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"FOOD FOR PEACE"

In his agricultural message to the Congress in January 1959, President Eisenhower said:

> I am setting steps in motion to explore anew with other surplus-producing nations all practical means of utilizing the various agricultural surpluses of each in the interest of reinforcing peace and the well-being of friendly peoples throughout the world—in short, using food for peace.

In response to recommendations of Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Benson, the President thus appropriated the slogan, "Food for Peace."

This general idea had already been given currency by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota. He had written a report to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry entitled *Food and Fiber as a Force for Freedom,* issued as a Committee Print dated April 21, 1958. In this the Senator urged considerable enlargement of surplus disposals of farm products, much more emphasis on foreign policy objectives in this operation, and greater permanence of the program under The Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act (Public Law 480, approved July 10, 1954), and urged its administration under a "Peace Food Administrator" in the Executive Office of the President.

On April 16, 1959 Senator Humphrey introduced a bill (S. 1711), sponsored also by 15 other Democratic senators,[1] to give effect to these proposals. Several similar bills were introduced in the House. Hearings on these bills in July 1959[2] and subsequent Congressional discussion moderately influenced the content of the Administration-sponsored bill extending P.L. 480 to the end of 1961, which in amended form was approved September 21, 1959 (H.R. 8609, P.L. 86-341). But important features of the proposed "International Food for Peace Act" were not included.

A still stronger policy is urged in various quarters, especially among church people. This more radical view can be summarized in four sentences: (1) The United States government holds huge and still increasing stocks of wheat, corn, and other foodstuffs, despite various moves to cut down our excessive output of these farm products. (2) Vast numbers of poor people in low-income foreign countries are desperately hungry, year after year. (3) It is our obvious Christian duty to produce all the food we can and to pour out our abundance to all these

[1] Senators Carroll, Clark, Church, Hart, Hennings, Kennedy, Mansfield, McCarthy, McGee, Monroney, Morse, Murray, Neuberger, Symington, Williams (New Jersey).

[2] Senate Committee hearings on S. 1711 on July 7–10, 1959, and House Committee hearings on this and other bills on July 14–29, 1959. S. 1711 was referred to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the House bills to the House Committee on Agriculture.

suffering peoples. (4) Such action would go far to relieve international tensions and to promote the kind of peace we sorely desire. Each of these statements deserves critical scrutiny rather than naïve acceptance.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* editorially expressed a widespread view when it asserted that " 'food surpluses' are a myth as long as over a billion of the world's people are underfed" (*1*). This is false. Actually, it must be emphasized, the huge and growing surplus stocks of wheat and corn in the United States and Canada are a harsh *reality,* since they are remainders from overstimulated output *after* vigorous subsidization of United States commercial grain exports and zealous efforts to supplement these by virtual gifts of very substantial quantities.

The issue between those who broadly support the Administration's program and those who urge going far or very far beyond it is by no means settled. Progress toward the wisest solution is hampered by distortions of facts, omission of pertinent truths, and widespread misunderstanding. This brief paper is offered as a contribution toward clarification of this complicated topic.

I

We are a peace-loving people *par excellence.* Our aversion to war was reflected in our late entry into the first World War and in the fact that it took a Pearl Harbor disaster to stab us into World War II. Nowadays, certainly, Americans hate war and are sincerely, persistently eager for genuine and durable peace. With strong support from our people, the general who led the wartime "Crusade in Europe" has led, as our President, in "waging peace" by all sorts of means. "Food for Peace" is therefore a slogan with powerful appeal.

Especially during and since World War II, Americans have evinced deep concern over the poverty and hunger of people in many nations. Individually, in groups, and as a people, under Democratic and Republican Administrations, we have taken unprecedentedly great strides in expressing this concern in deeds as well as words. Though the slogan "Food for Peace" is new, our Nation has long been earnestly pursuing the policy that it implies, and the broader policy of promoting advances in levels of living throughout the world, particularly in the underdeveloped countries whose people now aspire to achieve revolutionary gains.

If our peace crusade has not yet been crowned with success and what is termed "the cold war" continues, and if vast numbers of the world's people are still ill-fed, these facts reflect the magnitude and obstinacy of these great problems, not weakness of will nor paucity of efforts on our part.

