

## Faith In The Budget

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### The Decision Dilemma

Frank Lucas had on his desk two documents about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as food stamps. Rep. Lucas was the U.S. House Representative for Oklahoma's 3<sup>rd</sup> District and was Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, which oversaw SNAP. One document was Paul Ryan's, "Path to Prosperity" budget proposal designed to eliminate a large and growing national deficit, a budget that was based on Rep. Ryan's faith. The other document was a letter from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (U.S.C.C.B.) received on April 16, 2012 asking Rep. Lucas to oppose cuts to the SNAP program because of the impact that the cuts would have on the recipients of SNAP. Rep. Lucas needed to decide whether to support or oppose the proposed budget cuts to SNAP.

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Federal expenditures for SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps, were \$78 billion for the fiscal year 2011. Participation in the program was the highest that has been recorded. On average, approximately one in seven U.S. residents received SNAP benefits. The program has grown dramatically in the last decade.

**Table 1: Total Spending for SNAP**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Expenditures</b> |
|-------------|---------------------|
| 1995        | \$26 billion        |
| 2000        | \$18 billion        |
| 2005        | \$33 billion        |
| 2010        | \$70 billion        |
| 2011        | \$78 billion        |

*Source: CBO*

In a report issued by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) (<http://www.cbo.gov/publication/43173>), several characteristics of SNAP beneficiaries were listed:

- In 2010, about three out of four SNAP households included a child, a person age 60 or older, or a disabled person.
- The average income for SNAP beneficiaries was \$8,800 per year.

- On a monthly basis, the SNAP benefit per household was \$287, or \$4.30 per person per day.
- SNAP benefits increased gross monthly income by 39 percent for all participating households and by 45 percent for households with children.
- 85 percent of SNAP households live below the poverty line.

An important issue that has impacted the SNAP program is fraud. The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) had a team of 100 analysis and investigators across the country who worked with state and federal government officials to identify and investigate SNAP fraud. SNAP fraud included the exchange of SNAP benefits for cash, i.e., trafficking, lying on SNAP applications, or retailer abuse of SNAP (FNS, 2013c).

Approximately 38,000 stores were subject to FNS surveillance annually (FNS, 2013a). The most recently reported FNS information showed that as of 2011, 99 percent of those who received SNAP benefits were eligible and that payment accuracy was 96 percent (FNS, 2013b). The FNS's most recent trafficking report, which represented the years 2006-2008, said that payment errors had been reduced by \$3.67 billion, which was reduction of approximately 50 percent. In addition, over a 15 year period, SNAP trafficking had fallen from 4 percent to 1 percent of the total SNAP dollars distributed. In other words, the \$330 million in SNAP benefits that were diverted through trafficking represented 1 cent of each SNAP dollar distributed (FNS, 2013a).

Taking fraud into consideration, SNAP had provided assistance for 45 million participants each month in fiscal year 2011, which represented a 70 percent increase over the roughly 26 million participants (or one of every 11) who received benefits in 2007. Total expenditures, excluding administrative costs, more than doubled during that period from about \$30 billion to \$72 billion.

Approximately two-thirds of the growth in spending on SNAP benefits between 2007 and 2011 stemmed from the increase in the number of participants. Of course, there was a dramatic rise in the number of people eligible for the program after the economic slowdown at the end of 2008. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 added benefits for recipients, which increased expenditures by one-fifth. Benefits also increased because of higher food prices and lower incomes.

The cuts in SNAP funding proposed by Rep. Ryan's budget constituted a 17 percent cut (\$134 billion) in government support over a ten year period (CBPP, 2011). Ryan argued that this program could not continue to grow at its current rate as the cost has exploded from \$18 billion in 2001 to over \$80 billion in 2012. Currently, the 10 year projected cost of SNAP is almost \$772 billion.

