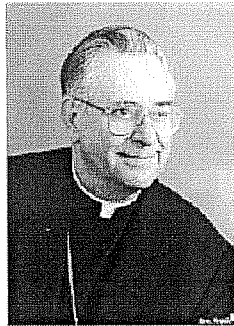


(Archdiocese of Mobile Publication, *The Catholic Week*, 5/3/02)

***Because you need to know . .***

***By Archbishop Lipscomb***

**“We are Honored to Have the Opportunity...”**



It was 1973, and the individual, gaunt after over seven years of captivity and torture in Vietnam, dressed in Navy whites, as senior P.O.W. led the way off the aircraft that returned them to freedom and home. Admiral Jeremiah Denton of Mobile spoke for all to a waiting America, “We are honored to have the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances. We are profoundly grateful to our Commander-in-Chief and to our nation for this day. God Bless America!”

This former student of St. Mary’s School and graduate from McGill Institute, Mobile, turned a page in continuing to serve his country. And the pages keep turning. After finishing his naval career, Admiral Denton served a six year term as U.S. Senator from Alabama. His wide knowledge of worldwide needs, along with those of our nation and the many blessings of the way of life he fought to defend, followed Jeremiah Denton into private life.

From his vantage point of public service and knowledge of military capability, Denton secured passage of a law that permitted the U.S. Air Force to transport humanitarian aid free of charge on a space-available basis. In short order the Denton Program gained praise for its results internationally, appreciation for our Air Force, and gratitude for our country. It was a significant factor in the early 80’s that helped save El Salvador from Communism. But the program, though proven, has its limitations. Delivery was uneven depending upon military priorities, and in time of national emergency it practically ceased to function.

TRANSFORM (Transportation for the Relief of Mankind) was the answer to such problems. It, too, is the work of Jeremiah Denton to reduce or even eliminate the high cost of shipping that has been the main bottleneck in making available billions of dollars in relief from our national surplus by corporate giving through charitable organizations. The founder has been able to enlist highly reputable and generous major transportation companies to donate space for delivery. In 2000, with one and a half full-time employees, TRANSFORM managed 15 ocean containers valued at \$2, 475,283 in addition to air shipments and inland service for the United States. In the first half of 2002 already 55 containers valued at \$4,562,000 have been handled.

Shipment increases are made on a quarterly basis as the capability of the system grows. The continuation of such expansion is dependent upon hiring more staff with immense economies of scale resulting. And the opportunities are just waiting all around us. This year, for example, through efforts that involved many of our own schools, over 900 desks previously destined for a landfill, and other much needed supplies, were successfully delivered to children in Central America. Just last month Admiral Denton addressed a USAID/USDA Conference called “Together We Can Feed the World” on the role of

TRANSFORM. Afterward there was strong approval and the promise of cooperation. The U.N. chief in Rome committed space on all the U.N.'s huge fleet of grain ships.

The task of increasing staff to make all this happen has fallen squarely on the shoulders of Jerry Denton. He has given so much to our country and to the world and now turns to us, among others, and asks for our help so that this extraordinary giving can reach its full potential. In the past one dollar contributed to TRANSFORM meant \$200 in goods delivered-and this leverage begs to be increased.

In a unique gesture, by way of response, our Priests' Council, voted, and I approved, a special collection throughout the archdiocese for the weekend of Mother's Day. I hope and pray we will be truly generous. In his last letter seeking tax-deductible support, the admiral ended, "We urgently need your help. Together we can transform the lives of these desperately deprived people from abject poverty to self-sustenance. America's excess becomes their treasure."

May our answer echo the words of one who returned from extraordinary service to us in 1973: "We are honored to have the opportunity. . . ."

(Front Page article in the Catholic Week 5/3/02)

## **New initiative for humanitarian aid seeks support through special collection next week**

Through a special collection which will be held in all parishes in the Archdiocese next weekend, Alabamians have the opportunity to take the forefront in supporting a new world-wide humanitarian aid initiative called TRANSFORM (Transportation for the Relief of Mankind). TRANSFORM seeks to secure unfilled cargo space from commercial shippers and fill it with food, supplies, and equipment for millions of people around the world.

By soliciting free port-to-port delivery from domestic and international carriers who have unfilled cargo space, collecting relief and humanitarian aid supplies from various companies who have usable excess inventories, and providing an administrative team of material managers and transportation specialists, millions of dollars worth of donated goods get to their destination at no cost to the donor or the receiver.

It was through TRANSFORM that a recent shipment of educational resources, including desks and school supplies collected by McGill-Toolen's Servants of the Poor, was transported to needy students in El Salvador.

TRANSFORM is a division of the National Forum Foundation, founded by Mobile's own Jeremiah A. Denton, Rear Admiral USN (Ret), and former United States Senator. The Mobile-based, National Forum Foundation is dedicated to family values, welfare reform, peacekeeping and humanitarian aid, all under the concept of "One Nation under God."

TRANSFORM is the principal program of the foundation and is a spin-off of the Denton Amendment Program, a 1980's U.S. Congressional legislative act which made way for the U.S. Air Force to transport humanitarian aid free of charge on a space available basis.

However, the Denton Program was limited in scope and during times of increased Air Force logistics demands, space was unavailable. TRANSFORM was initiated to access the vast network of commercial carriers and fill the gaps in the Denton Program.

"There is no shortage of donated goods from American charities and there has never been a shortage of the need for these goods. The shortage has been in affordable shipping," says Admiral Denton.

"But recent developments have made that obstacle a thing of the past," he adds.

In late April, an address by Admiral Denton to an international conference of 650 key transportation professionals resulted in pledges of support from the United Nations transportation authority, the U. S. Department of Agriculture/U.S. Agency for International Development Grain Authority, and other ship-lines and stevedore organizations.

Now the most pressing need for TRANSFORM is the expansion of a Mobile-based administrative team to coordinate the shipments of humanitarian aid from their points of origin to their ultimate destination.

All in the archdiocese are asked to be generous their support of this new and exciting humanitarian endeavor. In addition to the special collection next week, an informational brochure on TRANSFORM will be inserted in next week's issue of *The Catholic Week*.



NEW INITIATIVE—Transporting humanitarian aid to needy people around the world is the work of TRANSFORM, a program of the National Forum Foundation. Members of McGill-Toolen’s Servants of the Poor pose with Jeremiah Denton, the president and founder of the Mobile-based initiative, after loading trucks bound for El Salvador.