

A Quick Overview of World Problems

by Dr. F. Elwell



FOUR OVERARCHING CRISIS:

- ☞ **Four Overarching crises in the world:**
 - **Nuclear war/terrorism**
 - **Environmental deterioration**
 - **Food shortages/starvation**
 - **Poverty and associated disease**



Nuclear War

- ❏ Because of nuclear proliferation to many unstable countries, the threat of nuclear war or accident could be greater today than during the cold war.



World's Nuclear Club:


How Many Nuclear Weapons Are There in the World?

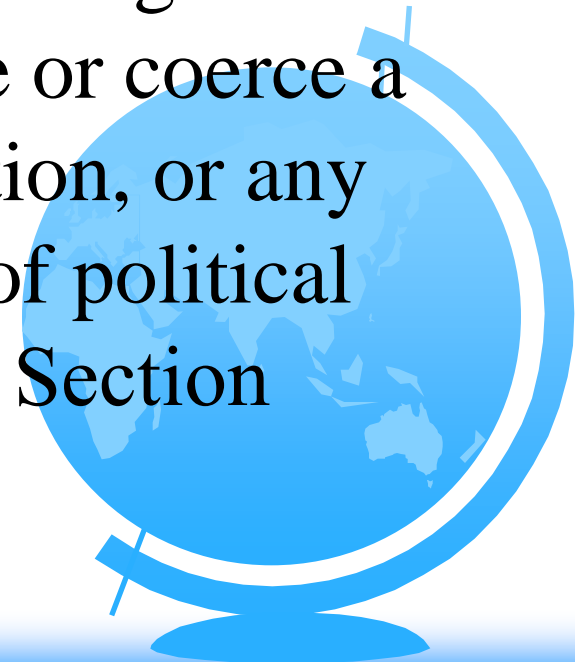
State	Quantity
Declared Nuclear Weapons States	
People's Republic of China	400-410
France	400-482
Russia	13,000-20,000
United Kingdom	200
United States*	10,500-12,000
De Facto Nuclear Weapon States	
India	85-90
Israel	100
Pakistan	15-25
Potential Nuclear Weapons States	
Iran	Actively Pursuing
Iraq	Actively Pursuing
Libya	Actively Pursuing
North Korea	Potentially Pursuing
Total	24,700 to 33,307

*US weapons are deployed in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, and Turkey



Terrorism

- ☞ There is no single, universally accepted definition of terrorism. It is defined by the Code of Federal Regulations as “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” (28 C.F.R. Section 0.85)



Terrorism

- ☞ During the Cold War terrorism was the trade of the superpowers. They fought wars by proxy across the world by funding local armed groups with legal or covert operations (for example the Contras in Central America).



Terrorism

- ☞ In the late 1970s-early 1980s, some of these groups managed to privatize terrorism. To raise money, they used a mixture of legal and illegal activities -- the IRA had the monopoly of private transport in Belfast; the PLO got a cut out of the Hashish trade from the Bekaa Valley; Carlos the Jackal and Aby Nidal became 'guns for hire' for Arab leaders such as Gaddafi.



Terrorism

- ☞ In the 1990s, as international economic and financial barriers were lowered, terror groups expanded their businesses, which become transnational. Today, money is raised cross border, as proved by the joint business empires of Yousef Nada and Idris Nasreddin, two of bin Laden's associates.



Terrorism

- Globalization also facilitated the merging of terror enterprises with criminal and illegal activities. This meant big business. Today their joint yearly turnover is a staggering \$1.5 trillion dollars, higher than the GDP of the United Kingdom.



Terrorism

- ❏ Biological weapons have been called “the poor man’s atom bomb” because the capacity to produce and spread them requires relatively little in the way of sophisticated technology.