The cut Rep. Ryan proposed could be achieved through either a reduction in the total number of SNAP participants from 47 to 39 million participants, or a reduction in SNAP funding available for all participants. If the cuts resulted in smaller amounts for all recipients, the cuts would mean a reduction of \$147 per month for a family of four, or \$1,764 per year. Families of three would lose \$116 per month, or \$1,392 annually. These cuts would affect low-income households as well as administrative costs for states to administer the program and determine eligibility. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities points out that the recent increased expenditures in SNAP

are primarily a result of the depth of the recent recession, and argue that it is not a sign that the program is growing “out of control.” The CBO’s projections showed that once the economy has fully recovered, SNAP would return essentially to pre-recession levels as a share of the Gross Domestic Product. (Rosenbaum, June 11, 2011).

As previously pointed out, SNAP households are primarily families with children, seniors, or people with disabilities. Roughly 75 percent of SNAP participants are in families with children; and approximately one-third are in families with senior citizens or people with disabilities. There are 86 percent of SNAP households who have incomes below the poverty line (\$22,350 for a family of four in 2011), and they receive 93 percent of SNAP benefits. There are approximately 40 percent of SNAP households who have incomes below half the poverty line. The typical working mother with two children on SNAP earned \$1,027 per month (or \$12,324 annually) and received \$385 per month in SNAP benefits. The Ryan budget proposal would cut that working mother’s SNAP benefit by \$116 per month, or a 30 percent reduction in monthly support.

Given the importance of the SNAP program to both recipients and the national budget, Rep. Lucas needed to decide what he believed was the best direction. In addition to considering his own beliefs and opinions, he needed to consider the needs of his constituents, and the opinions expressed by interested parties. Because the program was so large, it raised important questions about the proper role of government. At the same time, because the program assisted those in need, it also raised important questions of faith.

### **The Congressmen and the Bishop**

Frank D. Lucas was raised on the century old farm of his family in Oklahoma. He earned a degree in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State, and saw himself as a crusader for the state’s farmers when he served in the Oklahoma state legislature. He continued that role when he was elected in 1994 to represent Oklahoma’s 3<sup>rd</sup> district in the United States House of Representatives. Lucas’ district covered nearly half of the state of Oklahoma, and was one of the largest agricultural regions in the nation. Given the importance of agriculture to both Rep. Lucas and his constituents, it was logical that he be appointed Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, a position he has held since 2011. Lucas also served as a part of the Republican Whip Team, ensuring that all American’s voices are heard in Congress. He and his family attended the First Baptist Church in Cheyenne, and he spoke openly about his work to protect “Oklahoma values” (Lucas Biography, 2013). He also believed the government should not force people to hide their religious beliefs. In 2009, Rep. Lucas wrote on The Hill’s Congress Blog, “The Founding Fathers had no intention of removing religion from our lives. In fact, many religious [tenets] are the backbone of our Constitution” (Lucas, 2009).

Like all members of the House of Representatives, Lucas served a two year term, meaning every two years he must run for reelection. Lucas had easily won reelection during his last several elections, never dropping below 59 percent support from voters in his district. He was up for reelection in November 2012, and was campaigning and appearing at town hall meetings when his schedule allowed.

As Rep. Lucas pondered his position on the future of food stamps, it was clear that the program was not just important to the farmers of Oklahoma. The number of Oklahomans who received food stamps hit record levels in 2011, with about \$945 million in food stamp benefits dispensed to more than 600,000 residents of Oklahoma (Myers, 2012).

The budget proposal on Rep. Lucas' desk was proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, U.S. House Representative for Wisconsin's 1<sup>st</sup> district. His "Path to Prosperity" budget proposal explained how the U.S. Government could protect itself from an overwhelming and growing national debt. Shortly after releasing his budget proposal, Rep. Ryan made headlines when he told a reporter that his budget had been inspired by his Catholic faith. Following the headlines, as Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, Rep. Lucas received a letter from Rev. Blaire. Rev. Blaire, as Chair of the U.S.C.C.B. Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, urged Rep. Lucas to oppose the cuts to SNAP funding included in Rep. Ryan's Budget proposal (Appendix A).

Stephen E. Blaire was a Catholic priest who served as Bishop of Stockton California. He also served as Chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development for the U.S.C.C.B. The 12<sup>th</sup> of 14 children, Rev. Blaire served as a priest for 45 years and 13 years as Bishop in the state where he was born, raised, and educated. Rev. Blaire's long and impressive life as a priest and bishop led to his 2009 election as Chair of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, where he and his committee advised bishops and politically campaigned on issues relating to human dignity, development, and poverty. He signed the letter to Rep. Lucas opposing the cuts to SNAP.

