

Inter-Office Communication

July 11, 1967

To

Walter

From

Irv)

Subject

Attached is the Preface which Guy Nunn prepared by way of introducing the subject of the Peace Proposal. He is now preparing the first chapter, after which I would suggest another meeting with Guy to review what he has written and discuss the writing still to be done.

IB:lm opeiu42 att.

PREFACE

We live in a clamor of change and of revolutionary challenge.

There are forces at work in our world which can, in seconds, destroy us and all we cherish — or bring our values and hopes to their highest fulfillment. The same scientific and technical know-how which have given us the hideous capacity for instant overkill also held out to us, for the first time in human history, the possibility of rising abundance and a life of decent content and security for the whole of the family of man. The great challenge before us, transcending all others, is control of the purpose to which we will use our creative genius, the end to which man will bend the twentieth century technological revolution. Will we continue to forge the weapons of annihilation up to the zero hour of global extinction? Or will we (and here, too, time is of the essence) set about the construction of a rational and responsible world community in which the rising star of science and technology is harnessed to the needs and rewarding purposes of peace and progress?

It has been said—and it bears repeating—that the world is too dangerous for anything but the truth and too small for anything but brotherhood. Thoughtful men on both sides of the Iron Curtain share the common anxiety which was expressed by President Kennedy when he said to the United Nations:

Today every inhabitant of this planet will be contemplating the day when it may no longer be habitable. Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hung by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident, miscalculation of madness. The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us.

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Capitalist or communist, rational men have by now come to the realization that disarmament is the only possible means to draw humanity back from its headlong race to disaster. A leading American corporation building arms for the United States defense program has sponsored conferences on disarmament because, as one of its vice-presidents explained, "We want to go on serving live customers." The same logic had seized Mr. Kruschschev when he said:

Anybody who says a revolution needs a war should know that more warmongers die than anyone else. We want communism not on the ruins of the world but on the foundations of Marxism-Leninism.

In foreign policy, the United States is now deep into a third decade of attempted military containment of communism, accompanied by a fitful effort at competition with this ideology amongst the world's underdeveloped nations. Neither policy has entirely failed, yet neither has produced more than a tremulous and shifting stalemate. That stalemate cannot long endure. Beneath it, thrusting upward with volcanic force, moves a blind and uncontrollable population explosion whose power and dimensions are only now becoming discernible. Without massive preventive intervention, its clearly forseeable consequence is chaos.

Two thirds of our world is living, as it were, at the foot of a Vesuvius which rumbles toward eruption. The other third, unheeding, nurses stale hostilities and in the name of security lays waste its talent and treasure at a time when it along can buffer the world family against the disaster which impends.

This book is an appeal both to the reason and the self-interest of the developed world. Its core thesis is that it is still possible for the free Western powers to bring the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America into self-sufficient modernity before they are choked by their own explosively rising populations, and to do this while peacefully "coercing" the authoritarian world into abandonment of the armaments race.

But, the time left to us dwindles daily. There is no Cassandrizing in the chill computer projection that, even without further proliferation of nuclear capacity, we stand on the razor's edge of nuclear holocaust by idiocy or inadvertence. Nor is there visible refuge from the population Vesuvius short of the most intensive and cooperative planning, aimed at the twin purposes of population limitation and rapid expansion of the capacity of the underdeveloped nations to feed themselves. Science has picked the atom's lock and placed the potential for global incineration within the grasp of a growing number of nations. Science has, at the same time, postponed death on a scale which permits, in many nations, a near doubling of life expectancy, with the certainty that by the close of the century the world's population itself will have more than doubled. But science has not produced — nor is it, in time, likely to produce — corresponding miracles in the control of births or the acceleration of food production.

It is clear that, for decades to come, the gap between standards of well-being in the richer and the poorer countries will widen rather than diminish. That fact alone portends tumult and political tornados without end. But this prospect, grim as it is, is not the heart of the development problem. That problem is not merely relative; it is also absolute. A trickle of evidence, soon to be a tide, shows us that per capita food consumption in several developing areas is already in actual decline...and this takes place decades in advance of the full thrust of rising populations brought about by disease control.

Ironically, our response to the impending Malthusian calamity has been inverse to its proximity. During the late Forties and into the Fifties, largely as a reflex of fear of Communist penetration of countries in the early agony of attempted industrialization, we undertook haphazard aid programs which, if expanded and continued, might have blunted the collision between population and subsistence. By now, however, these early plantings have shrivelled in the hot sun of conflict. Presently, our annual military outlay for Vietnam is approximately ten times the magnitude of our aggregated non-military assistance programs the world over. In 1950, at its apogee, American non-military economic aid amounted to 1.3 percent of our gross national product, with only a tiny fraction of the total as loans. Today, as population avalanche warnings multiply throughout the underdeveloped world, our contribution has shrivelled to 0.3 percent of our GNP, and of the total more than fifty percent in in the form of loans. Meanwhile, the aggregate population of those nations already acutely in want threatens to double within the coming two and a half decades while the capacity to produce food remains all but static.

There is no contention here that the United States can, through unilateral effort, cap Vesuvius. The magnitude of the task of bringing traditionalist economies up to productivity rates sufficient to sustain upsurging populations is clearly beyond the capacity of any single nation, even one as powerful and abundantly endowed as the United States. This book does contend, however, that a primary responsibility rests upon this country to exert leadership, to summon the rest of the free world both to a realization of the danger and to the urgency of common plans to confront it. This book does contend that nothing less than a massive, sustained, planned and coordinated aid effort, participated in by each of the developed nations within its means, can avert an oncoming disaster.

It is not alone a humanitarian imperative which impels us to assume and execute this responsibility. To turn our backs on it would be to abandon most of the underdeveloped world to Communism. By moving out vigorously to meet the challenge now, however, we can acquire the leverage with which to shift the ideological struggle between freedom and authoritarianism onto a terrain where freedom's forces can move to best advantage. Inevitably—and perhaps quickly—a free world aid program of the dimensions proposed in this book will compel the Soviet Union and China to attempt to match our efforts. Since the peoples of both nations are themselves in the throes of rising expectations, the

two dictatorships will be unable to match free world assistance programs without substantially curtailing their currently huge military expenditures.

That, put simply, is the logical underpinning of the proposal which follows. I do not blink the fact that the economic development field is pocked with pitfalls, frustrations and tempting booby-traps.

There is no guarantee that summoning the highest talents and the fullest resources which the free world can provide for the task here outlined can brake the population juggernaut which crunches toward us with glacial power, or render it harmless through heightened productivity, but the surest prescription for calamity in the fact of the menace of biological superabundance is to do nothing.

All that is certain, if we hope to escape the Scylla of blowing ourselves to bits and the Charybdis of breeding ourselves into world famine, is that we had best begin to row—harder and more cooperatively than ever in the history of crews adrift on the seas of chance. If there is consolation in the gravity of the dual challenge we face, apart from its excitement in being both the noblest and the most desperate ever faced by mankind, it should be in the realization that we have nothing to lose...and a free, peaceful and abundant world to gain.