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POLICIES, PLANNING
AND MANAGEMENT
FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PAPERS AND REPORTS

FOURTEENTH
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS

*Held at the Byelorussian
State University, Minsk, U.S.S.R.*

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OXFORD
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1971

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

NILS WESTERMARCK

When we assemble today for our Fourteenth International Conference of Agricultural Economists, the event will be recorded in the history of our Association as the first congress to be held in a country with a centrally planned economy. Since Agricultural Economics belongs to the sphere of social and economic sciences, the research work and the activities carried on within our discipline depends to a high degree on the social political system prevailing in a country. It is, therefore, quite natural that agricultural economists in countries with a free enterprise economy place emphasis on other aspects in the problematics than their colleagues in countries with a centrally planned economy. On the other hand, it is also quite natural that scientists, research workers, teachers, officers and extension people in the wide field of agricultural economics feel a great and constantly increasing interest in deepening their knowledge of and insight into the problems that the colleagues in both forms of economy are, so to say, contending with and the solutions that are being sought or already are being applied.

It is perhaps not known to all that as early as in 1930 agricultural economists from the U.S.S.R. participated in our work and were present at the Second International Conference held at the Cornell University in Ithaca, New York State, United States. Then followed a long period during which there was no contact, but in 1955 contact was revived through the attendance of three agricultural economists from U.S.S.R. in the Ninth Conference held in Helsinki. Since that time, not only have Soviet economists joined our organization, but the IAAE has now members also from most of the other countries with centrally planned economies.

When the Association now meets in 1970 for its fourteenth session, it has entered into the fifth decade of its existence. The timing of this congress fits in very well with the decision taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations when designating 1970 as the International Education Year. We certainly live in a world that is changing before our very eyes – a world in which the population explosion, decolonization and the profound economic and social transformations resulting from technological development are so many forces making for the democratization of education, to cite Mr. René Maheu, Director-General of Unesco.

What is the role of IAAE in this connection; what are the tasks we should engage ourselves in? Let me first go back some years in time. One of the veterans in IAAE, Professor Max Rolfes, of Giessen, West Germany, has prepared an interesting and personally coloured retrospective review of IAAE's period of activity of over 40 years. The history was published in English in the journal 'Zeitung für ausländische Landwirtschaft'. He divides the Association's work into three periods: the period prior to the Second World War, the immediate postwar period, and the period of world-wide meetings beginning with the congress in Mysore, India, in 1958.

The outstanding feature of the third period in which we are now in is, according to Rolfes, that whilst enlarging its geographical sphere of action, the Association has broadened and deepened its scientific approach in the course of its existence. A study of the proceedings shows how first and at once the need was felt to widen the concept of 'Agricultural Economics' so as to embrace both production and marketing economics and both the micro- and macro-economic approach. Then step by step, both under the influence of purely theoretical conceptions and as interpretation of actual events, one new subject after another was added to the basic subject-matter: general economics, political science, sociology, natural sciences and perhaps also anthropology, although its absence has been deplored. Furthermore, these sciences were not merely regarded as 'accessories' to agricultural economics. On the contrary, all of them, including agricultural economics, came to be regarded as intimately connected by innumerable and insoluble interdependencies.

It lies in the nature of man to emphasize his own merits and importance over others. The same is true of the branch of science that he represents. I may perhaps be guilty of a similar overstatement when I claim that it is evident that agricultural economics, not only nationally but to a great degree also internationally considered, has increased in importance during the period of our world-wide meetings, but I do adhere to my statement. Let me present one or two examples. In the broad-based economic integration extending over the boundaries of states which is going on not only in Europe but also in other continents, the hardest nut to crack has on innumerable occasions proved to be the problems connected with agricultural production and with the economic and social questions of farming and the farm population. This applies as well to EEC as to Komekon and to other economic markets that are integrating. The problems also of the Third World are to a vital degree associated with agricultural problems, not only the technical ones but at least as much the economic and social problems.

In the final analysis it is of course the government that makes the policy decisions, but much depends upon the qualifications of the experts in agricultural economics available. In this respect IAAE and these conferences have a significant role, in promoting the knowledge and competence of agricultural economists, in widening their horizons, and in creating among them a sense of affinity.