In November 1943 I gave, by request, an address at the 25th annual meeting of the California Farm Bureau Federation on food as an "implement of war" (2). In it I reviewed the steps already taken by this country, in conjunction with other food-exporting allies, toward covering the food deficits of the British and the Russians, meeting "the terrible needs in Soviet Union territories recently reconquered by the amazing Red Armies," thwarting the "bitter famine raging in India," and supplying food for civilians following the advancing forces on the Continent of Europe—"to check and prevent starvation, to correct undernutrition or semistarvation . . . , to eliminate serious deficiency diseases, to provide the basis for civil order, restored morale, assistance to our own armed forces, and

economic and political rehabilitation." Recognizing that food can be a "lever for victory," I warned against such extravagant slogans as "Food will win the war and write the peace," "The United States will feed the world," and even "Food fights for freedom."

It was already clear, I said, that "when victory is won in Europe, food will need to be shipped in and distributed on a large scale, to those who have been our enemies as well as to our ruthlessly oppressed friends, in order to clinch the victory and help start the peace." Even then the Council of the new United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was sitting in Atlantic City, and the Interim Commission which followed the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture was struggling in Washington with the problems of how to transform into reality the superambitious slogan, "Freedom from want" all over the world. I went so far as to say: "Food is not only an implement of war and a lever for victory. It can also become a powerful engine for durable peace. . . ."

This last sentence anticipated one in the President's agricultural message of January 29, 1959: "Food can be a powerful instrument for all the free world in building a durable peace." Better are the milder words used both by Don Paarlberg and by Under Secretary of State Dillon in two excellent recent addresses:[3] "Food can be a powerful ambassador of good will and hence an effective instrument for peace." In the retrospect of the past sixteen years, however, even these words seem too strong. As we shall see (p. 146), "Food for Peace" implies too much. Yet the magnitude and significance of our postwar moves in this area have been unprecedented and outstanding, and should be neither ignored nor minimized by those who urge far greater surplus disposals to hungry peoples overseas.

Postwar relief activities through UNRRA and alongside it, by our Nation and some others, were of major importance and broad effectiveness. Special efforts were required in the late 1940's, when famine threats in Europe led to large-scale emergency food shipments. These, coupled with underestimation of European agricultural recovery, unfortunately also led to reversing the planned tapering off of our wartime price supports and thus to overstimulation of our grain production. Ever since, we have held a "famine reserve" for the world—stocks of foodstuffs, notably wheat, corn, and rice, ample to be shipped when and where famine threatens. We have repeatedly drawn upon this reserve, and it is partly responsible for the fact that there have been no major famines in the past ten years—except possibly in mainland China.

With our essential support, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed into a major international agency for appraising the state of the world's food and agriculture (see 5) and for striving to raise levels of food production and consumption where they are deficient. Its Director General, India's Dr. B. R. Sen, was present at the Conference of Major Wheat-Exporting Countries in May 1959 to promote our "Food for Peace Pro-

[3] The address by Don Paarlberg, Special Assistant to the President, on the Food for Peace Program, given Oct. 7, 1959, is in *3*. That of C. Douglas Dillon, "Building Growth in Freedom: Greatest Challenge of the Sixties," given at the annual convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Nov. 17, 1959, is in *4*.

gram" (*6*). Late in 1959, FAO's Conference approved a "Freedom-from-Hunger-Campaign" for 1960–65.

The United States has also wholeheartedly cooperated in creating and supporting the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and has provided technical and financial assistance to hundreds of health projects abroad through the Mutual Security Program. These have done much not only to cope with epidemics and other health emergencies, but also to stamp out malaria and various other diseases that have long taken a heavy toll of life and working capacity in many parts of the world. The so-called "population explosion" in the underdeveloped countries, indeed, is due mainly to striking reductions in death rates while birth rates continue high. Some two years ago President Eisenhower invited the Soviet Union to join us in the worldwide crusade for improved health (*7*). In February 1960 the State Department set up a permanent Interdepartmental Committee on International Health Policy "for advising the Secretary of State as to objectives, establishing long-range goals, and planning programs in the field of international health" (*8*).

