

## MEALS FOR MILLIONS

1800 Olympic Boulevard Santa Monica, California 90406

Will you help keep one human being  
alive for one month?

Dear Fellow Human:

This spring, when your world bursts into color, Abdoulaye's family -- what is left of it -- will eat straw. Spring will not come to the Sahel this year. The edible weeds are all gone; the insects, grubs and worms have vanished; after the straw, there will be nothing.

By then, the problem may have solved itself; Abdoulaye and his family probably will vanish too. With luck, they will die quickly of typhus or cholera. Without luck, they will slowly starve to death.

Things were not always this way for Abdoulaye. Life in Africa's vast Sahel region was never easy, but Abdoulaye and his family were relatively well off. On a small plot of land, with the help of their ox, they grew enough millet to support themselves. Abdoulaye and his family worked very hard; someday, they would acquire more land and another ox; life would get better.

Then the rain stopped. Abdoulaye endured each dry season stoically, hopeful that the rain would come again as it always had. But it did not come. Six years have passed, and still the rain has not come. Like an immense malignancy, the Sahara has spread southward into the Sahel.

Abdoulaye's plot of land has become desert. The crop planted there now will never be harvested; beneath the reddish brown mounds lie not seeds, but the corpses of Abdoulaye's children.

I am writing to ask you to share a small portion of your good fortune with Abdoulaye and his fellow sufferers. What you spend for the trimmings at your dinner table will buy a month of life for one human being in the Sahel or somewhere else in the world's hunger belt.

If you keep one human being alive for another month, there is hope; at least there may be time to find someone who will keep him alive for a month after that.

The beneficiary of your compassion cannot help you or hurt you. There is only one reason in the world why he should mean anything to

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you at all, in fact -- he is a human being. Not long ago he had everything -- a happy family, children he loved, his own plot of land, the knowledge and skill to grow a crop. He had pride, hopes and dreams. He had plans, just like you or me.

Now forces beyond anyone's control have killed his loved ones, shattered his life, destroyed all hope. The food has run out in the Sahel and is running out fast in other famine-stricken areas. Hundreds of thousands already have died from starvation or from the diseases that feast on the starving. There is nowhere to go for help; the famine is everywhere. So the people wait to die.

Does it really matter to the world whether an Abdoulaye lives or dies? Does it matter to you? Does it mean anything to you that within your reach is the power to keep one human being alive for one month? Is that worth doing? Worth the small sacrifice it requires?

I hope I've written to the right person. I hope you feel that keeping a human being alive for another month -- so that maybe he will live for another year, or for a lifetime -- is something you consider worth doing.

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In its own quiet way, Meals for Millions has been keeping human beings alive since it was formed in 1946. We are a non-profit, non-governmental, non-sectarian foundation dependent entirely on the compassion and generosity of fellow human beings, church groups, service clubs and industry.

We recognized some time ago that food handouts are not the answer to the world's hunger problems. Even if all America's surplus food were distributed to the world's hungry, it would be eaten in three days.

So we've devoted the bulk of our energies and resources to self-help programs, giveaways of knowledge, technical know-how, loans of equipment. We help the world's hungry set up their own high protein food plants, which then operate on a self-sustaining basis. We operate a school at our Santa Monica headquarters which trains men and women from the world's "hunger belt" countries in the production and distribution of nutritional foods.

The key to our program is teaching these people how to use their own indigenous crop resources to produce low cost, high protein foods and food supplements that are harmonious with their cultural preferences.

The high protein concentrates produced replace more costly animal proteins. They can be added easily to most regular foods. They can be stirred into juices, soups or other liquids. They can be combined with

low-grade meats, casseroles or cereal products. They can be incorporated into noodles, beans and even pastries. They can be made into candy.

The nutritional value of the protein is roughly equivalent to that of cow's milk. Yet it is economical, can be stored for long periods of time without refrigeration and because it is a concentrate, offers maximum food value with minimum bulk.

When we talk about self-help, we're talking about helping the hungry of the world grow, produce and distribute high protein foods and food supplements. Thanks to Meals for Millions and its dedicated volunteers and field workers, there are high protein processing plants throughout the world today, in countries as diverse as Korea and Ecuador, Mexico and India.

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Although self-help of this sort is the most promising long-term solution for the world's hungry, it is of little value to the world's starving. The people of the Sahel, for example, must first survive.

When emergency measures are called for, Meals for Millions mobilizes its organization to help the many agencies that are sending relief shipments to critical famine areas. High protein concentrate is being shipped into the Sahel right now; the need for more is urgent.

"Urgent" really isn't a strong enough word. I doubt that the language contains a word strong enough to describe what it is like to starve.

I have not experienced it; I have only witnessed it. It is a death horrible beyond imagining, so horrible that people in the Sahel have been known to implore U.N. officials not to give them medicine; they prefer to die from diphtheria because it is quicker and easier than the slow, ghastly tortures of death from starvation.

A starving human will eat anything -- tree bark, wood, paper, leather, dirt. He will eat other human beings. He will, in the terminal stages of starvation, eat his own flesh. Such cases have been recorded; they are among the most grisly in the human experience.

By now, Abdoulaye has stopped hoping for a miracle. He is resigned to his fate. What he does not comprehend is that his fate is not a matter of whim or chance; his fate is in your hands. You can grant him a reprieve. You can keep him -- or someone like him -- alive for another month.

The price? Just \$25. For \$25, you can keep one human being alive for one month. Your reward? Well, don't expect a thank-you note. The

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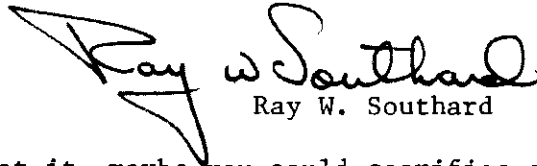
Page Four

individual you help will know only that you are an American. He will be grateful that another human being cared enough to take his fate in hand. "Grateful" isn't a strong enough word either.

So I guess your reward will have to come from within.

As you wonder at the miracle of spring this year, think about the miracle you can make possible for just \$25; life. Will you take on this responsibility -- and send your check today?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ray W. Southard". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the printed name.

Ray W. Southard

P.S. While you're at it, maybe you could sacrifice a bit more, and give some fellow human a little more time. Why not make it \$50? Or \$100? Incidentally, it's tax deductible.