A trend of development that undoubtedly arises from the increased importance given to agricultural economics in its role of assisting the governments in their efforts to solve the numerous complicated problems in agricultural policy and production economics is the founding of *special agricultural economic research institutions*. At least in Europe—both West and East—these research institutions have not been assigned to universities but are more directly subordinated to the respective Ministries of Agriculture. This has made it possible to create agricultural economic research institutes whose function is to have the necessary expertise available to the government. In some countries, for instance in Sweden, the farmers' organizations have founded their own research institutions for the purpose of providing farm

operators with the necessary expertise. As examples that indicate the dimensions of such research institutes I may mention that the All Union Institute of Agricultural Economics in the USSR, whose chief is Professor Alexandrov, the Secretary General of the Organization Committee of this congress, is comprised of sections, with a total of 376 graduate agricultural economists. Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique Economie in France, headed by Mr. Denis Bergmann, has on its staff 55 graduate agricultural economists, and the Agricultural Economic Research Institute in the Hague, Netherlands, employs 50 graduates. Development in the Economic Research Service of the United States, Department of Agriculture is proceeding in the same direction of expansion.

This trend of development is obviously a result of the constantly increasing economic problems brought upon agriculture by the industrialization of the community and the demands for economic growth.

Even if late, people are now realising that the most important resource in modern economy is not money, raw materials or machinery, but *brain, talents*. This fact is the essence of the revolution of knowledge.

For nearly two centuries, industry has been the dominating power in the world. Nevertheless, few people realize that the industrial revolution is already past and that another revolution has taken its place: the revolution of knowledge. This new revolution is characterized by an almost unlimited demand for capacities and talents.

The Japanese learned *Yukichi Fukuzawa's* book 'Gakumon no Susume' (Recommendation to Learning) published in 1872. He said in it, 'Heaven never created the man either above or below the other man. Notwithstanding this, there is actually a difference between the wise and foolish, the rich and poor, the noble and lowly in the world. Why did such a big difference come about? It is evidently caused by the difference between the will to learn or not to learn'. Such was his teaching.

One of the functions of our association, as of so many other international organizations, is to make our contribution towards the creation of better economic and social conditions for the farm population especially in the developing countries, but also in industrial countries. As we are now in the third period of our activity, which is characterized as the period of world-wide meetings, it can be well understood that two of the last four congresses were held in two developing countries, India and Mexico. Furthermore it may be mentioned that the third world was represented at the Sydney conference by not less than 75 participants.

One could speak at great length on the subject of the role of training in agricultural economics *in less developed countries*. A large, valuable literature has accumulated on this subject and there are many diverging opinions. Many economists from the developed countries, particularly those characterized by subsistence farming, have been much more sceptical of the advantages offered by the theoretical sophistication and analytical precision of production economics, concepts and tools.

There is a tendency in the modern graduate training in agricultural economics that it often appears to be first and foremost technique-oriented

rather than problem-oriented.

Without penetrating the subject further, let me only say that I adhere to those who consider that too few students who are sent from countries with tradition-bound farming to the United States or other developed countries are able to utilize in full the training they receive in these universities, since it is directed solely upon the problems of agriculture in developed countries. It has frequently been seen that, in case the students returned later to their respective home countries, they were unable, because of the bias in their training, to make a sufficient input in their countries' agricultural policy and promotion of agriculture.

As *inter alia* Mr. *Dabasi-Schweng*, a previous FAO officer, has pointed out, the farmer's goal in these countries is not the maximum profit or the maximum gross income. His goal is much more modest. He wants to ensure an adequate food supply for his family and to obtain additionally a reasonable money income from the market sector of his farm enterprise.

The reactions of a tradition-bound farm population can be considered to be identical to the reactions of modern farmers only if its economic goals and efforts are sufficiently strong. Many specialists are guilty of mistakes because they believe that the peoples engaged in traditional farming behave in the same manner as the farm entrepreneurs in an industrialized welfare state. If this were the case, traditional farming would be transformed to rational farming as soon as urbanization has opened up new possibilities in the food marketing sector.