Our Marshall Plan aid to Western Europe (also offered to but declined by Soviet satellites) in 1949–51 included food but was much broader. A magnificent success, it did much to start these countries on a forward economic movement that still has great momentum, as well as to check or to reverse the progress of Communist parties in France, Italy, and elsewhere. The United States has not only pushed our own Point Four Program of aid to underdeveloped countries but has also cooperated in highly promising technical assistance programs through the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

Since 1954, under The Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act (Public Law 480), we have gone to great lengths in trying, as Under Secretary Dillon recently said, "to transform our burden into a blessing: to make our mounting surpluses of food and fiber available on special terms or as gifts to friendly countries which need them but which cannot buy them on regular commercial terms" (*4*, p. 856). He went on:

> The results of the P.L. 480 program are impressive. The total value of surplus products sent abroad under it as of last June 30th amounts to about $5.6 billion. If we add to this the value of agricultural commodities programed for shipment as part of our foreign aid program, the total rises to a little more than $7.3 billion. By comparison the total supplied under lend-lease was $6.7 billion and under the Marshall Plan $7.7 billion.
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> . . .
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> Over the past 5 years 6 million tons of American surplus have been supplied free to needy people abroad. At the moment more than 60 million persons in over a hundred countries and dependent areas are receiving food as a gift from the American people.

Sales to India under P.L. 480 in 1956–59 totaled nearly $915 million. The Indian Food Minister (S. K. Patil) left for Washington in mid-April 1960 to seek a $1¼ billion contract for 12 million tons of grain to cover estimated deficits

in the next four seasons and 5 million tons for a reserve stock; and to borrow back part of the rupees paid for the surplus grain to increase India's wheat production, to expand grain storage facilities, and to improve distribution methods (9). As we shall see (p. 142), his efforts were successful.

II

Since mid-1954 most of the noncommercial exports of farm products from the United States have been made under the provisions of Public Law 480, by four different procedures under three "titles" of the act. The accompanying table (from *10*, p. 4) shows that more than one-fourth of our agricultural exports in five recent fiscal years were made under this act. These disposals entailed heavy losses to the federal treasury. The greater part of the other exports were made with the benefit of export subsidies in aid of domestic price-support programs.

EXPORTS OF U.S. FARM PRODUCTS, FISCAL YEARS 1954/55 TO 1958/59
(Million dollars)

Year	Public Law 480 exports					Other exports	Total exports	P.L. 480 exports as % of total
	Title I	Title II	Title III Donations	Title III Barter	Total			
1954/55	73	83	135	125	416	2,728	3,144	13
1955/56	439	91	184	298	1,012	2,484	3,496	29
1956/57	909	88	165	401	1,564	3,165	4,728	33
1957/58	660	92	173	100	1,025	2,977	4,002	26
1958/59[a]	729	56	138	144	1,067	2,678	3,745	28
Total	2,810	410	795	1,068	5,083	14,032	19,115	27

[a] Partly estimated.

Title I of the act authorized sales for foreign currencies, e.g., for rupees in the case of sales to India, under agreements with the recipient countries. This is by far the largest channel of surplus disposal. Through June 30, 1959, the estimated Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) cost of food and other commodities programed for export under Title I agreements was $5.1 billion (including ocean transportation) and the corresponding "export market value" (including ocean transportation) was $3.7 billion; but substantial quantities ($453 million as of May 31, 1959 at market value) remained to be shipped (*11*, pp. 66, 68, 70). Foreign currencies have accumulated in the hands of the United States in large amounts, mainly for two reasons. Portions have been used to pay for our own government's expenditures in the recipient countries. Most of the balance is expected to be loaned back to the recipient countries in aid of approved development projects, but the required machinery moves very slowly. Moreover, because of inflation in most of the recipient countries, the domestic purchasing power of the foreign currencies held has undergone considerable depreciation (*11*, Table 11, last line).[4]

[4] Through 1958 the "dollar equivalent" of foreign currencies withheld had been $2,549 million, and the year-end balance was $1,358 million; revalued at the December 31 market rate, the balance was $1,106 million.

Title II of P.L. 480 provided for donations of surplus farm products for famine and other emergency relief abroad, for which provision had earlier been made under Sec. 416 of the Agricultural Act of 1949. This program is administered by the International Cooperation Administration. The amounts so used appear surprisingly small.

Title III of the act provides for donations of surplus food (a) to eligible recipients and outlets in the United States, including schools for lunches, charitable institutions, family units, and disaster relief; and, (b) under Sec. 302, to needy persons overseas, distributed through nonprofit agencies such as CARE and intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), chiefly to school children, refugees, and other individuals. Many church people have contributed substantial sums in recent years for this "Share Our Surplus" program. Costs of processing, reprocessing, packaging, etc., and ocean transportation as well, are usually paid by the United States.

Through June 30, 1959, $1,209 million (at CCC cost) had been shipped to foreign countries under Titles II and III, and $1,162 million of food had been distributed in the United States under Title III (*11*, pp. 71–74).[5]

The 1959 amending act added a new Sec. 308 to Title III which specifically authorized donation of CCC stocks of animal fats and edible oils "for use in the assistance of needy persons outside the United States," and even CCC purchase of such products for foreign donation in such amounts as the Secretary of Agriculture determines "will tend to maintain the support level for cottonseed and soybeans" without involving price-support purchases by the CCC.

