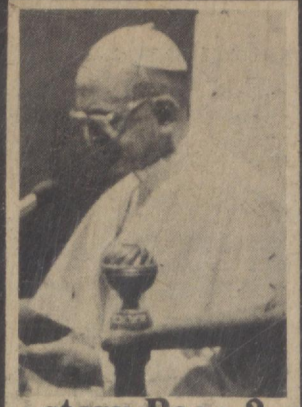


PAN



story Page 2



Newspaper of the World Food Conference November 10-11, 1974 Number 6

Deadline 16th

-and the story so far

WE NEED eight to 10 million tons of grain more than that presently committed to World Food Aid Programs if we are going to have any chance of saving the millions who are facing death by starvation.

We are in the last week of the conference and it has become painfully clear that the gap between need and commitment has only marginally narrowed since the conference opened.

It is impossible to give a precise indication of the amount of grain made available by the new commitments which will reach those most in need by next October.

Difficult

Some figures are quoted in dollars. The tonnage is difficult to calculate because of the galloping rate of inflation. All food deliveries are subject to transportation delays at both ends. Most delegations are not equipped to estimate when the food will be bought and shipped.

'Judgment on the success or failure of this conference is going to be made by hungry men in Africa or Asia'

-SAYED MAREI

Nonetheless, even the most optimistic assessment could not put the effective commitment so far greater than one million tons.

Some countries, such as Canada, have taken the opportunity of the conference to come forward with bold new proposals. Others, such as Britain, have claimed that the situation earlier in the year was so desperate that there was no time to waste, and have already committed substantial resources.

Still others appear unaware of the urgency of the situation.

These differences clearly emerge when we take account of the individual positions of the various donor countries.

Australia

The Australian government has committed 225,000 tons of food grains as part of its regular aid budget for this year.

When conditions in the Indian sub-continent deteriorated earlier this autumn, they added a further \$20 million. This will probably increase the total Australian food aid to 340,000 tons in the 1974 fiscal year.

In addition sources close to the delegation say that a proportion of their special contribution of \$20 million to the UN emergency operation might be used to buy food grains.

Here they have pledged grain in proportion to the Canadian offer of one million tons. This implies a quantity in the order of 350,000 to 500,000 tons, although one member of the delegation

MAREI FIGHTS TO SAVE HIS POLICY

THE SECRETARIAT'S plans for a World Food Authority are dead. That is the verdict given by conference Secretary General Sayed Marei.

In an exclusive interview with PAN, he says that the future of the Agricultural Development Fund is also uncertain. And with it could go an important catalyst for more resources to help deal with the food problem.

Roman ruin? Page 5

Butz grain flight to Egypt

DESPITE American contention that grain for emergency relief is in short supply, Earl Butz, the head of the American delegation to the Food Conference, has flown to the Middle East to sell up to one hundred thousand tons of wheat to Egypt.

The Washington Post reported Friday that Butz, the American Secretary of Agriculture, will also visit Syria on his grain selling trip.

The food is being sold under Title I of US aid law PL 480. Emergency relief, which the US is being asked to increase at the Food Conference, comes under Title II of the Act.

The importance of the legal differences is unclear in light of Secretary Butz's repeated argument that America's intransigence on the aid question is not a matter of lawyers' definitions but of the unavailability of grain.

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Please help us by placing orders early as it is much easier for us to increase our print than to reprint and it is expected that, as with everything else discussed at this conference, demand will far exceed supply. Ring Sasha at Rome 678.0.641.

Continued on Page 8



Mark Edwards

Go, think! - Chairman

COMMITTEE I spent all but a few minutes of Saturday's four working hours discussing fertilizers, an issue left over from the previous day.

In addition to the secretariat's draft Resolution Three, called simply "Fertilizers," the committee had before it two other draft resolutions tabled by Sri Lanka and Mexico.

Sri Lanka was asking for institutional machinery under ECOSOC, and Mexico was asking for the expansion of fertilizer production capacity, and for the technical and financial assistance for this.

The debate rarely sparked. Delegates generally agreed that some supervision was necessary to shield the industry from the vagaries of market forces.

Delegates were united also on the need to allow the established UN agencies to play their full part in the field but that some coordinating machinery was necessary. Even the US delegation said that the glut and deficit cycles of the past should be avoided in the future.

There was marked support for the way the International Fertilizer Supply Scheme had, as one delegate put it, "got off the



Committee 1

ground."

New Zealand, which had co-sponsored, with Sri Lanka, the ECOSOC resolution to activate the scheme, introduced a written resolution of its own which was remarkably similar to that already tabled by Sri Lanka.

Both countries were among the 16 which, at the end of the

day, formed a working party of "interested delegations." Its terms of reference were to find a consensus resolution on the institutional mechanisms required for the fertilizer industry.

The committee then went on to discuss the need for developed countries to increase food production. A number of delegations had tabled proposals on this issue but now appeared reluctant to speak.

Some even dismissed the chairman's suggestion that they were tired and insisted that they were reluctant because the subject should not be isolated from its context, and the context was being discussed in another committee.

The chairman, S.A. Jabati of Sierra Leone would have none of it. He said that they had been charged with the duty to discuss and report to plenary. Those who made proposals must have had ideas. Those ideas must be aired.

"Now I see people are relating this to dumping," he thundered. "Go and think again," he ruled, "and come back with ideas." They went.

Gamini Senevirantne

Still the need but not the will

PAN, in issue Number 4, hailed the speech of Mr. Hao of China at the plenary on Thursday as an attack on platitudes. But, surely, China's Vice - Minister for Agriculture and Forestry also perpetrated some platitudes of his own.

The sad truth is that politicians must mouth platitudes. They may know better, but they also know better than to act as if they know.

Mr. Hao, of course, did not make the first political speech of this conference. Mr. Henry Kissinger, that vastly political animal, had earlier made one too.

So did Mr. Jagjivan Ram, India's Minister for Food and Irrigation. He, in fact, anticipated Mr. Hao when he held colonialism responsible for the food crisis in India and elsewhere.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram did not of course mention the words "food crisis in India." The reasons are obvious; at any rate, I need not enter into them here.

But he has remained true, nevertheless, to his reputation as a realistic politician and a practical minister and administrator.

By coming out clearly in favor of a World Food Security Council, he has conceded by

implication that India needs the security of such a system. This is in refreshing contrast to the more familiar Indian or, rather, Indian Government attitude that India can manage its food affairs on its own except on those occasions when the gods choose to play false.

With a third of its people eating at or below subsistence at all times and with its increase in population eating sharply into its increase in grain production, India certainly needs all the food security that any international system may provide.

The Indian interest in a World Food Security Council is therefore both large and real. Whether it will get this council through this conference remains to be seen.

There has been plenty of support in this conference for the idea that there should be a large, strong and firm political will behind any international scheme for world food security.

Otherwise the scheme will remain a paper tiger. As at the time of writing, however, this conference does not seem to be ripe or ready yet for this or any other dramatic break - through towards commitments to action.

V. Balasubramanian
Editor, Eastern Economist,
New Delhi, India

The Editor writes: Just for the record, we did not hail Mr. Hao's speech. We reported it without comment.

Speeding things up

FOLLOWING the quaintly named "Friends of the Rapporteur" technique devised by Committee I Chairman, Sierra Leone's S.A. Jabati, the chairman of Committee II, Roy D. Morey of the U.S., has adopted another technique to expedite his committee's work.

Three informal "contact

groups" have been set up under each of the vice chairmen and given the task of working out acceptable drafts of the resolutions.

The first of these met on Saturday night with Sri Lanka's Asoka Jayasinha in the chair and got struck into draft resolution VI -- Food Information Service.

Pope calls for clear decisions

A REPEATED call for the rich nations to divert money from armaments into a fund for the less well - off was made by the Pope on Saturday.