Well known anthropologists have stated that different individuals and different families are not talented in the same way; thus some are endowed with natural gifts through their hereditary structure, while others are less gifted. No one can deny this fact and there is overwhelming evidence for its validity. On the other hand, every racial group includes individuals that are gifted, moderately gifted, and less gifted. As far as anthropologists and geneticists can judge this question, the variations in endowments follow on the whole a similar pattern of variability no matter what human race is in question.

Racial differences may exist with respect to a few individual traits, but when we consider all the mental and physical characteristics we cannot speak of the superiority of any human race.

The resolution drawn up by the International Congress of Anthropologists held in Moscow in 1966 contains the following conclusion which is worthy of consideration: 'The peoples of the world today appear to possess equal biological potentialities for attaining any civilizational level. Differences in the achievements of different peoples must be attributed solely to their cultural history'. A greater significance than to race, climate and natural resources must be ascribed to the sphere of thought and ideas of the people, their appreciation of material things, their social environment, and their past history.

I do not wish to claim that economic welfare should be the only objective of a nation. Rather there seems to be a question of maximization of a *state of well-being and contentment*. We cannot, however, create a satisfactory feeling

of well-being without first attaining a certain level of economic welfare. The attainment of the latter requires rational thinking and rational operation. The fundamental reason, for instance, for Japan's economic rise is that the Japanese have adopted rational thinking and activity in their economic life. Their ideas are based on reason, objective observation, and knowledge of the laws of nature.

In the light of these facts we can draw the conclusion that the level of development of a nation is conclusively determined by its people's will to progress, rationality of behaviour, and initiative. Also the degree to which the community is alien to progress, greatly influences the general level of development.

Referring to the renowned British scientist Arnold *Toynbee*, there should always be held in mind that ever since the dawn of history, material and intellectual progress has had its source in the performances of a few rare intelligent persons who as individuals had become freed from the toil for their daily bread. Progress is not a free gift of nature; it is the result of an intelligent utilization of resources.

For the purpose of obtaining an idea of the *quantitative input of agricultural economists in international connections* I asked ten international governmental organizations for information on the number of agricultural economists on their staff. For comparison I also requested similar data on the number of general economists and of graduates in the biological and technical branches of agriculture. It proved however, to be very difficult to obtain comparable answers, since the personnel statistics of the organizations appeared to be very heterogeneously compiled. After much hesitation I shall nevertheless quote some figures. With reference first to the organizations in which agriculture forms a very important sector, the statistics showed 110 agricultural economists as against 1100 biologists-technicians. For the international organizations with a general economic and social orientation the figures were 115 agricultural economists and 770 general economists. Even if the data is highly uncertain, these figures tell us in any case something concerning the relative size of these groups.

The field of work that international governmental organizations represent constitutes, however, only *one* international sector in which agricultural economists are engaged.

Another sector is offered by *the bilateral governmental aid for development*. As a private individual it has been totally impossible for me to obtain global figures. I therefore confined my inquiry to the governmental bilateral aid for development given by four countries viz. Japan, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. The number of graduate agricultural experts engaged in overseas service totalled 1330, and was comprised of 130 agricultural economists and 1160 biologists-technicians.

According to a very rough approximation it can therefore be said that in the agricultural sector the ratio between agricultural economists and biologists-technicians is 1:10 both bilaterally and multilaterally, while the ratio between agricultural economists and general economists is more favourable for the agricultural economists.

Well, what is the conclusion to be drawn from this? My conclusion is that *the proportion of agricultural economists is entirely too modest when we consider the role that the economic and social problems of agriculture have de facto in international respects.*

As regards aid to the developing countries and particularly with respect to field work among the farmers I presume that the abstract nature of, for instance, farm management as distinguished from the more concrete nature of the biological-technical disciplines places special demands upon the forms of activity. A deeper penetration of the subject in a seminar on how the training of agricultural economists should be organized with a view to the needs of developing countries would in my opinion be an appropriate undertaking for Unesco in co-operation with IAAE. That many circles entertain a strong interest in the social and economic problems of the developing countries is shown, inter alia, by a recent item of news from West Germany. Among 155 doctoral theses or similar works now under preparation on subjects relating to tropical agriculture, no less than 67 deal with agricultural economics and rural sociology. Likewise it is clearly evident that at the many special institutes dealing with developing countries that have recently been established in various European countries, attention is being paid to economic and social problems.

