



Francis Moore Lappe, author of the book *Diet for a Small Planet*, speaking at PSU.
(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Hunger not necessary

by Robert Lothian

Francis Moore Lappe, whose book, *Diet for a Small Planet*, sensitized millions to the politics of food and became a Bible for vegetarians, said in Portland last week that hunger is not caused by scarcity of food or land, or by natural disasters.

"It is caused by a scarcity of democracy," she said.

Revolution, said Lappe, is the only word that describes the change needed to end hunger in Central America and other parts of the world.

She called for a shift of power from rich landowners and state bureaucracies to poor producers. Such a shift is occurring with Nicaragua's revolution, she said, which makes that country an example for the world.

Lappe spoke at PSU in the final installment of a month of programs

focusing on hunger. Thursday night, she addressed a benefit for Tools of Peace, an organization gathering tools for Nicaragua.

Lappe refused to talk about hunger in terms of numbers, but rather in terms of the emotions — grief, anger, humiliation, fear — that she witnessed in her travels to Third World countries.

She told of an impoverished Nicaraguan woman: "For her, hunger meant watching those close to her die — it was grief."

Lappe said that the world's grain production capacity alone is enough to supply every person in the world with 3,000 calories each day.

Also, according to Lappe, studies show that so-called "basket case countries" like Bangla Desh could not only feed their people but export food. Land needs to be given to peasants and food production for local consumption rather than export increased, she said.

The problem of hunger is politics, according to Lappe, who described El Salvador as a microcosm of the world power relations that keep people hungry.

There, six families control the same amount of land as 300,000 peasants. These families gear food production on their vast holdings to an export market with sophisticated, wasteful tastes while peasants go hungry, she said.

In Ethiopia, she continued, the government neglects poor farmers while building up the cities, which adds to hunger. "Stalinist" describes the power problem in Ethiopia, she said.

Lappe called for solutions on a level of morality "beyond capitalism or statism. That's really what we're talking about — freedom," she said.

The first step would be for the United States to cut off the aid that props up dictatorships and "give change a chance." The U.S. also needs to start obeying international law, she said.

Nicaragua's land reform holds out an example for hungry countries, Lappe continued. There, thousands of peasants have been given land for free that once belonged to the rich. Food production for local consumption has increased, she said.

"Efforts toward such change are inevitable. . . we couldn't stop it if we wanted to," Lappe said.

Tools for Peace received \$600 in donations, and several hundred pounds of hammers, saws and hand tools that will be sent to Nicaragua in a cargo container.

Racism symposium:

Blacks rejected by left

by Robert Lothian

According to Ron Herndon, relations between the Black community and white activists started out reflecting the racism of the greater society but appear to have improved in recent years.

Herndon spoke at a symposium on racism and the left at PSU. He was joined by Duane Campbell, a college instructor from Sacramento and head of the anti-racism commission of Democratic Socialists of America. Campbell spoke on the history of left-Latino relations. D.S.A. sponsored the symposium.

Herndon said that one of the consistent patterns in relations between white and Black activists is the attitude of whites that, "You can't think; your thinking will have to be done for you by white people."

William Lloyd Garrison, for instance, the white editor of the abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, at one point advised Frederick Douglass not to start another newspaper. He felt that Frederick was incapable of the proper kind of analysis to fight racism.

Ironically, several abolitionist organizations refused membership to Blacks, said Herndon. Leaders of the Progressive Movement (about 1900) came around to saying that Blacks shouldn't vote, he continued, and early craft unions couldn't let Blacks join.

Some Blacks then walked across the picket lines of these unions. "That wouldn't have happened if people hadn't let their racism get the better of them."

Racism in the labor movement came home to Portland during World War II when shipbuilding unions at Swan Island refused admission to Blacks. Auxiliary unions were set up for Black workers, said Herndon. But they still had to pay dues to white unions. Blacks were assigned the most filthy and dangerous jobs, he said.

In the 1930s, said Herndon, Black intellectuals gravitated toward the Communist Party after J. Edgar Hoover destroyed the Garvey Movement. Most dropped out of the CP, however, he said, when they were confronted with the argument that, "Black people hadn't progressed enough to discuss the question."

Those who wanted to discuss racism were met with cries of, "Let's not divide the movement," said Herndon.

During the Civil Rights Movement, groups like SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) soon found that when whites donated money, they also expected to be able to tell Black organizations what to do. That led the move toward Blacks and white organizing separately in the late 60s.

"Jesse Jackson's campaign has shown the way the community has developed," said Herndon. "If he was to have a base it would have to be in his own community."

"With Jackson getting 11 percent of the vote statewide while "on a good day" the Oregon Black population reaches 2 percent, "That's astounding," said Herndon. The Jackson campaign "has really started the rebirth of the whole idea of coalitions."

Brown trip

Portland Observer photographer Richard Brown is leaving soon for a month-long visit to Nicaragua.

He will be travelling with a delegation from Witness for Peace, an inter-denominational religious organization that sends witnesses into war zones.

Richard said not to worry, though, because none of the witnesses have been hurt.

He said he will travel to all parts of the country, "to get an education and awareness of what's going on down there."

"I want to be able to tell folks what's happening with the Black population there," he added.

Richard will of course be taking a lot of pictures during his trip: he's taking along 100 rolls of film.

On Sunday, June 2nd, from 5 - 10 p.m. at St. Andrew Hall, 4940 N.E. 8th, there will be a benefit for Richard and Rainbow Coalition anti-apartheid efforts. Attractions include a "spectacular multi-cultural dinner," music by Velvet and Antarra and cartoons for children. Admission is \$5 - \$10 for adults (sliding scale) and \$2 for children.

Richard says it will be your last chance to take his picture before he leaves.

Spring Festival

On Saturday, June 1, the Rotary Club of Albina will host its second annual Greater Albina Spring Festival in Portland's Peninsula Park.

This broad-based community event features a Rose Festival theme classic Pied Piper Parade, as well as the Junior Rose Festival Court Knighting Ceremonial and Rose Planting Ceremony.

Upwards to 1,000 students will be recognized for their efforts in a "Service Above Self" project sponsored by the Rotary Club of Albina and the Portland Public Schools.

Students to receive a "Certificate of Recognition" were nominated by teachers, principals, youth leaders or parents in the geographical area served by the Rotary Club of Albina. This area includes Humboldt, King, Vernon, Sabin, Irvington, Meek, Alameda, Hollyrood and Boise-Eliot schools.

Each student will be provided a special hamburger lunch cooked by the Rotary Club of Albina members. A wide variety of community-based entertainment is set, with everyone invited.

U.S. Congressman Ron Wyden is scheduled to attend the second annual Greater Albina Spring Festival and will congratulate students, parents, school representatives and more at the event. Congressman Wyden's attendance will also offer the community yet another opportunity for interchange of community-supportive thoughts and observations.

Highlight of the day's festivities will be the Junior Rose Festival Court Knighting Ceremonial and Rose Planting Ceremony, with Portland's Royal Rosarians attending.

Self defense

A free five-week self-defense class will be taught by Ron Cardenas for men, women and children. The classes will be held on Tuesday night from 6 to 7 p.m., at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center beginning on June 18. Call the I.F.C.C. at 243-7930 to register for the class.

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