Speaking at a special audience for conference participants, he said: "As far back as 1964, on the occasion of our journey to India, we launched an

appeal to the nations, asking that, by a truly substantial commitment, mainly in reducing expenditure on arms, there be set up a fund with the aim of giving a decisive impetus to the advancement of the less well endowed sectors of mankind.

"Today the time has come for an energetic and binding decision along the same lines."

The Pope said that freedom from hunger was an obtainable objective, but stressed that simply reducing hunger was not enough.

He talked of a crisis of civilization and method -- "when too much confidence is placed in the automatic nature of purely technical solutions, while fundamental human values are forgotten."

Reports by Tim Albert

The Pope also reiterated the Catholic Church's traditional opposition to birth control.

But much of his speech was taken up with the need for the modern world to stop underestimating the importance of agriculture.

"In a word," he said, "it is necessary to give to the farming community responsibility for their own production and progress."

In the early part of his speech he told delegates to face up honestly to the facts, and to bear in mind the urgency of the situation.

"This conference will not resolve everything on its own; it is not in its nature to do so. However, through the clarity and energy of its conclusions it will give the impetus to a series of effective and sincerely accepted commitments; or, contrary to the expectations placed in it and in spite of the good will of its members, it will have been held in vain."

A plenary for the Pope

MOST PEOPLE have to go to the conference hall to speak to the plenary. Some of them go a very long way to do so. But on Saturday, or so it seemed, the whole plenary, lock, stock and rapporteurs, went to hear a speaker.

The occasion was the audience at the Vatican. The Pope used it to give his view on the food problem, in a 40 - minute speech in French. It was all too much for some. Maybe all this talk about food is becoming indigestible. I observed one or two nod gently off.

The whole performance, which took about an hour, was in a huge modern hall, looking rather like an exhibition center for agricultural machinery, but with two egg - shaped modern - stained - glass windows on one side, and at the far end a stage backed by a tapestry of Christ, and with palm fronds on each side.

There was a strong supporting cast. Ushers in white ties and tails. Guards in yellow and blue striped costumes and floppy hats and carrying pikes. No Chinese -- but cardinals, canons and cameramen.

Afterwards, in what ended up as an informal huddle on the stage, the Pope met some of the important conference personalities.

Compared with Kissinger or the Chinese, it was a long way from the greatest show on earth.

But then shows on earth are not really what the Vatican is supposed to be about.

But then, outside in the lobby, with journalists and delegates literally fighting over scarce copies of the Pope's text, this earth all seemed rather hopeless.

Agreed, agreed, but how how..?

An interim impression
by Colin Tudge

ALL NATIONS gathered in Committee II, of course have the best possible intentions. All agree that to secure food security is either the most important matter before the WFC, or at least second only to the need to boost production.

And then the trouble starts. In talking of the proposal to pool information on food stocks, the

Committee 2



Nine refuse to talk

THE EEC are refusing to talk about stabilizing grain prices. That was the expected intervention in Committee II's discussion on world food security.

The EEC supported separately by UK, France, and West Germany, rejected the proposal in draft Resolution Seven.

They invited major consumers and traders in grain "to participate in negotiations...with a view to establishing a system of international grain reserves that would impart a greater degree of stability to markets for grains."

Invite

Instead, the World Food Conference should invite those countries to start talks about implementing the principles contained in the International Undertaking on World Food Security."

An EEC specialist said that his amendment was in line with the EEC's view that in discussing price stabilization, grain should not be isolated from other commodities.

West insists that this is a sine qua non -- but must involve all countries, and, of course could be a little constrained by the need to protect trade.

The Australian government, said her delegate, might be a little pressed to say how much grain they had because grain in Australia was held by marketing boards. And they weren't going to say how much they had. I mean. Come on. Be reasonable.

The developing countries say of course information must be pooled but unfortunately they don't have any. And even if they did they would have to think twice about who they told it to because once the sharks get to hear of shortage the price goes up.

And the opposition party uses news of impending shortage to oust the government.

The USSR says that any talk of pooling information in an international market dominated by speculators and other rip-off artists is a non-starter.

The root of all evil is imperialism. Capitalists are imperialists by nature. Get rid of capitalism or forget it. The USSR does as much as anybody to help the Third World, but it will choose its own friends, thank you very much.

China and Albania agree entirely. Except, of course, that there is nothing to choose between US imperialism and that of the USSR.

Countries, in general, must do as they think fit, whether producers or receivers. The only way out for Third World countries is to present a solid front to the west. Their real friends are each other. They who sup with the capitalists need a very long spoon.

OPEC recognizes all the problems. And does its bit.

And so to grain stocks. Repeat performance. All agree on the need, on the overriding importance. Just one thing. There is no grain to stock and its not clear who should produce it or who should pay for it when it's produced or where it should be kept -- those who need it most are least equipped to store it -- or how you protect trade or national sovereignty or...

Never mind. There's still plenty of time isn't there.



Betty Sedoc - Dahlberg

Aid need for rice plan

by Peter Bunyard

FOOD AID is vitally necessary to get people through famine, but rural development is the best way to get more food.

Betty Sedoc - Dahlberg from Surinam (formerly Dutch Guyana) and now on the Dutch delegation to the WFC, has come up with a scheme on behalf of her government to produce sufficient rice to feed 16 million people.

All that's necessary, she says, is some cash.

Surinam has a population of 400,000 people, 20 per cent of whom are ex-patriots in the Netherlands because they cannot find employment at home.

Independence

In a year's time Surinam gets its independence from Holland.

Surinam's biggest asset is fertile swamp land along the coast which could be developed into rice paddies were the capital made available. Estimates put this land area at 300,000 hectares.

At the World Population Conference in Bucharest, Surinam said it was ready to sell off part of this land at reasonable prices, possibly to FAO for food research or to a poor rice importing country.

The proposal would have the double advantage of providing employment in Surinam as well as providing a large rice surplus for sale abroad.

Investment

Here at the WFC Surinam is recommending that FAO should make an inventory of land which has never been used for agriculture, but which could become highly productive with adequate investment.

"Surinam would be an excellent place to start. We already know from our rice research station at Wageningen that we can get good yields from our own varieties of rice, and in two years we shall have finished work on a dam to provide water for irrigation in the dry season," says Betty Sedoc - Dahlberg.

Her government reckons on seven crops every four years at four tons of rice per hectare, and all for an investment of around 3,600 dollars plus 250 dollars working capital.

Any offers?

OBVIOUS

"WE ARE constantly being asked for a 'shopping list.' Surely some needs are obvious. Why can't they come to us spontaneously for a change, so we don't always have to appear with a begging bowl?" Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research at an NGO briefing.

Women have their say

DR. CLIO Presvelou, professor of family sociology at Louvain University, and author of a paper on women in rural development programs, will be a main speaker today at the NGO workshop on "roles of women in agriculture."

She will share the platform with Dr. Ludmilla Marin, FAO chief of home economics and social programs, and Mrs. Anne Holmbeck, a member of the Norwegian Delegation and the international committee of the Norwegian Housewives Association.

"We expect this to be one of

the most important NGO programs," said chairman Rosario de Summers.

"A great many words have been spoken by men at this conference, but few about the women who produce 50 per cent of the food in the developing world, or the fact that development programs often have a negative impact on women's agricultural work."

Wanted: a strategy for food and labor

by Dharam Ghai

AT A TIME when the spectre of mass starvation is haunting the world, it is understandable that governments and international agencies should be preoccupied with the need to expand food production at the highest possible rate.

Indeed, in much of the post-war period, there has been no food problem at the global level, as commonly defined, but this has not prevented the persistence and aggravation of hunger and malnutrition among millions of people in all parts of the world.

If hunger and poverty are to be eliminated, it is essential to link expansion of food production with increased employment and equitable income distribution.

Only in this way is it possible to ensure that not only will enough food be produced but that it will reach those in greatest need of it.