Title III of the act (Sec. 303) also authorizes so-called barter transactions, for which provision had been made under earlier legislation. These have played a variable part in surplus-disposal operations. At export market values, the total so shipped was $109 million in the four fiscal years ending June 30, 1954, mainly under the Charter Act of the CCC (August 20, 1948), and $1,068 million in the ensuing five fiscal years (*11*, p. 76; *10*, esp. p. 4).

These transactions do not constitute direct barter of grains and other surplus products for minerals and certain other products destined mainly for domestic stockpiles. Surplus farm products are turned over to private U.S. firms, at an attractive price, in return for contracts to deliver, over a period of years, an equivalent value of stockpile materials. The farm products are then sold by the dealers for what they will bring, regardless of where they go, thus competing with ordinary commercial sales of American, Canadian, and other foreign exporters.[6]

The strongest private domestic advocates of barter transactions, according to official testimony, "are those who own foreign mines and smelters, or who are in the business of importing minerals and ores. Its strongest opponents are found in the ranks of those who are exporting American agricultural commodities, and who believe that barter is replacing our normal export business" (*11*, p. 400).

P.L. 480 authorized the creation of a "supplemental stockpile" of strategic and

[5] A new Sec. 306 was added to P.L. 480 by the 1959 amendments, giving authority for a two-year trial of the "food stamp system" long advocated by Senator Aiken of Vermont; but the $250 million per year limit on cost will narrow the scope of the experiment if it is undertaken.

[6] See testimony of Clarence D. Palmby, CCC vice president, before the House Committee on Agriculture, July 28, 1959, in *11*, esp. pp. 399–436.

other materials. The "strategic stockpile" appeared amply justified when it was authorized some years earlier,[7] but the need for it has largely vanished, and increasing portions are being sold while additions keep coming in. The supplemental stockpile is essentially an unnecessary surplus, mainly of minerals, in forms more durable and less costly to store than farm products are. At the end of 1958 its supplies on hand represented a cost of some $458 million, with substantial amounts still to be delivered.[8] Difficult questions involved in its eventual disposition have not yet been squarely faced.

Barter transactions became a source of mounting friction between Canada and the United States in 1954–57. In April 1957 unrestricted barter was abolished, and barter operations were later resumed only under regulations (initially effective May 27, 1957) which sought to prevent interference with normal commercial markets. These safeguards have largely eliminated the friction, but also involved a reduction in the volume of barter transactions (*12*). These declined from $350 million in calendar year 1956, before the new regulations went into effect, to $269 million in 1957, and to $65 million in 1958, then rose to about $150 million in 1958–59. Under the prodding of numerous legislators, who are eager to maximize surplus disposals, Congress has tried to insist on enlargement of the barter program, up to the previous maximum or beyond it. The unofficial but representative Canadian-American committee recently stated (March 1960):

> Despite the recent expansion in U.S. surplus wheat stocks we believe that it is vitally necessary to resist pressures to give barter a significantly greater role by relaxing, as contrasted with merely adjusting, current restrictions. Such extension would inevitably lead to the displacement of dollar sales of both the United States and Canada.

It is amply clear that American food surpluses have been and are being used as a constructive instrument of our foreign policy, and that our government is earnestly seeking to enlarge and improve this use. On this point there is broad agreement in principle between the Administration and those who criticize the administration of the program and urge greater expansion and greater permanence. But experience has clearly indicated several limitations on the extent of wise moves in this direction.

The so-called barter operations have given rise, as we have seen, to legitimate complaints from friendly exporting countries which are subject to what is internationally regarded as unfair competition. The same sort of hazard also arises in connection with much larger sales of surplus commodities for foreign currencies. The scope and content of barter operations have been modified with a view to obviating all reasonable objections. In view of pressures from the Congress, however, it is virtually impossible to exercise care enough in administration to keep these operations consistent with our over-all foreign policy, prominent in which is the promotion of freer commercial international trade and the avoidance of using our great economic power to gain unfair advantages. To a degree that is open to serious foreign criticism, the United States has already secured

[7] Initially by the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act (1946), 60 Stat. 597.