### **Ryan's Budget: The Path to Prosperity**

On March 20, 2012, Rep. Ryan introduced a budget proposal entitled, "The Path to Prosperity" which was the third budget released by Rep. Ryan during his 13 years in Congress. During his time in Congress, Ryan had developed a reputation as a gutsy up-and-comer who kept focus on the budget when others would have rather focused attention elsewhere. Ryan laid out the basics of his budget in an opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal on the same day he introduced the budget to the House of Representatives (Ryan, 2011). In short, "The Path to Prosperity" was a comprehensive budget proposal that addresses, critiques, and proposes changes to major components of the 2013 U.S. Government Budget Proposal, including SNAP and other social service programs (Excerpts are in Appendix B). The overarching objective of Ryan's budget was to achieve a balanced budget that will provide long-term stability in the U.S. economy as well as, "promote upward mobility and secure opportunity, especially for society's most vulnerable" (Ryan, 2012, p. 7).

Rep. Ryan said that the prosperity of the U.S. was threatened by, "the crushing burden of debt" (Ryan, 2012, p.4). To this end, Rep. Ryan's budget proposal was focused on reducing the 2013 budget deficit and the national debt. To accomplish this goal, his budget proposed cuts to SNAP and other programs.

Rep. Ryan explained how his budget proposal was inspired by his Catholic faith. In a speech he gave at Georgetown, a Catholic Jesuit University, Rep. Ryan explained how he relied on his faith

in crafting his budget. “The work I do as a Catholic holding office conforms to the social doctrine as best I can make of it. What I have to say about the social doctrine of the Church is from the viewpoint of a Catholic in politics applying my understanding of the problems of the day” (Gigloff & Merica, 2012). Rep. Ryan specifically stated that his budget was inspired by the Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principle of subsidiarity.

### **Catholic Social Teaching, Subsidiarity, and the Path to Prosperity**

CST was a collection of principles that articulates the Catholic Church’s position regarding the care of society’s poor and vulnerable. An expansive body of literature has developed concerning CST over the centuries, and many authors have attempted to describe the complexity and richness of CST. One example of this is a document written by Professor C. Firer-Hinze of Fordham University, which explains eight central themes of modern CST (Appendix C).

Ordinarily, CST was not overtly discussed in the budget considerations of the US Congress. Yet Rep. Ryan had specifically said that his budget proposal was reflective of his faith through the principle of subsidiarity (Nicholas & Peters, 2012). According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, subsidiarity was the principle in which, a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to co-ordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good (Catholic Church, Article 1, Part 1, Sec. 1883). In other words, the principle of subsidiarity holds that lower orders of the community, i.e., churches, municipalities, states, and other local institutions, should not be interfered with by higher order communities, i.e., the federal government, in their pursuit of the common good. Rather, local communities should be supported by higher order communities. As it applies to his budget proposal, Mr. Ryan’s position was that the common good was best served when the federal government has a limited role in the broader community. In his own words, the principle of subsidiarity, which is really federalism—meaning government closest to the people governs best—having a civil society of the principle of subsidiarity where we, through our civic organizations, through our churches, through our charities, through all of our different groups where we interact with people as a community, that’s how we advance the common good (Nicholas & Peters, 2012).

### **Milton Friedman’s Philosophy of Capitalism and Freedom**

Rep. Ryan’s perspective of subsidiarity was consistent with the writings of Milton Friedman, who argued for a limited role for government. Friedman described the conservative economic philosophy which in the 1960’s was referred to as a liberal philosophy. In his book, Capitalism and Freedom published first in 1962, Friedman very elegantly laid the foundation for the conservative philosophy today. Chapter II of the book, the Role of Government in a Free Society, quite clearly argued that the role of government is a very limited one. He argued that there is definitely an important role for government, such as when it has, maintain[ed] law and order, define[d] property rights, served as a means whereby we could modify property rights and other rules of the economic game, adjudicated disputes about the interpretation of the rules, enforced contracts, promoted competition, provided a monetary framework, engaged in activities to counter technical monopolies and to overcome neighborhood effects widely regarded as



sufficiently important to justify government intervention, and which supplemented private charity and the private family in protecting the irresponsible, whether madman or child—such a government would clearly have important functions to perform. The consistent liberal is not an anarchist (Friedman, 1962).