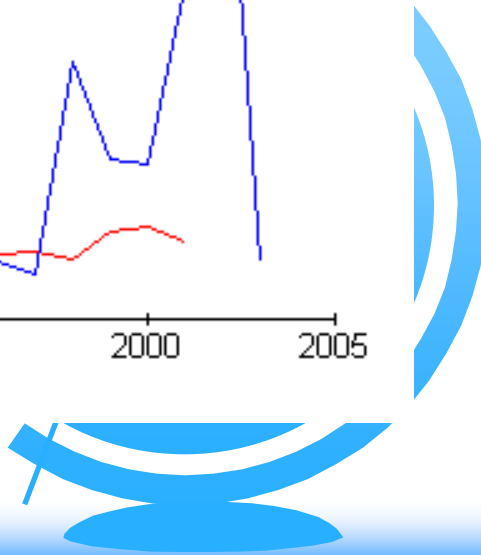
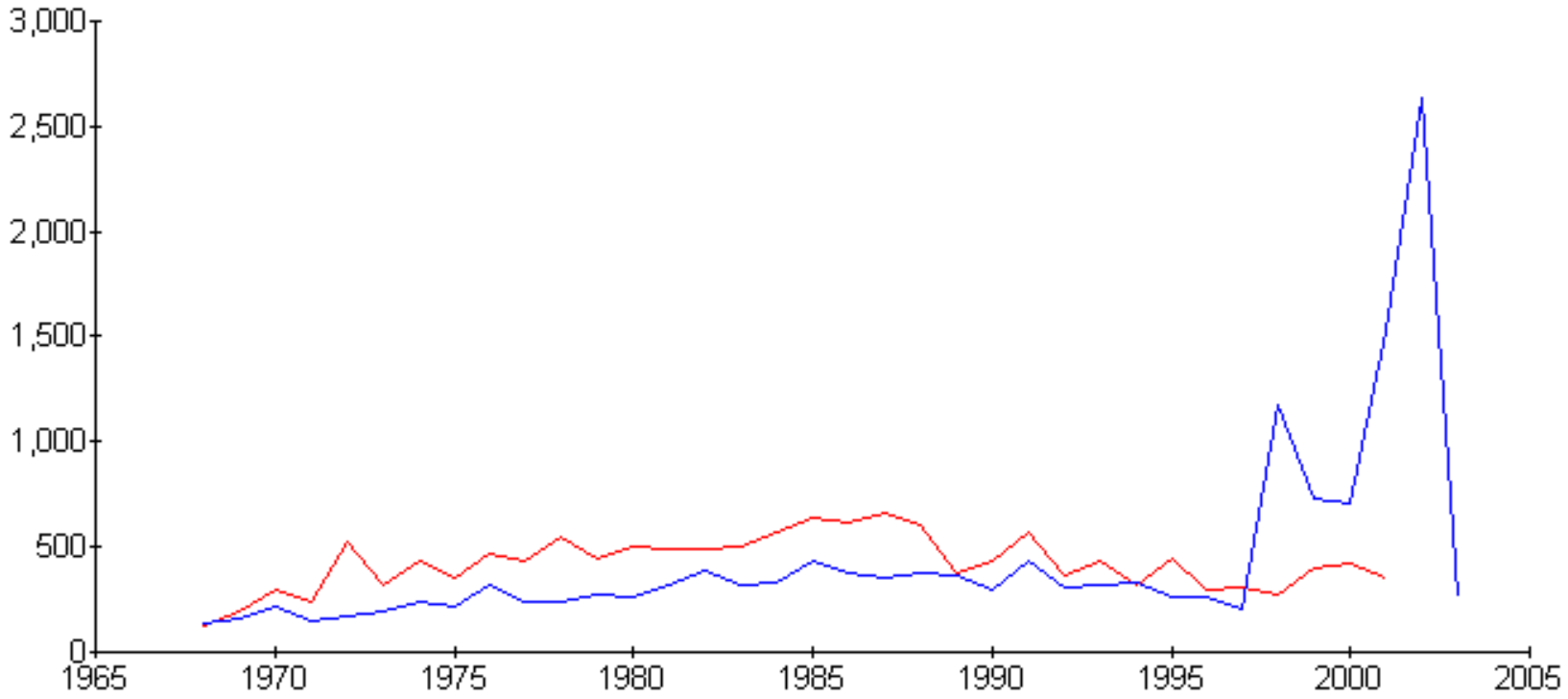
Terrorism

- ☞ An attack against agriculture, livestock, or other food supplies with a biological, chemical, or radiological weapon is known as agro-terrorism.



Terrorism

International terrorist incidents



Environmental Deterioration

- ☞ Atmosphere
- ☞ Water resources
- ☞ Oceans
- ☞ Soil
- ☞ Forests
- ☞ Living Species



Atmosphere

- ☞ Stratospheric ozone depletion threatens us with enhanced ultraviolet radiation at the earth's surface, which can be damaging or lethal to many life forms.