[8] Mr. Palmby testified that of the materials received under barter arrangements, about $220 million had gone into the strategic stockpile and a little over $600 million into the supplemental stockpile (*11*, pp. 406–15).

grudging international consent to our extensive export subsidization and our severe import restrictions on competing farm products (see *13*).

Here is the major justification for the current Food for Peace Program, in which this country is undertaking to get a higher degree of international cooperation in dealing with the problems that arise, stressing continuing consultations with friendly exporting countries. An intergovernmental Wheat Utilization Committee, set up after the Food for Peace Conference of May 1959 and representing the major wheat-exporting countries, is undertaking to find ways of maximizing the constructive distribution of existing surplus wheat stocks under conditions that safeguard and encourage expansion of commercial exports. The Departments of State and Agriculture and the International Cooperation Administration are vigorously working on this problem, as shown by testimony of their officials before Senate and House Committees; and on April 13, 1960 the President appointed Don Paarlberg, his Special Assistant in the general area of economics, to be Food-For-Peace Coordinator also.

One of the important potentials has seemed to many to be the building, in food-deficit countries, of national reserves of wheat in particular. This has been long a subject of study within the FAO and its member countries. On February 27, 1957, the United Nations Assembly adopted a U.S.-sponsored resolution favoring grants of surplus agricultural commodities over a 5-year period to help build up and maintain such reserves. Senator Humphrey's "International Food for Peace" bill included specific provisions for promoting this, including grants for building storage facilities (see *14*). These provisions were not included in the 1959 amending act, but the Administration position was that sufficient authority already exists. The American Farm Bureau Federation and American flour millers oppose this move, on different grounds (*14*, p. 140; *15*), but there have been many obstacles to early implementation of such schemes.

Nevertheless, on May 4, 1960, the first P.L. 480 agreement designed to establish substantial stockpiles was signed in Washington. Under Title I of the act, the United States undertakes to ship to India about 16 million tons of surplus wheat (587 million bushels) and 1 million tons of rice (22 million bags) over the next four years. All of the rice and one-fourth of the wheat are to be used to constitute a national food reserve. The aggregate export value is estimated at $1,276 million, including expected ocean transportation costs of $195 million. About 85 per cent of the rupees paid for this grain will be made available to the Government of India for economic development projects, one-half as loans and one-half as grants. The press release announcing this significant agreement, by far the largest single Title I transaction under P.L. 480, observed that "in the case of both wheat and rice, measures have always been taken to assure usual imports from free world sources." While no specific mention is made of consultations with other wheat-exporting countries on this huge contract, it must be inferred that the subject has received serious consideration in the Wheat Utilization Committee in the past year.

III

Initially, Public Law 480 was conceived as a temporary measure, employing extraordinary devices to bring about a rapid disposal of accumulated surpluses,

which were regarded as tending to depress farmers' prices. In this it has failed. The upward trend of surplus stocks, in total and most notably of wheat and corn, has continued despite huge domestic and foreign disposals. Hence the act, at first limited to three years, has been repeatedly extended and broadened, and dollar limits set on its operations increased. Yet its temporary character has continued to be officially emphasized.

Recently, Congressional efforts have been made not only to enlarge the scope but also to make it semipermanent, on the assumption that large agricultural surpluses will persist indefinitely. Senator Humphrey vainly sought to get the authorization to negotiate sales under Title I raised from $1.5 billion a year at CCC cost for two years to $2 billion a year for 5 years. This was in line with a more comprehensive special report in 1958 by John H. Davis, made for the Department of State, which accepted only part of his recommendations (*16*; see also *17*, *13*). The 1959 amending act added a new Title IV (Secs. 401–05), which authorized long-term supply contracts and dollar loans at low interest rates up to 20 years; the practical significance of this, however, is doubtful. The American Farm Bureau Federation has supported the Eisenhower Administration in resisting these pressures, and vainly sought to taper off the dollar authorizations for sales for foreign currencies (*18*, *19*).

One hard fact Administration spokesmen have been loath to assert publicly. Under the existing "farm program," so extremely resistant to rational revision, the more surpluses we dispose of at home and abroad the greater is the stimulus to production of greater surpluses. Without change in present farm legislation, government stocks of farm products as of June 30 have been estimated to rise from about $9 billion in 1960 to $12 billion in 1963, and costs for transportation, storage, and interest in fiscal 1960 are expected to exceed $1.25 billion (*20*).[9] Only recently have the President and Vice-President spoken out strongly for a drastic overhauling of the indefensible phases of the farm program, but thus far in vain.

