

Wheeler, an internist in private practice in Charlotte, N.C.; Dr. Alan Mermann, a pediatrician and assistant clinical professor at Yale Medical School, who made a medical survey in Lowndes County, Alabama, last year, and Dr. Joseph Brenner of the medical department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who has made other medical inspections of the South and in Africa.

Dr. Wheeler, who is executive committee chairman of the Southern Regional Council, a private group whose stated goal is equal opportunity for all Southerners, said he had been born and raised in the South but had not been prepared for what he saw in Mississippi.

He stressed the "absence of compassion and concern" among health and welfare workers and described one child who came for treatment with a "nasty laceration." The nurse gave the child a tetanus shot, Dr. Wheeler said, but "didn't dress the wound."

"She didn't even look at the wound," he said.

In "child after child," the doctors said they had seen nutritional and medical conditions "we can only describe as shocking—even to a group of physicians whose work involves daily confrontation with disease and suffering."

They said they had seen children afflicted with suppurating sores, severe anemia, ear, eye and bone diseases, heart and lung ailments that had gone undiagnosed and untreated, chronic diarrhea, "appalling" tooth decay and, "in every county we visited, obvious evidence of severe malnutrition."

AS BAD AS AFRICA

The doctors' report continued:

"We do not want to quibble over words, but 'malnutrition' is not quite what we found; the boys and girls we saw were hungry—weak, in pain, sick; their lives are being shortened . . . They are suffering from hunger and disease and directly or indirectly they are dying from them—which is exactly what 'starvation' means."

The doctors made their disclosures in discussions with the Senate subcommittee at a lunch in the New Senate Office Building, and later at a news conference.

Dr. Brenner, who had spent one year in East Africa, said he had found health conditions in the South among the poor as bad or worse than those among primitive tribal Africans in Kenya and Aden.

"It is fantastic," he said, "that this should be so in the wealthiest nation in the world—the wealthiest nation that ever was."

The team emphasized that the families they saw in Mississippi were totally isolated, unseen and outside the "American money economy."

They described some who struggled to live on \$15 a week, which they earned after working 55 hours, with children who ate biscuit for breakfast, boiled beans for lunch and bread and molasses for dinner.

They saw women, they said, "who had not had money in their hands for weeks." Therefore, they said, the Government should change the food stamp program so that the rural poor could obtain food stamps free.

The stamps now cost from a monthly minimum of \$2 for each applicant to a maximum of \$12 for large families. They can be used to buy quantities of food worth much more than those amounts.

The doctors also met with Assistant Secretary of Agriculture George L. Mehren and his staff, and said they had found them honest and concerned.

But the team was also "discouraged" by reports of Congressional opposition to the free distribution of stamps, even to penniless families whose fathers are declared "able-bodied" thus making them ineligible for welfare.

Senator Clark is planning to hold public hearings on the doctors' survey next month.

Dr. ENGLISH. May I quote one paragraph:

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