Fortunately, there is a complementary relationship between the objectives of increased food production and promotion of social and economic justice, if appropriate policies are followed.

Broadly speaking, the production of food crops requires more labor than an equivalent amount of other agricultural products. Thus the demand for labor should increase as greater priority is attached to the production of food.

Redistribution

Secondly, in the conditions prevailing in most developing countries, the small farms tend on the whole to utilize land more intensively and to employ more labor per hectare than the larger farms.

The current situation in many developing countries is characterized by mass rural underemployment and unemployment and great disparities in the distribution of land.

Thus a redistribution of land in favor of the landless, the unemployed and those with very small holdings would result in increased production, higher employment and better distribution of income.

Thus, as countries solve their food problems, they will at the same time be moving towards elimination of mass poverty and unemployment. There will be less need to rely on special food programs to reach the needy and disadvantaged groups.

Land reform by itself cannot of course provide the answer. To meet the growing demand for food created by rising population and increasing prosperity, the yields in the small farms must be raised continuously. This calls for a steady stream of innovations appropriate to small scale farming.

Dr. Dharam Ghai is Chief of the Research Branch, World Employment Program, ILO. From 1971 to June 1974, he was Director of the Institute for Development Studies of the University of Nairobi. A Kenya national, he was educated at Oxford and Yale. The views Dr. Ghai expresses here are his own.

In this respect, the high yielding varieties (H.Y.V.) are an ideal innovation: they require more labor per unit of land than traditional technology and at the same time can be adopted by both small and larger farmers.

Yet in many countries, the adoption of H.Y.V. seems to have led to a further concentration of wealth and income.

Nor have the employment effects been as impressive as they could have been. The reason for this is of course that it is the larger and better-off farmers who benefited most from the government financial and technical assistance designed to accelerate the adoption of H.Y.V.

The story would have been different if the new technology had been grafted onto a more equal structure of land distribution and if the government financial and technical assistance had been directed largely at small farmers. This would have made a substantial dent into the problems of poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

While considerable progress has been made in the development and adoption of innovations in bio-chemistry technology, the same cannot be said of agricultural tools and equipment. It is clear that large-scale importation of technology, developed in the industrialized countries, is not and cannot be the answer.

The capital requirements are too large and the impact on employment and income distribution could be disastrous. At the same time, the traditional technology cannot yield the required output increases.

The answer must lie in an intensification of the effort to search and develop appropriate technology such as bullock-drawn implements, pedal threshers, hand sprayers and dusters, manually operated seeders, etc.

Migration

The food problem is also related to urban unemployment. The security of food in the countryside and the glaring gaps in living standards between rural and urban areas have stimulated migration of vast multitudes of persons to the urban areas.

The urban population in the developing world is rising at twice the rate of the overall population growth.



Dharam Ghai

In Africa, it is increasing at an annual rate of 7-8 per cent. This in turn has intensified the problem of squatters and shanty-towns along with that of urban unemployment. In many leading cities of the Third World such as Jakarta, Colombo, Cairo, Lagos, Bogota and Rio de Janeiro, open unemployment rates range between 15 to 30 per cent.

All these problems are of course the consequence of a certain pattern of development which has been followed in most developing countries in the past two decades.

This pattern has been characterised by heavy emphasis on capital-intensive technology in the modern, urban sector and the consequent

neglect of food production in the rural areas. While overall rates of economic growth have been satisfactory, poverty and unemployment have worsened.

It is now increasingly being recognized that these problems can only be solved within the framework of a strategy which lays primary emphasis on the creation of employment opportunities and the promotion of greater equality in income distribution.

Programs for increased food production must be conceived within the framework of an employment-orientated strategy.

Only in this way is it possible to ensure that increased food production will lead to the elimination of hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

Input five

Day five, and

MAREI'S POLICY A ROMAN RUIN?

by Robin Sharp

The World Food Conference has reached its halfway mark with Mr. Sayed Marei, the Secretary-General, engaged in a desperate rescue operation to save his world food policy from collapsing like a Roman ruin.

Mr. Marei told me in a weekend interview that he had finally accepted the defeat of his proposal for a new World Food Authority. And he agreed there were big question marks against the Agricultural Development Fund, without which there would be no catalyst for new resources and no money for the proposed Investment Program or the unit to handle long-range planning and aid flows.

Wider view

But Mr. Marei took comfort from a wider view. "Up to now I do believe that achieving a new flow of resources requires having the Fund," he said, "but if that doesn't happen it's enough for me to have the new flow - through bilateral channels." On the other hand, if new resources were not generated that way "it's going to be a great loss."

Asked how he would finance the new technical bodies required to follow through the conference's work if the money wasn't coming through a multilateral fund, the Secretary-General conceded: "If you don't have the money you can't finance all these things."

Faced with a highly delicate task in the next few days, Mr. Marei couched his present expectations of the conference in the following terms:

"The judgment on the success or failure of this conference is going to be made by hungry men

in Africa or Asia, or by a hungry child. And if the people in these countries feel that the conference has given them something new which will better their conditions of life it will have been a success.

"If at this level the people are not going to feel any results, then the conference will have failed.

"If the resolutions from this conference are not serious enough to represent a new policy leading to better productivity it means nothing to the poor man."

On the specific issues before the conference, however, serious consequences can be foreseen if the OPEC countries force the proposed ADF into cold storage.

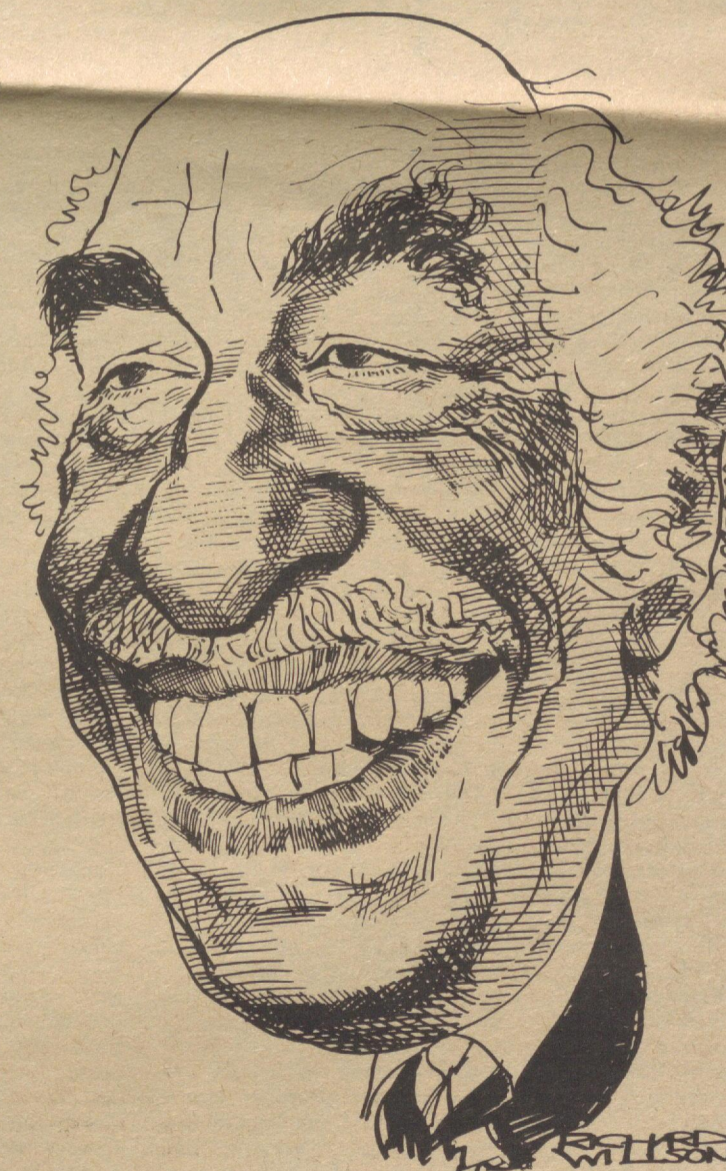
The food information-early warning scheme, for one thing, would have to be left in the hands of the FAO, of which the Soviet Union is not a member.

