ES© to the NEWS

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CHURCIIBS AND CAPITALISM

The National Council of Churches took some gratuitous swipes at capitalism recently when it sponsored a gathering called "An Ecumenical Consultation on Domestic Hunger." The delegates announced their belief that "a basic contradiction exists between the capitalist system and Biblical justice, mercy ... and self-giving love," and called capitalism "a system that is basically unjust." In order to end hunger, the delegates resolved to "work for radical change in the economic, political, and religious values and institutions in this society."

The obvious implication of this resolution is that the National Counbil of Churches is proclaiming its belief that capitalism is inherently evil and should be abolished. In terms of historical and economic reality, such a statement makes no sense. This conference focused specifically on the problem of hunger, but no system in history has ever done more to eliminate hunger than American capitalism.

Where in the world is there any evidence of a better system? The alternative to capitalism is socialism. Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov and other Russians with first-hand experience have given graphic eye-witness testimony to the absence of "justice, me_rcy ... and self-giving love" in the Soviet Union.

Liberal correspondents such as Walter Duranty used to argue that the tyranny of the Stalin dictatorship should be tolerated for the sake of economic gains, because you can't make an omelet without

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breaking eggs. After 58 years of control in Russia, and an incredible cost in suffering and deaths, socialism has proved itself a total economic failure. In other words, there is no omelet for the human "eggs" that have been broken throughout the Gulag Archipelago.

In 1975, the Soviet socialist economic system produced a grain harvest of the per capita level of 1913, which was a mediocre year under the Czars, and was long before tractors and commercial fertilizers greatly increased the yield per acre. For a thousand years before the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, Russia never bought grain. Russia had established a reputation as the granary of Europe long before the United States even existed.

Yet today. the Russian people are kept from starvation only by tremendous shipments of grain from the bounty of American capitalism. Who will send grain to the United States if capitalism is eliminated?

The contrast is even more dramatic when we remember that the Russians use 25 percent of their labor force on the farms, supplemented by military troops assigned to the farms at harvest time, whereas American capitalism is so successful that only four percent of our labor force provides far more food than we can eat.

The National Council of Churches is financially supporterl by the abundant generosity of those who ave prospered under capitalism. Some day Americans are going to get fed up with the ingratitude and inconsistencies of those who bite the hand that feeds them.

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