

## **Cut aid at the peril of the poor**

IF BARNABY Joyce thought through the human cost of what would happen if Australia cut \$50 million from its aid funding to the World Bank, he would realise how devastating it would be (*The Age*, 4/2).

Australian aid funding to the World Bank supports programs for the poor in many countries in our region: feeding kids at school, supporting pregnant women and nursing mums, running food for work programs, as well as emergency cash handouts in famine areas. Some 1.1 billion people were living on less than \$1 a day and 923 million were undernourished, even before the recent food, fuel and financial crises. Food prices remain volatile. Maize is 50 per cent more expensive than its average price between 2003 and 2006, while rice prices are double. A 10 per cent increase in the price of rice in Indonesia can put this basic food out of reach of 2 million people.

Barnaby, cut this aid at the peril of the lives of the poor.

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