Clearly, Friedman argued that the government had a role to play, but it was a very limited one. For Friedman's list of activities that the government should refrain from pursuing, see appendix D. In essence, Friedman argues that unless there is a legitimate role for the government to play, it should refrain from involvement.

### **The Bishop's Response**

While Rep. Ryan's opinions may have been consistent with the writings of Friedman, others disputed Ryan's claims that a reduction in SNAP funding was supported by his Catholic faith. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops responded to Ryan's assertion, sending letters to multiple House Committee chairpersons, as well as letters to all Representatives. Their letters addressed the specific ways the U.S.C.C.B. believed the Ryan Budget failed to protect the poor and vulnerable. Their letters were addressed to Chairpersons and ranking members of the House Committees that would consider the proposed budget (U.S.C.C.B., 2012). Rep. Frank Lucas, as chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, would lead his committee's consideration of The Path to Prosperity and the expressed interests of the citizens the committee serves.

The mission of the U.S.C.C.B. is to "collaboratively and consistently" act on issues vital to the Catholic Church and its community (U.S.C.C.B., 2012). As a collection of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, they are incorporated in the District of Columbia, and have committees that attempt to advance the Church's teachings in the larger culture. For example, the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development actively campaigns on issues of poverty, with the goal of raising poverty awareness and improving social conditions for the impoverished. As a function of the U.S.C.C.B., the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and other U.S.C.C.B. committees, sent letters urging support or rejection of proposed legislation. The Catholic view expressed in the letter is not dissimilar to the beliefs of other religions. For example, the Presbyterian Church promotes, "God's mission to care for the needs of the sick, poor, and lonely" (Book of Order, 2007/2009).

The letter sent to Rep. Lucas from the U.S.C.C.B. offices less than four miles from the Capitol building, was signed by the Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaine, Bishop of Stockton and Chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development. This particular letter was focused almost exclusively on preserving funding for SNAP (Appendix A). In his letter to Rep. Lucas, The Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire, Bishop of Stockton, urged the House Committee on Agriculture to resist cuts to SNAP, "for moral and human reasons," calling the cuts, "unjustified and wrong" (Blair, 2012). The letter delineates not only how the cuts to SNAP would negatively impact those who currently participate in SNAP, but laid out, "moral criteria" that the U.S.C.C.B. say should guide budget decisions (Blair, 2012). The criteria were: Every budget decision should be assessed by whether it protects or threatens human life and dignity. A central moral measure of any budget proposal is how it affects "the least of these" (Matthew 25). The needs of those who are hungry and homeless, without work or in poverty should come first.

Government and other institutions have a shared responsibility to promote the common good of all, especially ordinary workers and families who struggle to live in dignity in difficult economic times.

### Conclusion

The challenge that Rep. Lucas faced was to determine whether or not to support Rep. Ryan's budget proposal, taking into consideration not only Rep. Ryan's proposal, but his public statements about the proposal, and his constituents' interests in the proposal. It was clear that the proposed budget cuts to SNAP would reduce the national debt. It was also clear that the cuts to SNAP would reduce federal support for those in need. Rep. Ryan publicly claimed that his budget proposal was based on his faith. However, the letter received by Rep. Lucas from the U.S. Catholic Bishops urged him to reject the proposed SNAP cuts. How should Rep. Lucas have voted, and why?

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## Appendix A



### United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

April 16, 2012

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas, Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson, Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I write to urge you to resist for moral and human reasons unacceptable cuts to hunger and nutrition programs. The committee has been instructed to reduce agricultural programs by an additional \$33.2 billion. In allocating these reductions, the committee should protect essential programs that serve poor and hungry people over subsidies that assist large and relatively well-off agricultural enterprises. Cuts to nutrition programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will hurt hungry children, poor families, vulnerable seniors and workers who cannot find employment. These cuts are unjustified and wrong. If cuts are necessary, the committee should first look towards reducing and targeting commodity and subsidy programs that disproportionately go to large growers and agribusiness.