The fact is that big countries such as the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are mostly self-sufficient regarding economic information within agriculture. It is also apparent that small countries like those of Scandinavia *stay alert towards achievements made abroad.* These tendencies can be observed easily from the very different frequencies of foreign references made in similar textbooks in this particular field of knowledge. As a continuity of an old tradition, West Germany still produces proportionally much of this kind of literature. But there is a totally new feature here—the closer interrelationship between the American and the German authors, which has even produced books emanating from team work between authors of these two countries.

An international exchange of research workers has old traditions dating from as early as the Middle Ages. In those days it was in some respects easier to arrange an exchange, and also easier for the research workers from different countries to stay for a shorter or longer time at a famous university where there was a renowned scientist, since all had the same language in common, viz. *Latin.*

When we consider, on the other hand, our modern time, we of course ask first of all the question: What benefit do we have from an exchange of researchers. An increased teaching competence, a replenishment of one's own intellectual resources. One develops new ideas for research work. One's views become less minutely cut up, less confined, and blinkers disappear. One acquires knowledge of methods and concepts not previously known to him or her, and the new experiences influence the research work done after the return home.

A change of research environment for a time has in many respects a stimulating effect on both the research worker and the environment of the receiving part. There is not only the circumstance that he or she, so to say,

forms new acquaintanceships and personal contacts. His or her eyes are also opened to see that the environment can be different from that to which one has become accustomed. Personally, in holding lectures to farmers I often speak of something called 'farm blindness' among farm operators. Such blindness, however, is a phenomenon that is encountered in all occupational sectors, though under various names. It develops when a person works in the same environment for a long time. In a farmer this trait is particularly strong if he has worked only on the home farm ever since childhood. He then takes certain existing conditions for granted and considers that they are impossible to change, and for this reason he does not remove prevailing shortcomings with his own initiative.

I believe that with just as much justification as we speak of farm blindness we can speak of research blindness. To cure this sort of blindness, a stay of some length outside the boundaries of one's own country is of great benefit. The research worker finds himself in another research environment, he learns to view the problems from an angle other than the one to which he was accustomed at home, and he also learns to detect his own great shortcomings.

The circumstances that a student—and we are all students, so to say—lives at another research institute for a time does not, of course, have to mean a priori that he respects, understands and likes everything that he is taught. To know more means primarily that one observes, discovers and gains access to first-hand facts. These constitute the intelligent and scientific elements in the exchange between peoples, the essence of successful international contact.

Another aspect of the exchange of researchers is that as new specialized areas in the field of science are opened up through scientific discoveries and technical innovations, there simultaneously arises a demand for persons trained in the respective special areas. The possibilities to fill this demand can be solved considerably more easily in large countries than in small ones.

In gathering the agricultural economists who are from different countries and represent different sectors but who are interested in the same research matters, IAAE has a very specially important task. The significance of mutual contacts has increased irrespective of the fact whether they are kept up only through correspondence or if they lead to more solid team work over country boundaries.

In a UNESCO publication entitled 'Impact of Science on Society' I recently read an interesting article stating that every developed nation is confronted with a *shortage of highly qualified scientists*. This will also be the case in the future, and there will be a widening of the gap between, on the one hand, the large countries with their vast resources and, on the other hand, the small nations with their limited resources. The large nations will therefore attract research workers from other countries but, despite this, they will also suffer from a shortage of scientists.

The exodus of research scientists is, as is known, a common international phenomenon and is probably greatest today, at least as concerns their emigration from Great Britain to the United States. Referring to what I have already said, globally considered, an increased mobility can of course be to the benefit of research work and of humanity. But if we retain a certain national

point of view in considering the problem, although we live in an era of internationalism, and thus do not consider our aim to be the training of cosmopolitans, the guiding principle should undoubtedly be that we expect the research workers concerned to return to their respective homes and to serve in the first hand their own countries, naturally also serving at the same time the world as a whole.

The general theme of this conference is 'Economic Policies, Planning and Management of Agricultural Development-National and International'.

