-based paint poisoning. It is a needless and preventable malady. Lead poisoning in children is caused chiefly by the ingestion of paint chips, plaster, and putty. Usually, in the homes of the poor living in our big cities, walls are caked with coats of lead-based paint that are many years old. The failure to properly maintain these buildings has created a hazard that could be and should be avoided.

Last fall, I introduced S. 3216, which is designed to bring an end to this disease. It is appalling that with modern technology we can completely eliminate lead-poisoning as a hazard to our children, but inadequate and unenforced housing regu-