Mr. Marei said he didn't think the information would meet big opposition, but we suggested to him that it was threatened just as much by the non-co-operation of some major countries. "It will need all countries to be effective," he replied, "it is a key proposal and without it we can't plan and make the forecasts necessary for a long-range food policy."

Large funds

One key question is how the oil states will channel their very large development funds without the servicing mechanism the ADF would provide.

It would be "undesirable," Mr. Marei said, for these countries to set up a mechanism of their own instead of utilizing existing UN agencies. But the



Sayed Marei

agencies - particularly FAO - would have to be substantially enlarged to handle sums on the scale of Saudi Arabia's \$3 billion fund or Kuwait's \$2 billion.

Regarding consultation between himself and Dr. Boerma, especially on the FAO chief's initiatives during the confer-

ce, Mr. Marei said there was close and continuing contact.

"The only difference between us is that Dr. Boerma thinks FAO can handle all the follow-up work after the conference, while I believe a high-level political body is essential to get the decisions we need."

MOTIVATE THE PEOPLE

'We urge the conference to recognize the priority of promoting dynamic people's organizations'

IT IS ENCOURAGING that in the main document before the conference, "The World Food Problem, Proposals for National and International Action," emphasis is laid upon the achievement of immediate gains rather than heavy long term capital investment.

We should be realistic, as the last few days have revealed, in assessing the willingness of the wealthier portion of the world to make available much needed



foreign exchange and in examining the ability of the developing countries themselves to finance improvement.

The conference needs to do more than endorse the need for increased resources for food production. It must clearly define priorities in the use of

such resources.

The "World Food Problem, Proposals for National and International Action" recognizes the importance of organizational rather than technical prerequisites for achieving gains. For instance, it is noted that existing irrigation

schemes must be refurbished, credit disbursement and collection improved and farmers effectively involved in processing and marketing.

Attention is drawn within these contexts to the importance of co-operatives and other farmers' groupings. Few can doubt

that in the majority of developing countries an essential prerequisite of increased food production is not a new technological breakthrough, but rather the application of readily available techniques through the development of an improved educational structure and the incentive of adequate marketing and credit provision.

In the achievement of improved farmer education, primary marketing and input supply, significant economies can be achieved through the utilization of effective group or mass communication and action techniques, rather than individual ones.

In fact, it is only through the utilization of such methods that many countries can contemplate adequately servicing their entire rural populations.

In addition to the greater potential cost effectiveness of group communication and action, the possibilities for mobilizing the mass of the people, including the very poor, for their own development, must be recognized.

Where groups encourage a gradually widening experience of decision making their potential to promote local initiative is clearly demonstrable. This initiative, as has been amply shown by the credit union movement, can be further channelled into encouraging local savings for investment.

Multi-purpose co-operatives can frequently utilize one organizational system to bring several services to, and promote a range of activities amongst their members.

Indeed, there are now several countries in which the primary multipurpose co-operative society is regarded as the basic development unit. Co-operatives can fairly claim to be amongst the strongest organisms of dynamic people's development in the world. Whilst this is frequently recognized in government statements, the balance of resource allocation often does not reflect policy.

Similarly, within international development agencies insufficient man-power and resources are devoted to this sector.

COPAC, the Committee for the Promotion of Aid to Co-operatives, whose members include both UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations, urges the conference to recognize the priority of promoting dynamic people's organizations as one of extreme urgency.

NGOs seek their role

THE NGO PLENARY session today may at last answer the question which plagued virtually every briefing and workshop last week: what is the role of the NGO's at the World Food Conference?

Paradoxically, an empty hall may be a more definitive answer than a full one.

The unresolved issue which arose in the first session last Monday was whether the NGO's could - or should - present some kind of united front to the conference, or whether their basic function is to lobby delegations on specific questions of interest to their own organizations.

By the end of the week, it appeared that by design or default, the individual lobby role was emerging as the stronger.

The NGOs seeking greater emphasis on population growth in the context of the food program had successfully submitted a resolution sponsored by twenty-four developing countries, calling for recognition that unprecedented population growth, which has doubled the world's population in a single generation, is a major cause of the increasing demand for food.

Representatives of women's organizations had also submitted a resolution to Committee I, sponsored by eight countries and supported by seven more calling on governments to recognize the role of women in food production in the third world, and to involve women more fully in total development strategy.

Whether this was because or in spite of conference policy toward the NGO's is a matter of opinion. At least three members of the NGO steering committee believe the NGO's were intended to play a minor role in Rome. "When Henry Kissinger called the conference, he intended it to be a conference of governments. The NGO's had had their say in Bucharest and Stockholm," said one. Another, who concurred,

said that in fact efforts to lobby delegates had met with a stone wall.

Secretary-General Marei dismissed the idea that a deliberate effort was made to down-grade the role of the NGO's. "I wanted them here from the first," he said. "They are the ones who form public opinion at home, and we need them."

He said the Egyptian delegation included three NGO representatives and he dismissed the idea that facilities for the NGO's were inadequate and a handicap to their activities.

To the charge that NGO's had been frozen out, he replied that the WFC had gone farther than other UN conferences in the scope of invitations to NGO's, and in what it had allowed them to do. Speaking in committees, sitting on drafting committees, and submitting amendments, for example.

One obvious reason for the inconspicuous presence of the NGO's is that there were no funds to mount a presence like those in Bucharest and Stockholm. And one conspicuous result of lack of funds is the almost total absence of third world NGO's. The provisional list of NGO's contains only one identifiable third world organization - the Sudanese National FFH and Malnutrition Committee.

Both Mr. Donald Tweddle and Mr. Leslie Kirkley, of the steering committee, are concerned by the over-representation of the developed world. Donald Tweddle, who organized the 1970 FAO conference in the Hague,

raised \$250,000 from Dutch industry for a special caucus of 400 young people from all over the world.

This time, there was no money. "We tried to raise funds," said Hans Dall, "but we had no luck. Leslie Kirkley said he was disappointed that the NGO's had not been able to come up with more funds for third world representatives.

He suggested one reason was that the pressure-group role loomed large, and the obvious delegations to be lobbied were those from the developed world.

Among the NGO representatives themselves, there is frustration and lack of direction.

Rebecca Pollard of the World Hunger in Action coalition said "NGO's have been treated like patients in hospitals which would prefer to have the beds empty. We have been given fifth rate facilities, and we're the people who are going to implement the decisions made here."

Dame Phyllis Frost of the Australian Freedom from Hunger said the NGO's should hammer out some sort of manifesto. "I was hoping for some explosive gesture on the part of the NGO's. I'm going from here to Calcutta, and I expect to suffer pangs of conscience because we've done so little."

Bernt Karlsen of the International Peace Research Association reckoned the NGO show was over on Monday afternoon. "The NGO's were put on the sidelines from the first. The agribusiness representatives have the whole scene to themselves."



Mongolia

Mongolia's First Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Ravdangiin Tsagaankhuu, told the Plenary there was a need for deep social changes.

The experience of socialist countries showed that agriculture could flourish only if there was one central plan by the government.

Jordan

JORDAN agrees with the need to increase food security and is "re-examining our stockholding policies in accordance with the international trends in this direction," her delegate told the plenary.

Mauritania

FROM MAURITANIA, praise for Dr. Boerma for his sustained efforts to draw world attention to the threat of famine, and praise for the international press and broadcast media for bringing the gravity of the Sahelian drought before world public opinion.