This complex problem will be dealt with in several papers that will be read here and ventilated in the discussion groups. I shall therefore not dwell further on the theme but will limit myself to the statement that planning in its different forms is a sector of agricultural economics which is equally topical in countries with a centrally planned economy as in countries with a free enterprise economy. This theme is in itself a highly suitable assembling instrument in the sense that irrespective of the social system and the degree of economic development of a country, *production planning is the melody of the day*.

Planning and education are profoundly tied together. How wisely wrote the Chinese learned *Kuan-tsu* around the year 300 B.C.:

'When planning for a year—sow corn,
When planning for a decade—plant trees,
When planning for life—train and educate men.'

Holding in mind that Unesco has declared the year 1970 an International Education Year, we can each and all undoubtedly concur in the thought that the theme of our conference excellently complies with Unesco's intentions.

The fact that according to preliminary calculations a total of 700 persons have announced their intention to attend this congress is definite evidence of deep interest gained by this first congress of our Association to be held in a country with socialized economy. On behalf of the foreign participants I wish to express our pleasure in observing the great interest that has been manifested both in Moscow and here in Minsk with the purpose of making our congress as rich in content as possible. This is not my first visit to Byelo—Russia, and I therefore can state from experience that there lives here a people that are diligent, progressive and hospitable.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as we assemble here today from the different corners of the world, from less developed countries as well as from highly developed countries, from countries with centrally planned economy as well as from countries with a free enterprise system, we come together *not to convince each other of the excellence of one's own political and economic system*. We are coming together to learn from each other, to acquaint ourselves with the problems that our colleagues are struggling with, and in this way to enrich one another's knowledge and know-how as research workers, scientists and officers. Knowledge is the antidote against fear, knowledge allied with its high adjuncts: experience and reason. And the knowledge that we acquire is not meant to be merely piled up, but to be converted into concrete values. If such a transformation does not take place, knowledge will gradually die of itself.

ADDRESSES OF WELCOME

Minister V. V. MATSKEVICH

Minister of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R.

Distinguished Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades,

May we, on behalf of the Government of the U.S.S.R., heartily welcome all the participants of the 14th Conference of IAAE and wish you successful and fruitful work.

As our distinguished President has said, about 700 Agricultural Economists, representative of 58 countries of the world, participate in the work of our Conference. We in the Soviet Union highly appreciate the role of Agricultural Economists and pay special attention to the development of agriculture. There is no doubt that a wide exchange of opinion, and experience will help with the development of agricultural science and further make knowledge deeper and more profound. The Communist Party and the Soviet Government pay great attention to the greater development and role of agriculture in our country. The main task of socialist agriculture is to supply and maintain an ever increasing development of agriculture. This increase in the production of all fields of agriculture and our plan of economy do everything to maintain this growth. The socialist system, the planning character of our economy, excludes the possibility of agricultural surpluses. The more we produce the more it becomes cheaper and of better quality, the more we can do to supply the demands—the ever-growing demands—of the people and maintain the development of mankind and, at the same time, we may maintain the ever-growing power of our state.

This Conference is of great importance. Its aim is to help spread this knowledge, to supply the whole world with the necessary products. In the work of our Conference we see one of the ever-growing examples of international co-operation. The Soviet people always have and always will support such co-operation. Every man is under an obligation to help because the better we know each other the better we will help each other to benefit the life of the people, which is our common aim.

This year has marked one of the best known dates, that is the centenary of the birth of Lenin, one of the greatest thinkers of our time. The social transformation in our country, higher centralized economy, is connected with his renowned plan. Lenin expounded his agricultural plan, which made possible the development of the centralized socialist economy and the first attempts at co-operation among the peasantry. In the process of the transformation of the countryside, the Communist Party built into the system Lenin's renowned agricultural plan. It was necessary to transform the small farms into large productive farms. The organization of the state farms, and tractor stations made it possible to use the best of equipment—tractors, harvesters and other complicated machinery—and to use the best methods, especially in the areas which were harvesting wheat. In the period of the

Second World War, in the process of the struggle against the Fascist invaders, the development of the socialist economy showed its strength and its worth in the face of great damage on the state farms and collective farms.

According to the Extraordinary State Committee the harm committed on our economy was equal to about 181 billion roubles. After the War, great strength and great efforts were put forth in order to restore the socialist agriculture. Only with the help of socialist industry could the Soviet people overcome the difficulties in so short a span of time.