In its *Report on the FAO Principles*, dated May 22, 1959, FAO's Committee on Commodity Policy significantly observed:

> While the surplus situation varies from commodity to commodity and from country to country, as a broad generalization it may be said that the movement of agricultural surpluses into export, whether by concessional sales, barter, or donations, has not prevented the further generation of surpluses. Indeed the general effect may have been to delay actions that might have reduced surpluses. If embarrassingly large stocks are reduced through disposals abroad, pressures to correct the generation of surpluses will be less. It is unlikely that there will be any change in this situation so long as governments are prepared to support prices which have the effect of encouraging production substantially in excess of domestic demand and normal exports and then are prepared to subsidize the entry of the resultant surpluses into world trade. Furthermore, the export by one government of substantial quantities at discount prices or through other concessional terms tends to encourage other governments to adopt similar means. This, in turn, may again tend to defer measures to prevent surplus accumulation in those countries.

[9] The $12 billion figure is not there mentioned.

The unofficial Canadian-American Committee already quoted published in October 1959 a statement *Towards a Solution of our Wheat Surplus Problems*, in which it admitted that, "given the circumstances which have contributed to the current congestion on wheat, surpluses of the present order might well exist indefinitely," or even grow larger (p. 2), and expressed the view that "the problem of disposing of surplus wheat has now assumed such proportions, such a degree of permanency, and such a potential for intensified conflicts of interest between Canada and the United States, that new and better coordinated surplus disposal methods should be explored" (pp. 7–8). But it added (p. 10):

> Regardless of what program may be used to eliminate surplus wheat, the Committee emphasizes that there should be no thought of operating it in perpetuity. On the contrary, the general aim should be to restore the balance between supply and effective commercial demand as quickly as possible. There can be no doubt that the present state of serious imbalance, although partly attributable to agricultural technological developments and favorable weather, has also been partly attributable to the various forms of governmental intervention in production and marketing—intervention that exists to a greater or lesser extent in practically every wheat growing country in the world.

The American Farm Bureau Federation asserted in testimony on S. 1711 before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (*14*, p. 139):

> We must face the facts. The production of our present surpluses was not motivated by real market needs at home or abroad. They were motivated by the continuation of unrealistic government price support programs. Many of those who have consistently advocated programs that have been responsible for the accumulation of such vast amounts of agricultural commodities now look desperately for any avenue of disposing of them, regardless of the longrun consequence to the American farmers, to friendly nations, or to the U.S. Treasury.
>
> There is evidence that American agriculture is becoming overdependent on Public Law 480 and similar export programs.

The price-support, acreage-allotment, surplus-acquisition, and surplus-disposal "farm program" has dismally failed to achieve most of its objectives, yet there are vested interests in almost every component of this internally inconsistent and extremely costly system. Thus far it has proved politically impossible to make changes sufficient to bring domestic and export market demands and farm output into reasonable equilibrium. While this impasse persists, continuing technological advances coupled with production-stimulating price supports tend to yield increasing surpluses. Few are willing to advocate farmer regimentation drastic enough to eliminate surplus production, or cuts in artificial price supports severe enough to remove incentives to produce more than commercial markets will absorb. Hence the appeal to utilize to the full America's enormous agricultural potential, and to pour out this abundance for the benefit of vast numbers of underfed peoples, even if it should entail still heavier burdens on the federal treasury and further replace economic marketing by government operations.

IV

The extent of world "hunger" or subnormal nutrition is unknown, and there is no reliable basis for the confident assertions that are frequently made about it. It may well be that at least two-thirds of the world's people are ill-fed, if judged by dietary levels now customary in the Western World; but these levels are a comparatively recent development. Conceivably one-half or more of the world's population suffers from some degree of undernutrition, by some defensible standard, but we have no means of knowing. Doubtless large numbers of people in the underdeveloped countries often or commonly go hungry, especially in portions of each year and when local crops fail, and presumably many eat less than would be required to make them efficient laborers.

Such conditions naturally arouse the compassion of well-fed Americans. But falling mortality rates and the notable postwar population upsurges in those countries belie crude impressions that starvation is common and that chronic and serious shortage of dietary calories is well-nigh universal even where poverty is widespread and severe, as in India. To a degree not generally recognized, calorie consumption appears generally adequate to provide subsistence and maintain fertility; and if protein consumption is too low to provide for maximum growth, the consequences are by no means crucial. After long study of reliable dietary health surveys, wherever made, the Food Research Institute's conclusion is, to quote Mrs. Farnsworth (*21*),

> that chronic marked undernutrition with associated adverse health symptoms is rarely encountered as a characteristic of large population groups—that it is mainly to be found among widely scattered, unrepresentative individuals (probably predominantly located in large cities) and to small, unrepresentative, primitive groups whose location, food habits, and cultural patterns are such as to make most of them poor prospects for the utilization of surplus wheat.