Gambia

GAMBIA told the Plenary she was part of the Sudano-Sahelian zone and after the devastating drought anyone familiar with that area knew that "unless a sincere, sustained and meaningful effort is made by the entire international community, the continued suffering, material degradation and unnecessary loss of life will further decimate the populations of this area."

Implementation of medium and long-term reconstruction was needed, as well as emergency and relief actions.

Still only one earth



by David Brower

Mr. Brower is founder president of Friends of the Earth International, the head office of which is presently in San Francisco.

ONLY 29 months ago most of the nations now meeting in Rome attended the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. There they took stock -- and concluded that there is only one earth.

Most of the talks so far in the WFC seem to assume that the developed countries have a spare earth hidden somewhere, and everyone should therefore hurry about the task of tearing up this one at an accelerating rate.

Fertility

In the FOE view, there is indeed only one earth. It must be kept alive. There is altogether too much evidence that man is killing it because he has lost perspective.

Jacques Yves Cousteau warns us about this. If the earth were the size of an egg, he says, all the water on earth (very little of it fresh and most of that frozen) would be but a drop on the egg's shell. Less than a half century more of man's current reckless attack will make most of that water, the ocean, useless.

Hard questions spring to mind. What harm did the good men in FAO and other miracle-wheaters do with the best of intentions because they did not understand some well-known and immutable ecological laws?

Can we afford another minute of putting the fertility of the earth's soil on a half-life basis with our half-thought-out, oil-rich, machine serving agriculture, with its oversimplified artificial

fertilizers, its trace-element drain, its pesti-herbi-fungi-slimi-suicides, its soil compaction, its supersaturations of waste and pollution, its monoculture?

Can we afford to continue forging more and more links in the technological chain of food production, thereupon becoming more and more vulnerable to the failure of any of the links and the increasing likelihood of such failure? Professor Paul Sears

warned against this years ago. *Deserts on the March* was the title of his book then. It could be *Deserts on the Dead Run* now. DEVELOPMENT FORUM's cereal-flow diagram issued for WFC shows North America and Australia as the overwhelmingly dominant source of cereals for world trade.

The unasked question is: How long will the sources last? Are they operated on a sustained-yield basis or is a peculiar kind

of mining operation going on, a kind of agriculture that produces a slow but steady decline in diversity and fertility?

To judge from agriculture's departure from natural patterns of growth and recycling, mining is what we have. Breaking of the natural land cover accelerates erosion by wind and water. There is a constant removal of crops. Their growth is accelerated by the application



-does WFC expect a spare?

of artificial fertilizers that contain only a few of the elements removed.

The consequences to the soil mechanism resulting from the application of such simplified fertilizers are poorly studied. So are the consequences of the doses of lethal chemistry in pesticides and herbicides. The tragic loss of much of the best land to pavement continues at an increasing rate.

The discarding wastes that should be recycled to the land creates two deserts -- one where the organic material came from, and the other where it is dumped, unusable.

The vast amounts of energy needed to fuel mechanized agriculture is to a large extent transported over land and sea at peril to both. When burned they imperil the air as well; the rain falls acid downwind.

Faster

But at the WFC, the only question seems to be how to organize doing all this faster. Who is guilty of not mining fast enough? Of not putting up enough money for it, so that man can hurry on with the joys of overpopulating the earth still more.

Perhaps there needs to be an Organization of Fertility Exporting Countries ready to follow OFEC's wise course -- deciding not to hasten the loss of the only real resource they have that can produce the food of life -- the continuing fertility of their land and their estuarine waters.

OFEC should, of course, not undertake anything precipitate that would add to Third World miseries, whether overseas or within their own borders. But OFEC could make it clear that it is not ecologically feasible to continue drawing on their fertility bank, and there must be a phasing down of demands upon it.

This would entail sharply limiting OFEC populations first, because theirs are the heavy users. But it would also entail dynamic population control elsewhere, consonant with rapid spread of the word that soil fertility is not in any sense limitless, and that a world without wildness, a world of men and rice and pests, is a world no one needs.

Equity

No one thinks exponential growth of anything can go on forever, but neither does anyone think to stop it while the earth is still livable, and is anyone thinking of leaving a generous store of unused resources in the bank for further generations, OPEC, OFEC, and everyone else, to use in a world likely to be as troubled as ours is? Or is conservation old hat?

Considering what four billion people have done to the earth in the last forty years, neither Russia nor China nor anyone should entertain the idea of feeding 40 billion people, not even for another 40 minutes!

Moral: Less for those who are surfeited. More, drawn from that surfeit, for those who have never known enough, but not indefinitely. A rational end to overdevelopment and a rational beginning of equity. A lot more self-sufficiency, as China suggests, and some self-denial too, including self-denial of the urge to bring children into the world in such numbers that they must perish if someone else fails to feed them.

Compassion is not just a human

THE ANIMAL we are worrying about in Rome is man, and understandably enough, for men, women and children are our own species.

But there are also other creatures whose right to survive (if such a thing has ever existed as a right) is threatened. In many cases it is threatened by us, by our real needs and by our artificially-fabricated demands.

Demands dictated by the fashion industry -- whose products have been on show at the Palazzo -- are a case in point. It is not uncommon at conferences like this one to see people sporting rare furs taken from the backs of even rarer fur-bearing animals.



Gremlin's diary



Leopards -- or, rather, bits of their carcasses -- are popular.

These animals are not starved to death, because, if they were, the quality of their coats would be impaired. Instead, many of them, once trapped, are killed by the anal insertion of a red-hot metal bar.

It is right for us to care for our brothers and sisters. But compassion, if we really possess it, is a great enough emotion to be extended to all species.

Scratchers

OUR FRIENDS in *Il Messaggero*, are busily covering PAN's coverage. Every now and again, we get a mention and the latest description attached to us is "la graffiante pubblicazione." Literally, a scratching publication.

Blind faith IN COMMITTEE II the EEC had proposed what seemed to be a highly significant amendment.

We fully support the EEC, said the UK. Our reporter, ever probing, but primarily English-speaking, rushed to ask the UK delegate exactly what the amendment entailed. "You better ask the EEC man," came the reply. "I don't understand it..."

Dall's fall Thin cold shoulders

HANS DALL, who actually allowed the famous weighing machine to attend the Rome Conference, trod on it yesterday, and was duly informed he was 14 kilos overweight. He duly coughed up 28,000 lire.

THERE WAS a very interesting conversation on Saturday between two gentlemen who both managed to squeeze into the PAN office. One was Michel Cepede, representative of the Comité Français pour la CMCF and the other Andrew Hutton, news editor of PAN.

Evidently, the trouble was that the fat-tax fundraising exercise, the weighing machine, and the height-weight ratio charts lacked any sound scientific basis. You see, said Michel, you have to take shoulder-width into account.

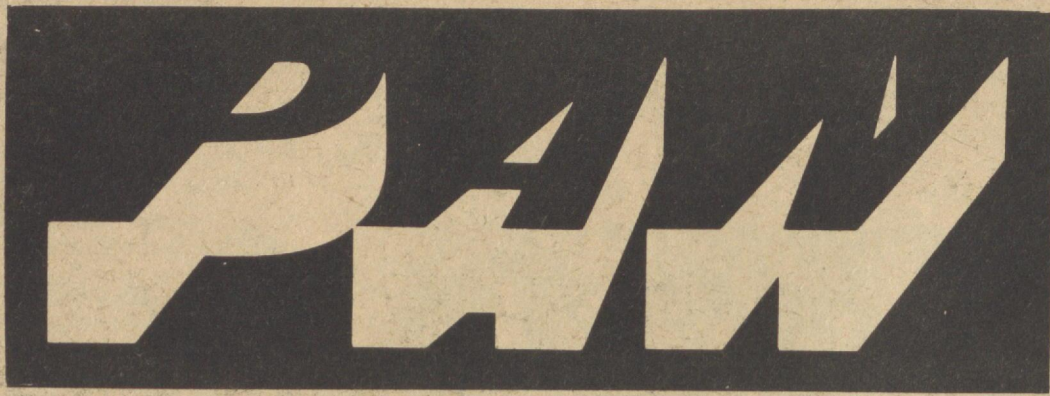
Yes, yes, agreed Andrew. Shoulder-width, that's the thing.