SNAP, also known as food stamps, helps feed millions of households; 76 percent of which include a child, senior, or disabled person and many include workers who cannot provide sufficient nutrition for their families. At this time of economic turmoil and growing poverty, the committee should oppose cuts in this effective and efficient anti-hunger program that helps people live in dignity.

If savings need to be achieved, cuts to agricultural subsidies and direct payments should be considered before cutting anti-hunger programs that help feed poor and vulnerable people. Given current high commodity prices and federal budget constraints, subsidies and direct payments can be reduced and targeted to small and moderate-sized farms.

As pastors and teachers, we remind Congress that these are economic, political and moral choices with human consequences. Prior to the House considering the budget resolution, the bishops offered several moral criteria to guide these difficult budget decisions:

1. Every budget decision should be assessed by whether it protects or threatens human life and dignity.
2. A central moral measure of any budget proposal is how it affects "the least of these" (Matthew 25). The needs of those who are hungry and homeless, without work or in poverty should come first.
3. Government and other institutions have a shared responsibility to promote the common good of all, especially ordinary workers and families who struggle to live in dignity in difficult economic times.

Congress faces a difficult task to balance needs and resources and allocate burdens and sacrifices. Just solutions, however, must require shared sacrifice by all, including raising adequate revenues, eliminating unnecessary military and other spending, and fairly addressing the long-term costs of health insurance and retirement programs. The House-passed budget resolution fails to meet these moral criteria. We join other Christian leaders in insisting "a circle of protection" be drawn around essential programs that serve poor and vulnerable people. I respectfully urge that the committee reject any efforts to reduce funds or restructure programs in ways that harm struggling families and people living in poverty.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire  
Bishop of Stockton  
Chairman, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

## Appendix B

### Two Excerpts from Sen. Paul Ryan's 2012 Path to Prosperity budget proposal.

The following is an excerpt from p. 39 of The Path to Prosperity

#### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps)

The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) serves an important role in the safety net by providing food aid to low-income Americans. But this program cannot continue to grow at its current rates. The cost has exploded in the last decade, from less than \$18 billion in 2001 to over \$80 billion today. As recently as 2007, SNAP was projected to cost slightly less than \$400 billion over ten years. Currently, the ten-year projection has risen to almost \$772 billion.

Much of this is due to the recession, but not all of it: Enrollment grew from 17.3 million recipients in 2001, to 23.8 million in 2004, to 28.2 million in 2008, to 46.6 million today. According the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "The historical relationship between unemployment and SNAP caseloads diverged in the middle of the decade ... As the unemployment rate fell 1.4 percentage points between 2003 and 2007, SNAP caseloads increased by 22 percent."<sup>35</sup> The trend is one of relentless and unsustainable growth in good years and bad. The large recession-driven spike came on top of very large increases that occurred during years of economic growth, when the number of recipients should have fallen.

This unsustainable cost growth is the result of the same flawed structure that has fueled unsustainable growth in Medicaid. State governments receive federal dollars in proportion to how many people they enroll in the program, which gives them an incentive to add more individuals to the rolls. State governments have little incentive to make sure that able-bodied adults on SNAP are working, looking for work, or enrolled in job training programs.

This leads to a program rife with waste, fraud and abuse. In the past year, Michigan has had *two* lottery winners continue to receive SNAP benefits.<sup>36</sup> In New York, former and current New York City employees created false names, addresses and Social Security numbers to create approximately 1,500 false SNAP cards.<sup>37</sup> These individuals netted \$8 million. And, under the leadership of Chairman Darrell Issa, the House Oversight Committee has uncovered dozens of additional examples of abuse, such as recipients collaborating with vendors to trade food stamps for cash, cigarettes and alcohol.<sup>38</sup> This kind of abuse must stop. By providing states with incentives to reduce fraud and abuse, the federal government can ensure its SNAP dollars address hunger and malnutrition in the United States without lining the pockets of criminals.