If this be true, the extent and degree of chronic hunger among the world's peoples are often grossly exaggerated.

The greatest contribution of our postwar food disposals, including those in recent years, has been in helping to cope with short-run shortages, including prevention of threatened famines. On the chronic undernutrition of such fractions of the world's people as suffer from it, our enormous surplus disposals, however beneficial they have been, have made no perceptible dent. It is hard to believe that doubling or quadrupling the quantities would do much more. And corn, one of our two most intractable surpluses, is not generally acceptable as a food in the poorest countries.

Moreover, just as openhanded charity to individuals—giving to everyone who begs, without any strings—does not strike us today as the best way to help individuals improve their condition, so in international relations a similar practice is very hard to justify. At its recent session, as in one two years earlier, the FAO "Conference again emphasized that, in spite of the continued existence of surplus stocks, in the long run the less developed countries could overcome the twin problems of rural poverty and inadequate food supplies only by building up their own agriculture and developing balanced economies" (*5*, p. 89).

The basic ways to overcome undernutrition and malnutrition, where they are widespread, and to raise levels of consumption and living where they are very low, include raising educational levels, improving technology, curbing excessive population growth, and enlarging per capita output of agriculture and other industries in these countries themselves—not still more lavish gifts of foodstuffs that our Government wants to get rid of. There is even reason to believe that Congressional support for the more effective forms of foreign aid, such as technical assistance, development loans, and carefully devised money grants, is lessened by the politically popular food-surplus disposals.

Furthermore, it is wrong to assume that the countries with ill-fed millions *want* unlimited quantities of our surpluses dumped upon them. Their own producers, like ours, want protection from such dumping, and it is on their increased output that these countries must ultimately depend for raising their food consumption levels. Their pride prevents acceptance of indefinitely greater amounts of open or camouflaged gifts. Their governments rightly fear that, if they become increasingly dependent on such gifts from us for a major part of their food supplies, their efforts to enlarge their own output will be hampered and they will be the more vulnerable if our surplus runs out or there is a change of policy on the part of the United States. The recent ending of the surpluses of cheese and dry milk for overseas shipment has already been the source of serious disappointment to recipients of foreign donations and to the various distributing agencies. And Sec. 307, added to P.L. 480 by the 1959 amending act, specifically assures priority of domestic over foreign donations of surplus foods.

These are among the numerous grounds for giving no serious consideration to extreme proposals that American taxpayers finance our farmers in going "all out" to produce food for the world's billions who would like larger and better diets, paying all other costs involved, and thus radically expanding humanitarian food gifts rather than commercial markets.

V

With certain reservations because of its indirect support of our discredited "farm program," the President's Food for Peace Program deserves broad endorsement, but it should not arouse excessive expectations, especially in respect to the promotion of peace. Dr. Paarlberg indeed said, in his address already quoted: "It may well be that the 'Food for Peace' effort will yield its greatest returns in improved international understanding rather than in sharp increases in the quantity of food moving under special export programs. This, of itself, would be worthwhile."

It is extremely difficult to assess the contribution that our great food shipments have made to the cause of *peace* in very recent years. As part of the early postwar relief and rehabilitation programs and of Marshall Plan aid to Europe in 1949–51, I believe these counted heavily for peace in promoting the extremely impressive recovery in Western Europe and Japan. Prevention of threatened famines in Yugoslavia, India, and Pakistan was certainly important, but its bearing on world peace is not clear. This is true also of alleviations of localized food shortages elsewhere, and of our additions to food supplies in many poor countries.

In the past and present, surely, wars and threats of war have not come from the poor and hungry nations, but from those much better off, under ambitious ruthless leaders. Subject to some reservations about the miscalled People's Republic of China, I expect this to be true in the future.

