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Moderator's Message ... The Good of the Body

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Moderator's Message...

The Good of the Body

Primarily, this is what physicians are all about — the good of the body. For a person is not a person without a body. God thought enough of bodies to give us each one.

Physicians go about their business of tending bodies through preventive and curative means. Their dedication to the needs of all persons is impressive. Truly, our society uses the dedication of the physician as the base of comparison. "As dedicated as a doctor," is common currency in our society.

Without getting too technical, it is becoming increasingly apparent that food is the chief means of preventive medicine available to God's human family today; lack of proper nutrition on a world-wide basis is the chief cause of disease.

Where then do Catholic physicians of America stand in the face of this? What is their role? Father Yves Congar, O.P. makes a serious indictment in this regard: "We must frankly admit that it is the rich — or, in any case those who are not exactly 'needy' who talk about poverty. Sometimes they talk well indeed, but that does not change anything." (*Concilium*, Vol. 15, p. 16, Paulist Press, N. Y.)

But there is a dilemma. I am convinced that Catholic physicians by and large mean well, but don't know what to do. Just what shall we do about the preventive medicine called food; about the disease called malnutrition? On the world-scale of God's human family?

I suggest the following for your consideration as a Catholic physician:

1. Get involved seriously and to the extent of your talents in governmental programs to alleviate poverty. The taxative power of government means power, power to eradicate poverty. If abuses exist, your Christian presence will remedy that.
2. Skip a meal a week during 1967 — to identify with the hungry by suffering the pangs of hunger for a little while each week. Give the money saved to the poor.
3. Think about having your next Guild function in a second class hotel, with the banquet ticket not to exceed \$1.50 — a dramatic enough demonstration on behalf of God's poor. Distribute the money saved to them — to Christ who is hungry, and thirsty and naked and homeless in our brothers.

VERY REV. MSGR. MARVIN BORDELON