

act with foresight in guiding producers to alter their production programmes in accordance with the long-term requirements. The actual programmes must be drawn up to suit the particular circumstances of each country, but the Conference agreed upon broad general principles which should serve as a guide in making these programmes in all countries. These principles cover not only the adjustment of production to fit the long-term requirements of a better diet, but also improvements in the general efficiency of production. The Conference also recommended certain particular measures of more general application for carrying them out (Resolutions XVI-XX).

In addition, the Conference recommended measures (Resolution XXI) for new agricultural development. It was the opinion of the Conference that some parts of the world which at present are unproductive could be brought into agricultural production if the appropriate measures were applied. At the same time it was recognized that, in some areas of rich potentialities, development is impeded by overcrowding of farmers on the land. While something can be done to increase the productivity of these areas by improving methods of farming, by drainage and similar measures, it was recognized (Resolution XXII) that in some cases the development of industry to provide employment for agricultural populations or emigration to other areas were the only measures likely to offer any significant contribution to a solution of the problem.

The Conference recognized that it is useless to produce food unless men and nations have the means to acquire it for consumption. Freedom from want cannot be achieved unless there is a balanced and world-wide expansion of economic activity.

The deliberations of the Conference in Section III, which was set up to investigate the improvement of distribution, clearly showed that consumers would not be in a position to buy the food they needed, and producers of food could not be assured of adequate returns, unless progress was made through national and international action to raise the general level of employment in all countries. Moreover, as discussions in Section I emphasized, poverty is the first cause of malnutrition and hunger.

The work of Section III established the close interdependence between the level of employment in all countries, the character and extent of industrial development, the management of currencies, the direction of national and international investment, and the policy adopted by the nations toward foreign trade. The Conference was not called upon to conduct a detailed investigation into the policies which should be adopted by the Governments of the world in order to promote an expansion of economic activity; but it declared that freedom from want of food could not be fully achieved without such an expansion and urgently recommended the Governments and authorities represented to take action individually, and in concert, in order to secure this objective (Resolution XXIV).

Having drawn attention to the fundamental importance, in the approach to freedom from want of food, of policies to expand and quicken economic activity, the Conference discussed the place and functions which might be given, within the framework of such policies, to international arrangements for the control of basic staple foodstuffs entering international trade. There was agreement that the object of any such arrangements must be to eliminate excessive short-term movements in the prices of food and agricultural commodities, to mitigate general inflationary or deflationary movements, and to facilitate adjustments in production which may be necessary to prevent economic dislocation. The Conference agreed that any such arrangements should include the effective representation of consumers as well as producers. It was not possible for the Conference, in the time available, to discuss future international commodity arrangements in detail. Discussion in Section III was directed to general questions of principle affecting the operation of such arrangements as might later be made. The two questions to which most attention was paid were—

- (a) The place which buffer stocks should occupy in these arrangements; and
- (b) How far it would be necessary to achieve the desired objectives to include within the general arrangements agreements for the regulation of production.

The Conference agreed that further international discussion of these questions ought to take place with a view to the establishment of broad principles to govern the formulation and operation of future commodity arrangements.

There was general agreement that, whatever the nature of the arrangements eventually made for individual commodities, machinery would be needed for co-ordinating their operations in the light of the broad principles to be agreed upon (Resolution XXV).

It became clear at a comparatively early stage of the Conference that there was general agreement that the nations represented at the Conference should establish a permanent organization in the field of food and agriculture. It was also generally agreed that this organization should act as a centre of information and advice on both agricultural and nutrition questions and that it should maintain a service of international statistics. The Conference did not, however, attempt to lay down in detail what the scope and functions of such an organization should be or its relation to other national or international bodies. It was agreed that these questions would have to be worked out in detail between representatives of the participating Governments. Accordingly, the Conference recommended the establishment in Washington of an Interim Commission, one of the functions of which would be to draw up for submission to the Governments and authorities represented a detailed plan for the permanent organization (Resolution II).

The United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture has shown that the Governments and authorities represented are agreed upon the necessity of their taking action individually and in concert to achieve freedom from want of food. The reports and recommendations of the Conference indicate further agreement on the methods to be followed. The Conference has accordingly recommended that the Governments and authorities represented should recognize their obligation to their own people and to one another to raise the levels of nutrition and the standards of living of their citizens, to improve the efficiency of agricultural production, and to co-operate one with another for the achievement of these ends. The Conference resolved that the Interim Commission to be established in Washington should prepare such a declaration or agreement in this sense for the consideration of the Governments and authorities represented.