If all the world's peoples enjoyed adequately nutritious diets, the threat of war would be hardly, if at all, less than now. If all the food surpluses we do or can produce could be effectively distributed to the multi-millions who suffer from undernutrition or malnutrition, there is little or no basis for thinking that these peoples would be lesser threats to peace or, indeed, that their nutritional gains would be lasting. Much greater hope for lasting nutritional improvement will come if it is won by the peoples themselves, with such help as can be given by more prosperous nations and international agencies. The factors primarily responsible for the poverty and low nutritional status in India, for example, include illiteracy, ignorance, underemployment, wasteful marriage and funeral customs, taboos, the caste system, lack of enterprise, primitive technology, and over-rapid population increase. Attacks on all of these causal factors are under way, but some of them cannot be attacked from the outside. Here is no short-term emergency like a famine, but a long-term challenge.

The official report on "Operation of the Mutual Security Programs," for the first half of 1959, refers to a threat to our national security, "more diffuse but no less real" than the Communist one: "This is the explosion that may result if people in the emergent countries are frustrated in their determination to end the squalor and hunger and sickness in which they live" (5, p. 89). This evokes several comments.

The "revolution of rising expectations" or "aspirations" is a major fact of the postwar world. High among the objectives of our national policy is the aim to promote, directly, in cooperation with other nations, and through UN special agencies, advances in the levels of living of other peoples. We have gone unprecedentedly far in this direction and keep striving to go further. As President Eisenhower said in concluding his address in New Delhi, India, on December 11, 1959, "we shall continue to cooperate to achieve a world free from the pangs of hunger, in which families live full and prosperous lives, where friendship among nations replaces fear and suspicion, and where men are free in the pursuit of happiness" (22).[10]

This is all to the good. But the "aspirations" and "expectations" of our people and many others have been raised so high that early fulfillment is simply out of the question, and some degree of frustration is probably inevitable. Nor can we hope to prevent all sorts of "explosions," such as the persisting crisis in Algeria and the current ones in Cuba and South Africa. Most regrettable as these are, I cannot regard them as threats to world peace or to our national security. And the term "explosion" is highly inappropriate and misleading for gradual

[10] In his agricultural message to the Congress, Feb. 9, 1960, the President said:
"The Food for Peace Program, initiated pursuant to my recommendations of last year, has been vigorously advanced. On my recent trip abroad, I saw many constructive results from these efforts and the need and opportunity for even greater use of this humanitarian program. Clearly we should continue to do our utmost to use our abundance constructively in the world-wide battle against hunger. . . ."

disappointment of excessive expectations, as well as for the postwar population upsurge.

Still another illusion is cherished. The wide, persistent, and even growing disparities between levels of living in the more advanced and the less developed countries are viewed, in many quarters, with serious concern, and this concern is among the forces supporting all sorts of American and international efforts to help the poorer countries improve their living conditions. These efforts deserve and enjoy well-nigh universal favor. Some, however, like the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, go so far as to regard these disparities as "a grave threat to peace."[11] This view I regard as ill-founded. Rather, these disparities must be accepted as hard facts which we must learn to live with, at least for the foreseeable future.[12] They may at times be sources of irritation and disturbing propaganda, but they need be no more so long as stress is laid on progress in improving living conditions everywhere. Impressively rapid postwar population growth by natural increase in most of the low-income countries constitutes one of the most obstinate brakes on their economic advance, whereas such rates are much lower in most of the more advanced countries. But various other deep-rooted factors contribute to the regrettable if not ominous "gap" that even imperfect international comparisons of levels of living reveal.

SUMMARY

No nation has ever approached the liberality that the United States has displayed, during and since World War II, in strenuous efforts to promote world peace and the advancement of other peoples, especially including those with very low incomes and poor living conditions. With broad public support, our government is earnestly continuing these policies, and will surely do more.

Surplus food disposals have played an important part in these efforts. They have met many major and minor food emergencies, and generally yielded valuable results; but they encounter limiting factors, and show no promise of eliminating under- and malnutrition where these are chronic. Here is a long-term challenge that can be met only by helping low-income countries to realize their own potentials. The extent of critical food shortage is not reliably known, but it is often grossly exaggerated.

Our surplus disposals have unfortunately helped to tighten the grip on the Nation of an obsolete and costly farm program overdue for overhauling, and have complicated our relations with Canada and other competing exporting nations whose friendship is vital to us.

The President's Food for Peace Program—new only in name—merits endorsement but should not arouse excessive expectations, especially for its contribution to world peace. Those who would expand it greatly, or replace it by something much or vastly larger, have a heavy burden of proof.

[11] Mrs. Annalee Stewart, legislative secretary of the U.S. section of the League, so testified before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 8, 1959 (*14*, p. 216).

[12] I expressed this position in December 1949, in commenting on a similar statement by FAO's then Director-General W. E. Dodd (*23*).

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