

apartments—Republican as well as Democrat—are now recognizing the plight of the homeless, though from a nasty point of view. In January, seven trailers were placed near Kennedy Arts Center and the Watergate, on the Potomac River, in order to house some homeless from the winter cold, in compliance with a court order. Many Watergate residents, and their neighbors in Foggy Bottom, home of the State Department, scurried into court in January to get a temporary restraining order to prevent a shelter being located near them; but they were turned down. One Watergate resident called the homeless “opportunists.” But the Watergate upper crusts, and Bush himself, cannot ultimately escape the consequences of a crisis on the scale now unfolding.

### Food shortages

One common theme that came through the reports given at the Martin Luther King Tribunal last month is that even as basic a right as freedom from hunger is no longer guaranteed for millions of Americans. An estimated 15 million children nationally are in circumstances where nutrition is questionable.

Over the past year testimony has been repeatedly given to Congress on the food supply crisis. To date, there has been little action. Though already bad in the 1980s, the emergency food supply situation has become more and more acute since the 1988 drought, which hit basic fruit and vegetable crops (for canning), as well as the grain harvests and livestock herds. For farmers, there has been no real recovery since that disaster. Now consumers are paying more and more, and food aid services are overwhelmed.

For localities already short of food prior to 1988, the situation is a catastrophe. New Orleans Mayor Sidney Barthelemy told the Nutrition Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee in 1988 that, “In New Orleans the problems of hunger continued to grow during 1987. Requests for emergency food assistance increased by 20%. Particularly alarming is the fact that seven out of every 10 people requesting such food assistance were members of families, children and their parents.

“The food assistance provided is generally an emergency box which contains food that is healthy and nutritious, and enough for three days. Persons are limited to one box in a three month period, however. While our food banks can only provide food for three days once every three months, our people get hungry every day.

“We estimate that 20% of the demand for emergency food assistance went unmet in New Orleans last year because we just do not have the money to meet it. We have to turn away people in need who ask for help.

“Chronic poverty, chronic unemployment, under-employment, low wages and low benefit levels in government assistance programs are the main causes of the problems of the hunger in my city. It is because we are a poor city that we are unable to feed the hungry.”

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## George Gentry

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# American farmers, back to serfdom

I am a farmer, my father is a farmer, his father was a farmer, and as far as I know, I am from a continuing line of farmers from the time of my family’s immigration from England. In those days of feudal Europe, we were called serfs, or relegated to a class, under a titled nobility or lordship. In other words we were property, chattel, or assets, used for profit or influence for the benefit of the landed aristocracy. We came to America for freedom and a chance to unshackle ourselves from bondage and slavery.

This is still the battle we are fighting today. The constitutional democratic republic of the United States is now under a state of siege. It is being completely destroyed and eliminated. Our enemy wishes to reestablish the slave system. The battle against a strong independent farming sector is one of the targets when you are imposing policies to re-enslave a people.

Food is the ultimate strategic weapon when you are controlling people. For freedom to flourish, a people cannot be living in bondage for the next meal.

The international financial elite, represented by such institutions as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the U.S. Federal Reserve, is now committed to using their financial instruments, their control of credit and interest rates, and other conditionalities, to stifle freedom and human life before it can flourish, and also to destroy it where it does exist. Financial usury—excessive interest rates—is a tool that has been used for centuries, since the Babylonian Empire, to loot and starve and extinguish the light of freedom, sovereignty, and independence.

### The destruction of the herds

My particular case can be multiplied thousands of times across America. I used to produce beef cattle. I no longer do. I had to sell them in 1984 to pay interest and principal to the banks. Oklahoma is one of the major beef-producing states; now, the number of beef cattle in Oklahoma has been severely reduced. We have reduced our breeding herds to the numbers we had in the late 1950s and early 1960s. We have seen recent drastic price increases for beef. This is only a fraction of the price gouging that will happen if we do not

change these evil policies. Much of the beef we Americans eat now comes from starving Third World nations like Mexico and Argentina. We are eating their beef, which their poor never had a chance to eat. We are in very serious trouble. It takes several years to rebuild beef breeding herds.