In the post-war years for a period the production of grain came from extensive agriculture. This was true, also, for animal husbandry, livestock raising and other aspects of agriculture. Now when our industry is supplying the state farms and collective farms with all the necessary equipment, as well as a special inclusion for the development of plants, now when great work is being done in irrigation, there are great possibilities for the further intensification and specialisation of agricultural production.

In the state farms and collective farms great units are being created which have an unheard-of span of development. In the state farms and collective farms new processing enterprises are being built, special storage and handling facilities are being erected for the needs of agriculture. All this makes it possible to bridge the gap between the countryside and the town. The growth of capital investments and structural developments in agriculture, coupled with the intensification of the growth of the incomes of the peasantry is a basis for developing the countryside. Both in towns and in the country, education free of charge, is provided for the people at the cost of the country. Large investments are made in the construction of creches of kindergartens; in the country, camps, clubs and libraries are being built. Accommodation for the people are bought at the expense of the collective and state farms and other services—catering and amenities are provided. Social Insurance is a reality in the countryside. The men on the collective farms reach pension age at 60 and women at the age of 55. The pension fund is accumulated through the channels of the state budget and by allocations from the gross income of the country. About 12 million farmers got pensions last year. Now every farmer in the countryside has a secure old age. All these new conditions and transformations have brought the farmer and the urban population closer. The transformations in the Soviet Union was based only on the fact of the enormous growth in the countryside. People have no desire to have anything private. They have solved their own destinies, the destinies of each one and the destinies of the whole people.

The growth of agricultural production is brought to the foremost rank, and this year in June the Committee of our Party has discussed with Comrade Breshnev the further tasks of the Party in the field of agriculture and has adopted a scheme for the further development of agriculture for the next 5 years, 1970/71—1975.

The Committee has said that the further progressive development of agriculture and the improvement in its technical basis is one of the problems of paramount importance and one of the urgent tasks to be undertaken in the immediate future. It has paid attention to the necessity of increasing the

standard of husbandry, the effectiveness of the capital investments and other features to achieve a more effective utilization of the land, machinery and other material and capital resources. This will be one of the further channels for improving of the life of the farmers.

We believe that the work of this Conference will be conducive to the solution of these problems facing agriculture in the Soviet countries. We express our view that the exchange of experience and the discussion of the current problems will enrich and refine agricultural science and will be conducive to the solution of agricultural problems. We will be very glad, our dear guests, that you will all help with the work of this Conference; you will get better acquainted with the agriculture of our country and get acquainted with the life of our towns. The participants will be welcomed everywhere. Let us, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R., thank you for your acceptance and for coming to our country. Let me wish you good health, supreme happiness, and great success in the work of this Conference.

Dr V. E. LOBANOK

Deputy Chairman National Organising Committee, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Byelorussian S.S.R.

Mr Chairman, Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades,

Allow me, on behalf of the Government of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to welcome heartily all the participants of the 14th International Conference of Agricultural Economists, representing more than 45 countries of the world. This new Conference is a great occasion. Everyone understands the great importance of agricultural production; the existence of the human society itself depends upon it. The labour of agricultural workers is noble—noble, but not easy. That is why the activities directed at making labour in agriculture easier, at better organization, scientific validity and higher efficiency are of special value. In this respect, the problems which will be discussed at this Conference such as organization and management of agriculture, national planning, economic planning for areas within countries, credit, the demand and supply of agricultural products, amalgamation of agricultural enterprises, application of mathematical methods and computers, and so on, are of deep interest. We are very pleased that the 14th International Conference of Agricultural Economists is being held here in Byelorussia, one of the 15 fraternal unions of the Socialist Republics of the U.S.S.R.

In our republic, as well as all other countries, agriculture has undergone radical changes within a short historical space of time. During the years of Soviet power, due to the realization of Lenin's co-operation plan, we did away with the technical economic weakness of agriculture and have created the necessary conditions for the full growth of rural productive forces to ensure the prosperity and cultural life of our collective farmers. In this progress, our people, under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, have had to solve many difficult problems, make great efforts in order to twice reconstruct completely our national economy ruined by the

invaders during two Wars.

