

Food Can Win Wars And Also Peace

FOOD is the stuff that wars are made of and food may be used to maintain peace or advance ideals of freedom and justice.

During World War II, a motto used to encourage farmers to strain every muscle to feed our armies and our allies was: "Food will win the war and write the peace."

A saying attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte is "an army travels on its stomach." This probably was recognized by military leaders long before his time. Kings and potentates were aware also that well-fed people rarely rebelled, even if oppressed otherwise.

American politicians also know how to use food to help perpetuate themselves in public office. They seldom exhibit scruples about manipulating food production, supplies or prices to gain votes.

This may be done by using target prices to encourage farmers to produce surpluses, which then may be used to depress prices to win support of consumers.

Food has been used often by the

State department for leverage in diplomatic negotiations. An example is the "most favored nation" status granted to certain countries, assuring them of best prices, easy credit, and first chance at available commodities.

Now that other countries have overtaken the United States industrially and militarily, food is our strongest weapon.

America grows more food than our people can eat, an accomplishment that only a half dozen or so nations out of some 140 have been able to achieve. We must export food or pile up surpluses.

The rest of the world needs food in vast quantities. Almost daily pictures are published of undernourished and starving men, women and children of Asia, Africa or elsewhere.

Inability to grow food is not the only cause of their distress. Corrupt politicians in many countries use food as a tool of oppression.

Sympathetic Americans are ready, willing and anxious to help

feed starving people, whether they are helpless remnants of former allies or refugees from enemies of freedom.

When dictators or other heads of foreign governments accept food from us, claim credit for it and then denounce the United States as a rich enemy, we are victimized, and so are many hungry people.

When violence and insult are the only thanks we get for trying to help, it may be time to use food to change things. It is just legitimate to use food as a weapon for peace and justice as it is to use bombs and guns — or oil.

Talk of "barrel of oil for a bushel of wheat" sounds good, but it is not well founded. Oil is limited to a few localities and is not renewable. Wheat may be grown in many places, year after year.

Economic warfare is real, continuous and may be just as destructive to liberty as military actions. Enemies are using oil as a weapon to crush us. Food is our best weapon. Let's use it!