

Mead blasts overnutrition; food politics

By HOLLY D. REMY

Margaret Mead looks more like a not-yet-gray grandmother than an anthropologist who, at 23 and just married, sailed alone to Samoa to study its people.

But when the 75-year-old anthropologist spoke at Oakland University, she decried the waste of food and the role politics plays in hunger.

"We have enough food, but half the world is starving."

"There are five million people starving in the United States, and a significant number of them are very old. They can't afford food."

Addressing a lecture hall filled with students, teachers and residents Nov. 14, she said the major nutritional disease in the United States is over-nutrition.

"We have so much, we just can't believe other people are starving," she said.

Ms. Mead's knowledge of cultural aspects of nutrition problems goes back to her membership in the

National Research Council's Committee on Food Habits during World War II. Winner of the Ceres Medal of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in 1975, she concluded that the availability of food in the world is based on politics and economics.

"WE USE SO MUCH OF everything that small changes in our buying habits have enormous effects around the world," said Ms. Mead.

"Overpopulation in this country is severe, because a child here consumes 40 per cent more than one in India. The poor countries must cut down on children, too, because they don't have enough to go around."

Ms. Mead said the food crisis has grown into a world problem with many influences—population, economics, and politics. The problems are integrated in "World Enough: Rethinking the Future," her 1975 book that is one of her 33 publications.

"We have to attempt to keep in mind the whole planet, that we're inter-

dependent," Ms. Mead said. "The idea that everyone in the world is responsible for everyone else is a new one."

VIEWING the world as a whole led her to realize that dividing the number of bushels of wheat in the world by its total population wasn't a realistic way to look at nutrition, Ms. Mead said. Part of the food shortage problem is that countries all over the world are encouraged to grow cash crops and buy food.

"People are giving up food to grow coffee and rubber," she said. "In Bangladesh, the competition between food and hemp is shocking."

Using land to grow just one crop year after year depletes soil nutrients, she said. If the crop fails, the country's economy suffers and its people starve. Much of the blame for the monocrop system lies with waste and politics in the United States.

"We are angry at oil-producing nations for withholding oil until they get what they're asking for, but we've been doing the same thing with grain for two decades," Ms. Mead said.

"We loan other countries money to buy our grain and encourage them to grow cash crops."

She said the United States gives large amounts of food to countries in return for favors. The Russian grain sale, she claimed, was made for political reasons while other countries starved.

"WHEN THE amount of food available in a country depends on the grain market in Chicago and you live in India, and the grain market depends on money, there is no relationship anywhere between your need and the food available," Ms. Mead said.

"The further away you get from a village, the more food gets treated as a weapon. We give food to our allies and withhold it from our enemies."

Ms. Mead blames the food crisis on our culture. She said women should be put into decision-making positions when it comes to food.

"Do you think any woman would let half the food in the house be eaten by rats when her children were starving?" she asked.

"In Europe and Asia, men and women work together to make food. The men grow it and pile it up and make speeches over it, and the women store it and divide it and prepare it. They share the work."

In many areas of the world, Ms. Mead said, the invention of the plow started a political order in which women had no part—men were given more free time while tending livestock and women took care of horticulture. She said men are in high positions today because women traditionally have been too busy to take them.

Men and women should work together to restore local balance to agriculture, allowing people to make their own decisions about what kind of food they will grow and what they will do with it.

"WE COULD FEED the people of the world now if we went back to methods of growing we used before and back to the kinds of crops we had before," she said.

"The solutions to the food crisis are to grow food nearer to home, to get rid of monocrops, and to encourage further exploration of the most nutritious foods."

Ms. Mead said she isn't as optimistic about overcoming the food crisis as

she was 15 years ago because of political and economic factors in the world oil market and the development of nuclear power. She believes these issues may interfere with eliminating world hunger. But, at least, she would like to see the United States stop wasting food.

"We hadn't thought about the whole planet at once until the moon race," Ms. Mead said. "When we realized

there were no other people in the solar system, that we were all one species and could expect no hope and no help from another species, we began to look at our technology."

"We now have the opportunity to take our interconnected planet that has just become interconnected in the last 25 years, and work out ways to feed our people and keep our own children safe."



A winning effort

Former Observer & Eccentric photographer Craig Newman (left), of Farmington Hills, receives the "Mark of Excellence" award from Ralph Izard, representing Sigma Delta Chi professional journalism society, for his photo coverage of the 1976 tornado which struck the area.

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CITIZEN TOWN HALL MEETING

on Water Quality Management Planning

Citizens of Wayne County are invited to attend a Town Hall Meeting on Water Quality Thursday, Dec. 8.

The meeting is one of six such Town Hall Meetings to be held in this region. It will give citizens the opportunity to learn about the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' current efforts to prepare the technical components of a Water Quality Management Plan for Southeast Michigan under Section 208 of the federal Water Pollution Control Act.

Major topics of the meeting will be wastewater treatment, sludge disposal and stormwater runoff. These and other information sessions will provide citizens with background information prior to public hearings during spring 1978 on the technical components of the Council's plan.

WATER QUALITY TOWN HALL MEETING:

Wayne County

Thursday, Dec. 8, 8-10 p.m.

Civic Hall
Parks & Recreation Building
15871 Philomene, Allen Park

For further information or locations of other meetings in Southeast Michigan, call the Council at 961-4266.



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	Proposed (budgeted) use of Revenue Sharing funds		Actual use of Revenue Sharing funds		Actual use of Antirecession Fiscal Assistance funds (after July 1, 1977 Antirecession Fiscal Assistance funds may not be appropriated for capital expenditures)		Total expenditures of your government from all funds (except only for functions on which Revenue Sharing or Antirecession Fiscal Assistance funds were spent or anticipated)	
	(Omit cents)		(Omit cents)		(omit cents)		(omit cents)	
	Current	Capital	Current	Capital	Current	Capital	Current	Capital
1. Financial and general administration								
2. General Public buildings		204,000 ^a		455,565			110,339	600,870
10. Police				579		19,606	2,016,283	126,002
20. All other - Specify								
^a Note to 2A	The \$204,000 budgeted use of revenue sharing funds was based upon anticipated fiscal year receipts. The excess of expenditures over receipts resulted from use of unexpended prior years' resources available in the Trust Fund.							
Part III - CERTIFICATION - This is to certify that the data contained in this report are accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.								
Signature of official	Title		Date		Telephone			
<i>J. C. Philib</i>	Director of Finance/Treasurer		11/30/77		Area code	Number	Extension	
					313	474-6115	40	

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