As an independent journalist, Gremlin feels bound to report that both these soundly-based, scientific gentlemen have belly-widths considerably in excess of shoulder-widths.

Vanishing profiles

ONE COMMODITY appears to be running short in the Conference. At the start the plenary floor was littered with fairly senior ministers representing governments. But now many of these politicians have returned home.

Not only are they maintaining a low profile, their low profile is being maintained somewhere else.



Deadline 16th

(Continued from Page 1)

suggested that there were some feelings that the full one million tons should be matched.

Australian food aid at present is primarily directed towards those countries which need it most. The Indian sub-continent and Sri Lanka receive about three-quarters of it.

Canada

Current figures for the fiscal year 1974 indicate a total of 450,000 tons for food aid. An extra 100,000 to 180,000 tons may be available by April 1975. Some of the \$50 million promised at the conference for agricultural assistance is not intended as food aid, but could be allocated to emergency food assistance.

The most impressive commitment to date is undoubtedly the Canadian promise of one million tons food aid each year for three years. This offer has been made despite a 15 per cent reduction in the Canadian wheat crop this year.

The delegation insists that deliveries will begin in the spring, but they are unable to say how much.

United States

In May the administration requested \$900 million for food aid. The \$100 million addition first announced by secretary Butz at his press conference will merely cancel the effects of inflation.

A senior advisor to the American delegation stated that they were reserving their position on short term action until the end of the conference.

The EEC

The community does not intend to increase its food aid over the last year, although its value will be increased by 25 per cent to compensate for inflation.

United Kingdom

Over the past year, they have provided almost \$14 million for the Sahel and Ethiopia and \$28 million extra for Bangladesh, as well as sharing in the EEC contribution to the UN emergency measures.

They have no specific propositions at this stage, according to delegation members; it is waiting to see the recommendations of the conference.

Sweden

This year Sweden started an emergency fund to buy 70,000 tons of wheat which is shipped bilaterally to Bangladesh and the Sahel. At the conference the Swedish delegation has committed itself to make an extra 40,000 tons per year available for the World Food Program.

This quantity is just under 10 per cent of the proposed multilateral emergency fund of 50,000 tons, and will be available from July 1975.

West Germany

Although they have doubled their total agricultural aid to \$400 million, they have not increased their food aid above its present level of \$100 million per year.

France

There are no signs of any increase in France's bilateral aid. They did however support the EEC's initiative to maintain its food aid at the 1974 level.

Japan

The matter is still "under consideration," according to a delegate. "We cannot release figures. We are consulting with our government."

GROUP 77 BID TO BREAK DEADLOCK

by Melvyn Westlake

THE GROUP of 77 have drawn up plans for a radical alteration of the world trading systems. They were released late on Saturday, and will almost certainly lead to a head-on collision in Committee III between the developed and the developing nations.

There seems little chance of the rich countries conceding even a fraction of what is being sought from them. Several of the European delegates commented bitterly that the developing countries were trying to turn Committee III into a mini-UNCTAD.

The resolution calls for: A complete new deal for developing countries on the world's market.

Food at reasonable prices:

Reduction of food consumption in the rich states.

An end to restrictive practices in the farm policies of rich countries.

Preference to Third World exports, even if they compete with domestic products.

Postponed repayments of their debts.

Handling over the customs duties on their exports when they enter the docks of rich countries.

Earlier in the day, Committee III, was once again adjourned because the Group of 77 had not yet drawn up their plans.

With only a few days left to debate the Third World demands the role of the Committee is likely to be reduced to a propaganda exercise.

'Develop don't destroy' — Tolba

by Colin Tudge

"DEVELOPMENT without destruction" -- that was the message from UNEP's deputy executive director, Dr. Mostafa Tolba to the plenary.

Though we must maximize food production, if we do so without regard to the environment we would "destroy the ecological basis to sustain production."

That over-exuberant agriculture could end up cutting food supply was clear from past examples. Farming of steep hillsides in Indonesia had caused serious erosion. Slash-and-burn agriculture was undermining tropical forests in the Philippines.

And "deforestation in the Himalayas is contributing to the increase in frequency and severity of flooding in Pakistan.

India, and Bangladesh, and overgrazing and deforestation is contributing to the southward march of the Sahara in the Sahelian zone of Africa."

Equally dismal was our record in misapplying technology, and failing to make use of locally evolved techniques. "Simple inexpensive counter-measures known over the centuries, like the use of terracing, are often not applied widely enough to prevent soil erosion."

We need better fertilizers, said Dr. Tolba: new forms of

Then there was our predilection for using more and more pesticide to control pests. "This has resulted through the processes of natural selection and evolution in the appearance and proliferation of new strains which generally turn out to be more vicious and more immune to chemicals."

"Increasing dosages or using different pesticides provide no final solution."

What else was needed? Better food storage techniques -- rodents alone get through enough to feed 200 million people. And better ways of forecasting the weather.

Finally, said Dr. Tolba, "we realize that in certain regions of the world application of additional resources and inputs would lead to the production of more food than in others."

"The generation of surpluses in the favored regions must be linked with changes in the economic and social patterns which affect distribution."

Swedes say no to more grain aid

THE SWEDISH delegation, under pressure from members of their delegation and the Swedish press, has refused to increase their commitment of food aid, despite a grain surplus of just under 500,000 tons.

The Swedes, who last week in the plenary said they intended to increase their multilateral food aid by 40,000 tons, are being pushed by a Member of Parliament from the Center Party, a conservative, farmer-supported group, to raise that aid five-fold.

Citing a \$120 million

Swedish donation to the United Nations Catastrophe Relief Fund, the nordic press has suggested the funds be used to buy grain for aid from the Swedish surplus.

If the money is used by the UN on the world market, the Press argues, it will buy far less grain and augment world inflation.

Total Swedish aid last year, through bi-lateral and multilateral programs totaled 115,000 tons. A spokesman for the delegation said there is no hope that total will go beyond 155,000 tons next year.

PAN



Newspaper of the World Food Conference November 5, 1974 Number 1.

Thought for today

WELCOME TO PAN, your conference newspaper. We shall be reporting daily on the events inside and outside the conference hall. We will be telling you what the non-government people are saying and thinking.

PAN is published by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, with financial support principally from Oxfam, Christian Aid, Friends of the Earth, and distribution help from Italia Nostra and the World Wildlife Fund.

The journalists on it are independent. Some worked on ECO, the newspaper of the Stockholm Environment Conference; others on Planet, the newspaper of the 1974 World Population Conference in Bucharest.

Their concern is to report accurately, to further communication within the conference, to be a platform and, from time to time and entirely without presumption, a pulpit.

For, outside this conference, some 460 million people are waiting. They are the people of the developing countries who are suffering from malnutrition, from daily grinding privation.

It is a formidable queue -- and growing. From the better-off, it deserves some answers.



Remember-
THEY
can't eat
your words...

Page 2

Economic Notebook

Anthony Harris

Page 3

The Russians and the FAO

Robin Sharp

Strike at Palazzo

Typewriters and duplicators were silent yesterday afternoon as a strike shut down electricity supplies in parts of the conference hall for about half an hour.

Page 4

Why you are here

Robert Allen

Page 6

NGOs get-together

Pictures:

Mark Edwards

Curtain up on arsenic

The FAO Drama Group are producing a play in Rome during this week. The play: "Arsenic and Old Lace."

Page 7

The Rome Forum

Jonathan Power

Page 8

What's On

Enter Mr. Butz

Waiting for Mr. B

Last night it seemed unlikely that the question of whether President Boumediene of Algeria is to appear at the opening ceremony would be resolved until this morning.