The same situation, if not more dramatic, exists for our nation's dairy herds. There is now a severe shortage of milk in America. There is a severe shortage of both meat and milk products worldwide. What happened to the surpluses? Where is the cheese and butter for school lunch and emergency food assistance programs? They were lies. Surpluses never existed—only an inventory.

Why were my neighbors and other dairy farmers paid to sell and have their stock slaughtered and herds reduced just two years ago? The answer is pure and simple: genocide. The financial elite wanted to reduce the running inventories of this vital product, to be able to exercise more control of their population reduction policies.

This same general policy has, and is, being applied to our grain farmers. I still raise soybeans and wheat. But today I raise only 20% of the grain and 0% of the beef I raised six or seven years ago. I spend the majority of my time and now have totally extinguished my assets, fighting a corrupted legal system that is committed to preserving this house of abominations which is the rentier financier system, which loots producers and starves and enslaves the general population.

The name of the game now, if you still do remain in farming, is the survival of the fittest. Everything you do must be subordinate to the banker's bottom line. Once-proud farmers are being reduced to financial serfdom. They slave hours upon hours to pay the usurious bankers the bounty and loot. In this rule-of-the-jungle mentality, farmers must make business decisions based on business survival, not ethics or morality. If a neighbor is going out of business, his loss is fair game; in fact, you have to move in and benefit from his loss quickly. Make sure he goes down. If you don't, someone else will, and you may be the next one to go down.

In the course of the last eight years, the Farmers Home Administration has accelerated foreclosure on my operation numerous times. I have had to sell my beef herd that I started building when I was a young boy. I was put into receivership by the FHA and Federal Land Bank and a commercial bank in 1986. I lost my home and farm that I had put more work and capital into than the total purchase price of the farmers that bought the farm and benefited from my loss.

I now live in town, and I am still trying to hang onto the last remnants of a once large highly productive beef and grain operation that used to feed thousands of people alone. It, like many others, no longer exists.

I am now in bankruptcy court. FHA and FLB are on full assault against me. I used my last liquid asset, "church bonds," to hire some attorneys to defend me. On Jan. 8 the bankruptcy judge ruled I could no longer retain the lawyers



*George Gentry, candidate for U.S. Senate, Oklahoma.*



*Paul Magno, of the Zacchaeus Community Kitchen in Washington, D.C.*

I had hired. Since I am in bankruptcy, the court has full disclosure of all my funds. They know I cannot afford other lawyers.

The reality of the current suicidal, evil political policies, is that neither I nor my son will be a farmer. We will be fortunate if we are able to live and eat, if these policies continue.

I realize that the answer lies within ourselves. Whether I salvage my personal farm is now irrelevant. We must take up the pledge our founding fathers made in the Declaration of Independence. "We pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." This is the pledge Martin Luther King took up. He continued this legacy. This is the pledge the courageous students took up in Tiananmen Square. This is the pledge the brave citizens took up in East Germany. They carried the light of freedom so others might live and be free.

Don't look to the other man. We, you, must take the pledge. It is a personal moral decision. If we can meet this test, the brotherhood of man can come together in spirit and in truth: We can and we shall overcome.

As a member and representative of the Food for Peace organization, I would like to lay out a solution that will get farmers in the U.S. producing again.

1) We need an immediate emergency debt moratorium to stop all farm foreclosures.

2) We need to immediately use the Federal Reserve to issue credits, several billion dollars worth, to farms, at 4% to revitalize the production of food. (When the last October crash occurred, the Federal Reserve could have actually contributed to real growth in the economy instead of bailing out a bunch of bankrupt brokerage houses with \$5-10 billion.)

3) A floor price or parity price to insure a fair rate of return on a properly capitalized farming enterprise.

Farmers do not need a subsidy program. This program would not cost taxpayers anything. In fact it would feed them!