Water Resources

- ❏ Heavy demands on the world's surface waters have resulted in serious shortages in some 80 countries, containing 40 percent of the world's population.



Water Resources

- ☞ Pollution of rivers, lakes, and ground water further limits the supply.



Oceans

- ❏ Destructive pressure on the oceans is severe, particularly in the coastal regions which produce most of the world's food fish.



Soil

- ☞ Since 1945, 11% of the earth's vegetated surface has been degraded, and per capita food production in many parts of the world is decreasing.



Forests



- ☞ Tropical rain forests, as well as temperate dry forests, are being destroyed rapidly. At present rates, some critical forest types will be gone in a few years, and most of the tropical forest will be gone before the end of the next century.



Living Species

- ☞ The irreversible loss of species, which by 2100 may reach one-third of all species now living, is especially serious.



Severe Food Shortages

- ☞ Every day, almost 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes--one child every five seconds.
- ☞ In essence, hunger is the most extreme form of poverty, where individuals or families cannot afford to meet their most basic need for food.



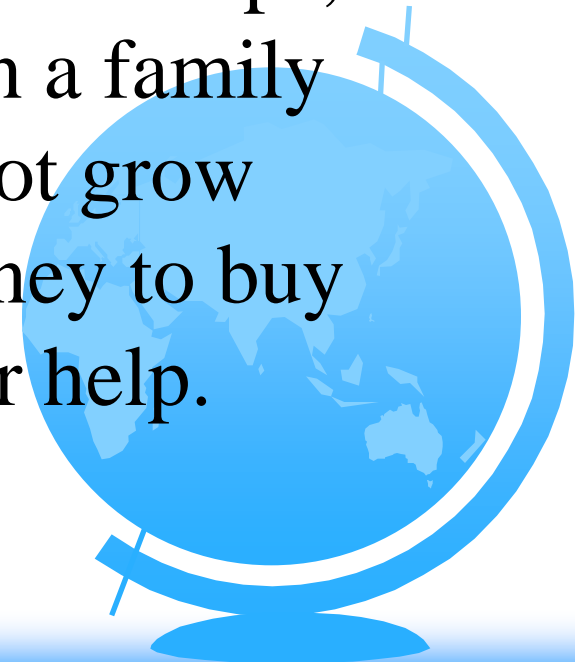
Severe Food Shortages

- ☞ Hunger manifests itself in many ways other than starvation and famine. Most poor people who battle hunger deal with chronic undernourishment and vitamin or mineral deficiencies, which result in stunted growth, weakness and heightened susceptibility to illness.



Severe Food Shortages

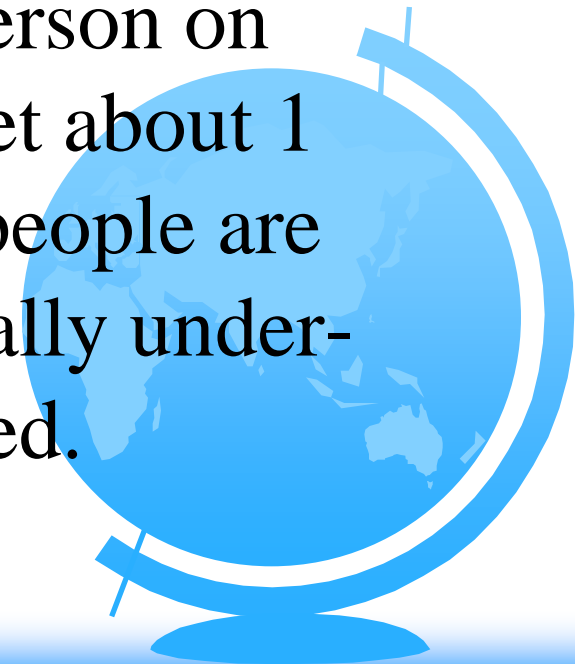
- ☞ Countries in which a large portion of the population battles hunger daily are usually poor and often lack the social safety nets we enjoy, such as soup kitchens, food stamps, and job training programs. When a family that lives in a poor country cannot grow enough food or earn enough money to buy food, there is nowhere to turn for help.



Food Production



Annual world production of food is currently adequate for every person on earth, yet about 1 billion people are chronically under-nourished.



Food Production

- ☞ The major problem with food shortages is not food production, although that will become a factor in the future.
- ☞ In each country where hunger is a basic problem, most of the land is controlled by a small elite, the rest of the population is squeezed onto small plots, marginal land, or are landless city dwellers.