President Boumediene was scheduled to speak before Dr. Kissinger.

Here we are again — not yet as happy as can be

WELL, HERE we are again -- as the old song goes -- with Stockholm stickers covered by Caracas and Bucharest. Now, in Rome, we'll get to grips with our problem - beset planet, with our demands of it, and with their ability to be met. Or not.

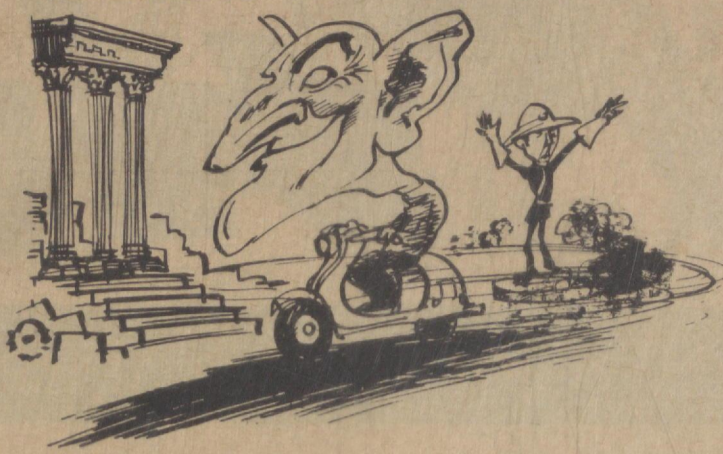
The United Nations and Italy, hosts to the World Food Conference in marbled halls of the Palazzo dei Congressi worthy of Xanadu have set aside a great meeting place called Plenary, with plush but sober seating for plush but sober speakers. And there, dominating the scene, is the symbol -- a belated map of a beleaguered world, betwixt the flags of Unity and Nationhood.

The single earth writ large but finite is a fitting enough exposition of our need to come to terms with the possible. But the single world is more than that, for it is also a view of a view, a global projection from the north in which the northern lands look big and clear, the southern distant, more obscure. Yet for all that this is the earth lent to us for our short or shorter lives only for us in turn to surrender to others.

Projections from the north, if cartographic, are of little importance; but if cultural, social, commercial, are of more.

So, in our mind's eye, let us view from the south, from the great and once immune

GREMLIN is back



Off with a bang!

PAN is being produced in a downtown office whose location must remain a secret. Monday morning, you see, a building adjoining the one we're working in was bombed. Something about a visit from Dr. Kissinger. In any event, if we miss a day, you'll know why.

southern continents across the seas to South America, to Australia, to southern Asia, then India and finally to the northern distant circle of America, Europe and the Soviet Union -- a closing circle of but transitory dominance. After all, it's only a map. So, *Vive la change. Faut-il d'être toujours la meme chose?*

Points for pedestrians

FOR CAR - LESS observers, and for that great majority of

journalists best described as pedestrian, the odd problem might just conceivably crop up in commuting from hotel to hot-spot. Rome, however, is not that difficult to get around, and I personally and with little difficulty have managed to avoid it entirely for a great number of years. However, while the city might be easy to get around in that sense, it does present a problem to those who actually have to travel within it. Hence a few pointers.

Firstly, there is a shuttle service which might operate between FAO and the conference center and which

might help. Secondly, there are illuminated signs on posts to help you cross vias which are roads. There are three types of message. *Avanti* means "Go." Flashing *Avanti* means "Go faster." *Alt* means "Go faster still. You've got three seconds."

ROMAN DIRECTIONS

If for any reason you are lost, then you can ask any Roman how to get to the conference center. He will then direct you to an old building beginning with the same letter, from which you proceed south.

Finally, there is the underground. The best tube stop is called *EUR*, of which there are two, and the one you want is *Fermi*, which is not necessarily Italian for closed.

If you decide -- as you well might -- that it really is better to walk, take care, and remember that Italian cars drive on the right. Mostly.

With respect to Dr. K...

THE WHOLE idea of a World Food Conference, it should be remembered, was first proposed by President Boumediene of Algeria. Which makes it all the more unfortunate that the poster-information sheet sent around the world by the UN to explain the origins of the conference should mention by name only one international figure -- the ubiquitous Dr. Kissinger.

It cannot be overemphasized that this self-effacing and hard-working multilateral, almost polygonal, individual has been cruelly embarrassed by the attention which is constantly focused on him. I am confident that Dr. Henry would have much preferred all the credit for the Rome conference to be passed to Boumediene, all the credit for the Vietnam settlement to Le Duc Tho, and all the credit for recent events in Chile to anyone who would care to accept it.

Help wanted: good food, etc.

THERE HAS been a tiny snarl up in the contractual arrangements between the United Nations and the Italian Government over the Roman talkathon. The UN has still not been able to reach an agreement about the payment of costs of staging the do in Rome. One problem, it seems, is that there is no Italian Government. But compared with the other problems we have to face, this one is surely less insuperable.

Anyone prepared to govern Italy from November 5-16 (inclusive) should contact the PAN offices on extension 62. All applicants will be impartially assessed. Please state clearly policies to be pursued and splinter-group of origin.

Agropower - the ugly alternative

Can the World Food Conference hope to achieve more than other United Nations conferences on such pressing problems as population, or the law of the sea? In some ways, the signs are more hopeful.

The physical objectives set by the Secretariat are in principle achievable: a relatively modest increase in the rate of growth of food production in the developing countries, from 2.4 to 3.6 per cent annually; a much more dramatic increase in the world capacity for fertilizers, which however can be based quite largely on the readily available raw materials and financial surpluses of the oil-producing countries.

Psychology is also to some extent on the side of the angels (a body apparently represented in Rome by Dame Barbara Ward): food remains to some extent an issue of conscience in the developed world, this has been shown by initiatives from President Ford in offering US support for world stockpiling measures, and the new proposal from the EEC Commission that the forthcoming multilateral trade negotiation should give special attention to removing restrictions on exports -- which the EEC itself applies to food products.

The Secretariat has also shown a realistic appreciation of the political preferences of the OPEC countries, whose potential as aid donors has already been shown in Mr.

Economic Notebook
by Anthony Harris

Robert Macnamara's estimate that the World Bank group may draw up to 90 per cent of its resources from OPEC next year, by stressing programs which offer technical support for bilateral aid projects.

The problem is technically soluble, and there is some evidence of a will to solve it.

No problems have ever been solved, however, by fixing attention on what is easy; the test of the next two weeks will be how far delegates can face the less pleasant fact that the economic situation is extremely unfavorable for solutions which involve self-sacrifice and long-term thinking.

The economic difficulties need little elaboration. The combination of inflation and recession in the developed countries, together with an unprecedented collective deficit on account of oil imports, create a situation in which all the objectives of the conference are much more difficult to achieve.

A large increase in development aid is seen as adding to already intolerable financial burdens. This is in fact extremely short-sighted reasoning: an expanded aid program would, after a short time lag, tend to improve the balance of payments of the developed countries, since part of the food and investment goods

they would sell would no doubt be financed by OPEC aid contributions. However, crisis situations tend to foster short-sightedness.

The trade objectives of the conference are more seriously affected. At any time, a situation of shortage is likely to provoke a scramble for the available supplies; at a time when inflation in general is a dominant economic problem, the motives are even stronger.

As has already been seen in the actions of the US on soyabeans and more recently over wheat sales, and by the operation of the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy, there is a strong tendency to give domestic buyers protected access to available supplies. Equally, at a time of economic recession, the developed countries will be even more reluctant than in the past to open their markets to the industrial products of poorer countries, and thus intensify the problems of unemployment.

Kit cuts cackle!

Where is the best place to eat at the conference? That question was one of the first asked at the Press briefing yesterday. The Journalist was politely referred to the briefing kit.