Closely united with the fraternal peoples of the U.S.S.R., Byelorussia has made great progress in the development of its economy and culture in raising the living standards of our people. We have also achieved great progress in agriculture, which is a highly developed branch of our socialist production. The high rate of development of the Soviet economy in general reflected in the standard of living of our people, makes new and higher demands on our agriculture. What is satisfactory today, tomorrow will be already insufficient, and this is well understood by our people and our Soviet Government, and they attach exceptionally great importance to the intensive development of agriculture.

Our basic efforts in this field are directed first of all to achieving a rapid and steady pace of development and increasing growth of agricultural production and animal products on the basis of complex mechanisation and chemicalisation of our industry. Particular attention will be given to agriculture in the next 5 years, the 5-year plan will become a stage in the sharp rise in the agricultural production of our republic, a stage of making further advances, answering modern achievements of our scientists and advanced practice in technology.

We are deeply convinced that it is right and expedient to discuss urgent problems of agricultural development on a scientific basis, to organise the exchange of experience and to study further the advance of different countries in this field. We think that the progress of agricultural development, which has been achieved in our republic, will rouse your interest and will be useful for the participants of this International Conference.

Dear delegates and guests, during the work of the Conference you will be provided with ample opportunities to get acquainted with the culture of Byelorussia, her modern life and her achievements in agriculture, industry, science and engineering. You will meet our wonderful people and know the traditional Byelorussian hospitality. I hope that you take away with you the best reminiscences of the days spent in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. In conclusion, allow me, on behalf of the Government of the Byelorussian Republic, to wish this Conference every success and fruitful work, and to express my hope that it will serve the cause of further development of agriculture and that it will be a valuable contribution to the expansion of co-operation, mutual understanding and friendly relations among the peoples in the interest of peace and progress. Thank you for your attention.

ACADEMICIAN P. P. LOBANOV

Chairman of the National Organising Committee.

Dear Comrades,

Allow me, on behalf of the Soviet Organising Committee, to heartily greet all the participants and guests of the 14th International Conference of Agricultural Economists. The present Conference is the most representative of all the preceding conferences, both in the number of the participants and

in the number of the participating countries. Among the present participants are the leading agrarian economists of all the continents of the world and a great group of young specialists. Together with the scientists representing the developed countries there are scientists from the developing countries which have taken the way of social economic transformation. The steady growth in the number of the participants testifies to the growing part of economic science in the field of agriculture all over the world.

The distinguishing feature of the modern epoch is the rapid growth of science and its increasing impact on all the aspects of material and spiritual life of society. At present the high rate of the growth of the production forces are impossible without wide-scale scientific research and rapid implementation of its results in production. A great part is played by science in the further progress of agriculture. It is widely recognized that one of the most decisive factors of the raising of the living standards of the people and the full satisfaction of the people's demands is impossible without a well-developed agriculture. The main task of economic science is to analyse in depth all the available information and to produce new information to provide a scientific basis for further development of agriculture. The technological progress and, associated with it, the improvements in the agricultural production, put more and more complex tasks before the economist who works in agriculture, it will find its expression in the wide range of the problems in the agricultural science which will be discussed at this Conference. This work offers greater and greater demands to our working international association of agricultural economists. In order to solve its main task, we must facilitate the development of the technology of agriculture, and facilitate the implementation of the results obtained in the field of fundamental research in order to provide for the flourishing of the productive forces of agriculture.

A high level in general development in this field cannot be obtained by individuals; serious difficulties cannot be solved if we use the narrow national approach to them but the co-operation of the scientists of the world, their collective mind directed to the noble task, would lead us to the desired results and provide every human being on earth with the necessary cheap food for a full life. This is the aim and purpose of the IAAE and one of the results of this activity is the present conference. Allow me to express the hope that this conference will be an important new milestone in increasing international co-operation.

Dear colleagues, our organising committee has done its utmost to promote the work of the present conference. We shall do all the council asks in order that it shall be a conference of mutual understanding and friendship. After it is over, before you return to your home countries, you will have the opportunity to get acquainted with our farms, and our applied specialists who work the state and collective farms. I have no doubt that you will find a hearty welcome everywhere.

I wish all participants most fruitful work directed to the further development of agrarian science and success in solving problems which face them for the sake of the peace of all the world.

The inaugural session then closed.