Food Production

- ☞ Most important, monopoly control of agricultural land is typically put into crops that have value as exports but neglect local needs.
- ☞ Typically land is put into cash crops that have value as exports.



Food Production

- ☞ The grain surplus is handled by feeding over a third of the world's production to animals.
- ☞ Crops are allowed to rot to keep prices high.
- ☞ Surplus milk is fed to pigs or even dumped in the name of profit.



Food Production

- ☞ The problem of food scarcity lies in the social organization of food production and distribution.
- ☞ The policies of the rich nations and large corporations are largely responsible for the conditions that perpetuate poverty and hunger.



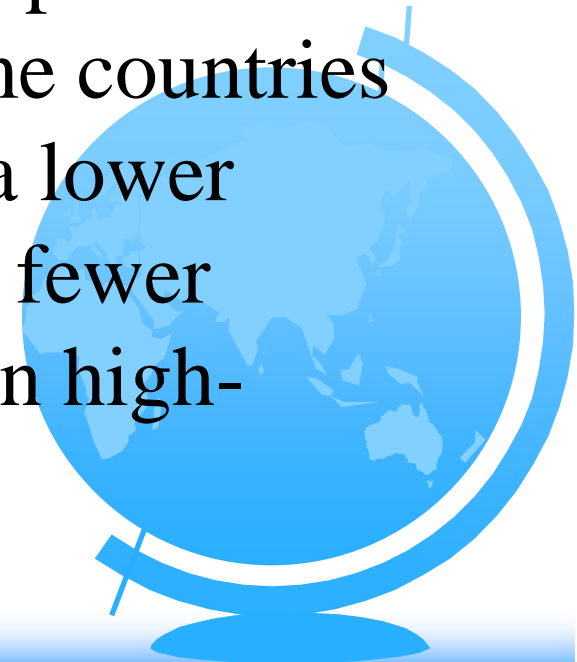
Poverty

- ☞ Today (2009) our world is home to 6.7 billion people. The United States is a part of the high-income group of nations, which consists of about 65 countries with a combined population of about 1 billion, less than one sixth of the world's population. ⁵



Poverty

- ❏ In contrast, approximately 5.6 billion people live in low and lower-middle income economies. This world, earning under \$3,705 GNI per capita, is made up of about 103 low and middle income countries in which people generally have a lower standard of living with access to fewer goods and services than people in high-income countries.



Poverty

- ☞ The gap between the "have" nations and the "have not" nations continues to widen.



Poverty

- ☞ In 2005, almost 1.4 billion people lived below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1.25 per day. Among this group of poor people, many have problems obtaining adequate, nutritious food for themselves and their families.



Poverty

- As a result, 947 million people in the developing world are undernourished. They consume less than the minimum amount of calories essential for sound health and growth.



Poverty

- ☞ Income
- ☞ Life expectancy
- ☞ Education
- ☞ Literacy



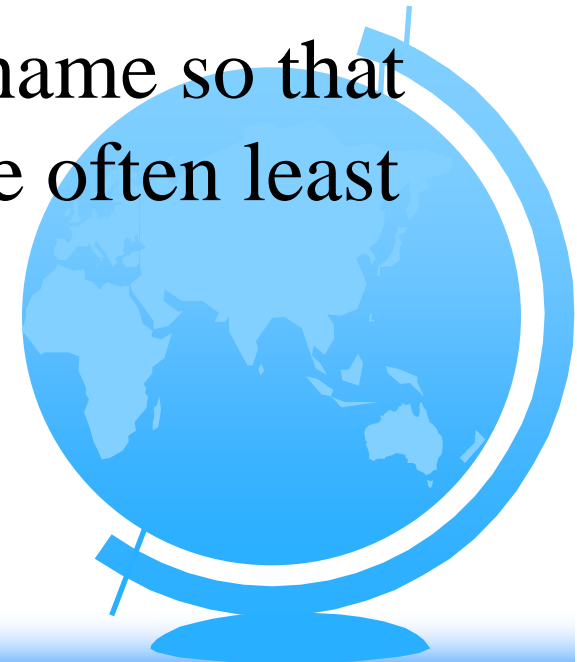
Poverty

- ❏ Undernourishment negatively affects people's health, productivity, sense of hope and overall well-being. A lack of food can stunt growth, slow thinking, sap energy, hinder fetal development and contribute to mental retardation. ¹



Poverty

- ❏ Economically, the constant securing of food consumes valuable time and energy of poor people, allowing less time for work and earning income. Socially, the lack of food erodes relationships and feeds shame so that those most in need of support are often least able to call on it.