The following is an excerpt from p. 43 of The Path to Prosperity

#### Protecting Assistance for Those in Need

- **Convert the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) into a block grant tailored for each state's low-income population, indexed for inflation and eligibility beginning in 2016 – after employment has recovered. Make aid contingent on work or job training.**

## Appendix C

### Central Themes in Modern Catholic Social Teaching (CST)

#### 1. Dignity of the Human Person

The God-given life and dignity of each and every concrete human being must be acknowledged, honored, and protected. The flourishing of persons, realized in community: this is the proper goal of every social sphere (familial, economic, political) and practice. This is the bedrock principle of CST.

#### 2. The Common Good

Persons are by nature social; the dignity of each and all is realized within community. More than a collection of individuals bound by contract, society is rich interdependent unity composed of persons, families (the most basic cell of society), local communities, workplaces, the state and other associations. State and economy exist for the sake of this common, shared good. Individual rights and subsidiarity require that power and initiative be fostered in smaller units of organization, with the state encourage and assisting, if needed intervening on behalf of the common good. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the care for the “common good” requires responsibility in the face of its ecological and globalized dimensions.

#### 3. Justice

Justice (commutative, distributive, and social) is the characteristic feature of social situations that cherish human dignity. Justice exists when there is active acknowledgment of the rights and responsibilities of each to each, and to all.

A. Commutative Justice: fair and honest dealings and contracts between individuals and private groups.

B. Distributive Justice: the goods of creation are destined to serve the flourishing of all. Power, resources, burdens and benefits must be allocated in a manner consonant with the needs and rights of all members, especially the most vulnerable.

C. Social Justice: all have the right and the responsibility to *participate in* – that is, to actively contribute to, and benefit from – the common good through family, political, and economic life. Social leaders and structures have the right to require such productive contribution, and the duty to assure conditions (e.g. access to resources, education, civil rights) that make such participation possible (U.S. Bishops, 1986, Ch.2)

#### 4. Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Economy’s purpose is to provide access, on fair conditions, to reasonable degrees of material flourishing for all its members. Work is the normal way one gains just access to material necessities; it is also a key avenue for expressing one’s co-creative capacities, and the contributing, with others, to the common good. To engage in meaningful work is thus both a duty and a right, an aspect of social justice. Workers have the right to earn family-supporting a living wage, to participate in running workplaces, and to conditions and treatment reflecting their status as more than instruments in the economic process.

#### 5. Material acquisition and ownership as limited rights

The resources of the earth and the products of the economy are meant to be enjoyed by all. Private property is legitimate when it serves the harmony and flourishing of the community, but its accumulation and use are strictly limited by the common good, warnings against greed, and by the demand for solidarity with and special concern for the poor and vulnerable. Large disparities/inequalities of wealth are morally suspect, especially when many live deprived of minimum material needs.

#### 6. Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Biblical religion reveals our God as taking the side of, opting for the needy, the oppressed, the most vulnerable. Groups, institutions, programs and practices must be evaluated in light of how they effect the vulnerable, and whether these groups are protected and empowered. This stance is reflected in a consistent ethic that promotes life and the just conditions for its flourishing “from womb to tomb.” It fuels both liberationist struggles among the oppressed and pro-life efforts.

#### 7. Solidarity as central Christian social virtue

Solidarity is the social face of Christian love, the virtue of seeing our interdependence and acting accordingly. It is “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good...because we are all really responsible for all.” [1987] Solidarity enacts the gospel’s call to break down barriers of domination and exclusion through risky, open-hearted, collaboration and service.

#### 8. Ongoing Transformation of Hearts, Communities, and Structures

The social mission of the church incarnates the Catholic sacramental imagination, and is deeply intertwined with the mystery of faith. The Compendium of CST #73 names three aims of CST (Brady, 2007): to *motivate* people to care and act – the level of the heart; to *provide norms* to help people interpret and judge social realities – the level of the head; and to *challenge* people to link these norms to their everyday lives – the level of integration. CST thus demands ongoing conversion of hearts and minds, and ongoing struggle to transform patterns and “structures of sin” – cultural and institutional patterns that entrench injustice and distorted power relations. In their letter on environment, “you Love All That Exists,” the Canadian Bishops (2003, #14) speak of “three interrelated forms of active response for Christians: the Contemplative, the Ascetic, and the Prophetic.” This side of the final kingdom, peace/shalom is never finally or perfectly achieved; sin persists. Yet God’s spirit and presence, and solidarity with fellow justice-seekers enable and require: hope, fortitude, and joy.