Poverty

- ➔ Go to the [World Food Programme](#) website and click on either "Counting the Hungry" or "Interactive Hunger Map" for presentations on hunger and poverty around the world.



Poverty

- ☞ In 2006, about 9.7 million children died before they reached their fifth birthday. Almost all of these deaths occurred in developing countries, 4/5 of them in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the two regions that also suffer from the highest rates of hunger and malnutrition.



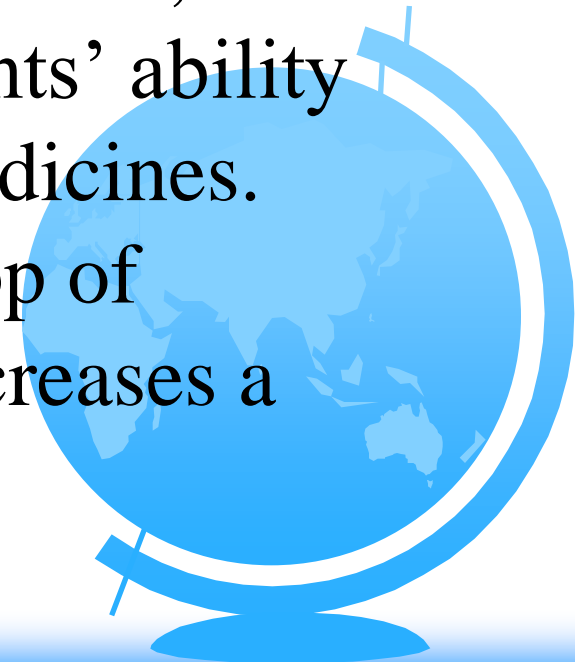
Poverty

- ☞ Most of these deaths are attributed, not to outright starvation, but to diseases that move in on vulnerable children whose bodies have been weakened by hunger.



Poverty

- ☞ The four most common childhood illnesses are diarrhea, acute respiratory illness, malaria and measles. Each of these illnesses is both preventable and treatable. Yet, again, poverty interferes in parents' ability to access immunizations and medicines. Chronic undernourishment on top of insufficient treatment greatly increases a child's risk of death. ¹¹



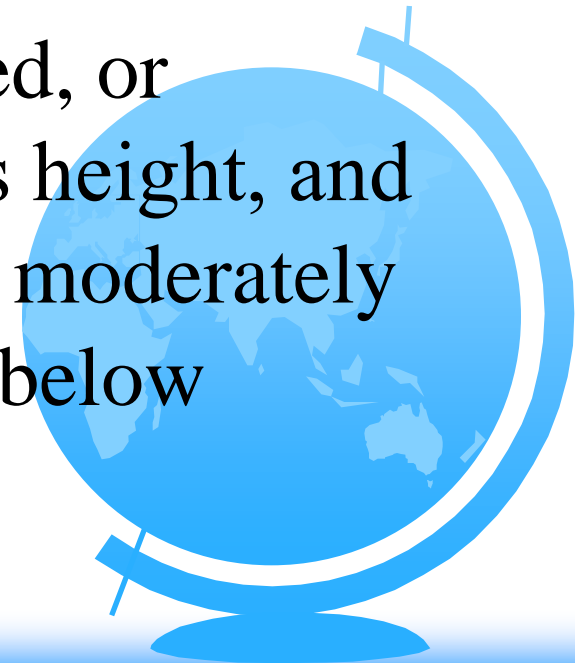
Poverty

- ❏ Poor nutrition and calorie deficiencies cause nearly one in three people to die prematurely or have disabilities, according to the World Health Organization.
- ❏ Pregnant women, new mothers who breastfeed infants, and children are among the most at risk of undernourishment.⁹



Poverty

- ☞ In the developing world, 26 percent of children under 5 are moderately to severely underweight. 10 percent are severely underweight. 11 percent of children under 5 are moderately to severely wasted, or seriously below weight for one's height, and an overwhelming 32 percent are moderately to severely stunted, or seriously below normal height for one's age.



Conclusion

- ❏ High population growth rates, coupled with the growth of industrial production and technology, are the primary social forces behind these massive global problems.