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For further reading:

1. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church* (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004) Text available on-line at:  
[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_compendio-dott-soc\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)
2. Catholic Social Teaching Resources on the Web: Excellent collection of sources and links to documents and articles, compiled by Villanova University Office of Mission Effectiveness:  
<http://www3.villanova.edu/mission/cetr.htm>
3. Parnard V. Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2008)
4. Kenneth Himes et al, eds., *Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries, Interpretations* (Georgetown, 2005)
5. Thomas Massaro, *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action* (Sheed & Ward, 2000)
6. Judith Merkle, *From the Heart of the Church: The Catholic Social Tradition* (Liturgical, 2004)
7. Marvin L.K. Mich, *Catholic Social Thought and Movements* (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000)
8. Rebecca Todd Peters, *In Search of the Good Life: Globalization and Christian Faith* (Continuum, 2005)

## Appendix D

### Friedman, M. (2002/1962) Capitalism and Freedom

#### Chapter 2: The Role of Government in a Free Society

##### Conclusion

A government which maintained law and order, defined property rights, served as a means whereby we could modify property rights and other rules of economics game, adjudicated disputes about the interpretation of the rules, enforced contracts, promoted competition, provided a monetary framework, engaged in activities to counter technical monopolies and to overcome neighborhood effects widely regarded as sufficiently important to justify government intervention, and which supplemented private charity and the private family in protecting the irresponsible, whether madman or child – such a government would clearly have important functions to perform. The consistent liberal is not an anarchist.

Yet it is also true that such a government would have clearly limited functions and would refrain from a host of activities that are now undertaken by federal and state governments in the United States, and their counterparts in other Western countries. Succeeding chapters will deal in some detail with some of these activities, and a few have been discussed above, but it may help to give a sense of proportion about the role that a liberal would assign government simply to list, in closing this chapter, some activities currently undertaken by government in the U.S., that cannot, so far as I can see, validly be justified in terms of the principles outlined above:

1. Parity price support programs for agriculture.
2. Tariffs on imports or restrictions on exports, such as current oil import quotas, sugar quotas, etc.
3. Governmental control of output, such as through the farm program, or through prorationing of oil as is done by the Texas Railroad commission.
4. Rent control, such as is still practiced in New York, or more general price and wage controls such as were imposed during and just after World War II.
5. Legal minimum wage rates, or legal maximum prices, such as the legal maximum of zero on the rate of interest that can be paid on demand deposits by commercial banks, or the legally fixed maximum rates that can be paid on savings and time deposits.
6. Detailed regulation of industries, such as the regulation of transportation by the Interstate Commerce Commission. This had some justification on technical monopoly grounds when initially introduced for railroads; it has none now for any means of transport. Another example is detailed regulation of banking.
7. A similar example, but one which deserves special mention because of its implicit censorship and violation of free speech, is the control of radio and television by the Federal Communications Commission.
8. Present social security programs, especially the old-age and retirement programs compelling people in effect (a) to spend a specified fraction of their income on the purchase of retirement annuity, (b) to buy the annuity from a publicly operated enterprise.
9. Licensure provisions in various cities and states which restrict particular enterprises or occupations or professions to people who have a license, where the license is no more than a receipt for a tax which anyone who wishes to enter the activity may pay.

10. So-called “public-housing” and the host of other subsidy programs directed at fostering residential construction such as F.H.A. and V.A. guarantee of mortgage, and the like.
11. Conscription to man the military services in peacetime. The appropriate free market arrangement is volunteer military forces; which is to say, hiring men to serve. There is no justification for not paying whatever price is necessary to attract the required number of men. Present arrangements are inequitable and arbitrary, seriously interfere with the freedom of young men to shape their lives, and probably are even more costly than the market alternative. (Universal military training to provide a reserve for war time is a different problem and may be justified on liberal grounds.)
12. National parks, as noted above.
13. The legal prohibition on the carrying of mail for profit.
14. Publicly owned and operated toll roads, as noted above.

This list is far from comprehensive.