Report attacks plan for food aid

THE ACTION proposals to be put to the conference would mean leaving the distribution of cash and food aid in the hands of the rich countries, according to a report published yesterday by the Transnational Institute.

Aid would be used for the political interests of the powerful countries and the commercial benefit of the multinational corporations, says the report.

"In other words, the net result would be the application of the same technocratic policies which have already demonstrated their failure, since not only has hunger not been eliminated but it has increased," the institute claims.

The report suggests that the best way to distribute cash, food and fertilizer stocks would be a group elected by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Countries giving food and funds would be represented, but with votes equal to those of the receiving countries.

The report says the suggestions prepared for the conference would mean continuing the existing system of supplying food and cash to poor countries and "it is absolutely impossible to think that confidence should be placed in such developed countries as the United States," following the report, of the US Senate committee on human nutrition and needs.

This committee, chaired by Senator George McGovern, former US Presidential candidate, claims that food and fertilizer aid was used for political purposes.

According to the Transnational Institute report the suggested Intergovernmental Council -- half of whose members would be elected by the UN General Assembly and half by the World Food Conference -- with the proposed Fund for Agricultural Development would not change this pattern.

The report advocates a UN council of organization to supervise the investment of cash from developed countries to aid agricultural growth, distribute fertilizers and pesticides and supply food at stable prices to countries which need it and keep a food reserve for emergency aid.

But this organization should reflect all the countries of the world and not current economic relationships. The Food and Agriculture Organization would act on its decisions.

The institute says the World Food Conference should not be "just one more conference of compromises and concealment of the true causes of underdevelopment and hunger." Delegates should not accept measures that have already been tried and failed -- "for hunger is caused by plunder and not by scarcity."

The Transnational Institute is linked with the Institute for Policy Studies in the United States.

Soviet Union may want to join FAO in Rome

by Robin Sharp

Political pressures generated by the World Food Conference have a 50-50 chance of ending the Soviet Union's 30-year boycott of the FAO.

This is the assessment of high-level UN food officials who believe there is an even chance that Moscow will announce its intention to join the agency during or shortly after the conference.

Pressure on the Soviet government to take up membership -- as a demonstration of its readiness to join international efforts on the food problem -- has been building up during the preparatory stages of the conference. In its summary of action to strengthen world food security, for example, the report of the third session of the Preparatory Committee says:

"Many delegates stressed that full and active participation in the information system by all countries, particularly those which were major producers, consumers and/or traders, was essential for the effective functioning of the system."

The United States would like the Soviet Union in FAO, not least because it would ease the financial burden. And the developing countries which were indirectly hard-hit by Soviet forays into the grain market in 1972 are also anxious that this shouldn't happen again.

From 1945 onwards, for the first few years of FAO's existence, Moscow declined to join because, as one FAO official put it, "agriculture was the Achilles heel of the Soviet system." Then political factors came to the fore and although the cost in foreign exchange was their official reason for staying out, more important was reckoned to be their reluctance to join another forum where they'd be under pressure from the developing countries to give more aid.

Also, while remaining non-members, the Russians have established useful unofficial links with the FAO at a technical level on forestry, fisheries and other matters -- and at the same time retained the secrecy which enabled them to scoop the world grain market two years ago. Now, however, the Soviet technicians themselves are anxious for their government to get on the inside.

Some FAO staff have expressed anxiety that the introduction of Soviet staff members would slow down the bureaucracy's decision-making processes, but senior officials are eager to put out the welcome mat, stressing that Soviet participation is essential to give the agency the global credibility it needs to tackle the task ahead.

In any case, the problems of assimilating another major member country and another official language are probably overstated. China, which rejoined FAO last year, has so far adopted a low profile.

Farmers' protest

As delegates from the world's nations prepared to come to Rome, farmers near St. Bruno, Quebec, slit the jugular veins of 600 calves and dumped the carcasses into a pit. The farmers say that animal buyers pay 15 to 40 cents a pound for live veal, while it costs 60 cents a pound to raise the animals.

A similar demonstration occurred a few weeks earlier in Montana.

Lack of conference planning provokes one resignation, some injured feelings;

Bright spots remain

The resignation of an Assistant Secretary-General, lapses in communication between the Rome and New York ends of the secretariat and the absence of a signed contract between Italy and the UN set off a spate of mini-crises in the final stages of preparation for the World Food Conference.

Only a week before delegates started arriving at the Palazzo dei Congressi for today's opening Plenary Session, there was hardly a stick of furniture in the place. The Secretariat was still frantically negotiating with the Italians for more partitions to divide large rooms into office cubicles -- and meeting with a polite refusal because they weren't included in the contract.

In the end, conference officials had to agree to pay for some of the extra facilities without being quite sure where the money would come from.

CLOSE TO TEARS

The resignation -- apparently in despair -- was that of the Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Protocol Affairs, Mr. A. G. Orbaneja, who gave up when the third Preparatory Committee ended in early October without any signatures on the Italy-UN contract. Apparently he had seen the shape of things to come, because his successor -- hauled in from Geneva at the eleventh hour -- was reported close to tears last week after failing to bridge the supply-demand gap (a familiar problem?) between the secretariat and the Italian side.

In the absence of the contract,

and later in the absence of an Italian government, planning of conference services ran into hazards at every turn. Then came a lengthy tug-of-war over the allocation of limited seating and office space at the Palazzo before the names finally went up on the doors.

A harassed Hans Dall, the conference co-ordinator for NGOs, reported that his office and briefing rooms were being regularly expropriated for other purposes, restored after a strong protest and then expropriated for someone else. And the US was complaining about the number of seats allocated to NGOs in the Plenary while their numerically overweight delegation had to make do, like everyone else, with six.

Meanwhile, the Italian Tourist Agency, CIT, assigned by the erstwhile Italian government to handle hotel bookings for delegations, reserved about 3,000 beds in 40 hotels around the city -- only to cancel them all a

bit later when they realised no-one was using their service. The reason? Invitations to the conference had been sent to governments from New York and CIT's hotel booking forms were planned to go out only on receipt of the acceptances. But the system failed and long after the effective deadline for despatching the forms they were still stacked in an FAO office.

On the credit side, the WFC secretariat emphasised that they had kept costs to a minimum. The total bill -- including Italy's contribution of \$500,000 as host nation -- is estimated at \$1.5 million, compared with approximate figures of \$2-3 million for this year's Population Conference in Bucharest and \$8-10 million for the 1972 Environment Conference in Stockholm.

SUITABLY AUSTERE

Notice has gone out from Mr. Marei that, because of the nature of the conference, he will not hold the traditional Secretary-General's reception for delegates. And please, he added, would delegations organizing receptions of their own keep them suitably austere.

Meanwhile, back at the FAO building -- constructed before World War II to house one of Mussolini's ministries -- staff were wondering how they'd be kept informed of the proceedings at the Palazzo. For the opening sessions a closed-circuit TV relay was laid on, but thereafter officials agreed they would have to depend largely on PAN for day-by-day reports.

Assessment document attacked

THE OFFICIAL United Nations view of the world food situation has already been attacked by some of the countries taking part in the conference.

The official report, *Assessment of the World Food Situation, E-CONF 65-3*, was discussed during the third preparatory meeting at Rome between September 23 and October 4.

DATA DISPUTED

According to the official report to this meeting, some delegates refused to accept the figures put forward in the United Nations report.

They pointed out that most of these figures were not based on official data, and that any prognosis made from them could only be seen as an attempt by the UN secretariat to "give its own understanding of the world food situation."

The dissenting countries also suggested that the provision of data by region and by country would help to clarify the situation.

However, the majority of the delegations acknowledged the difficulty of assessing the relative importance of the factors behind the world food

supply, and the difficulties of making any firm forecasts.

And they felt that the document provided "a reasonable basis for deliberations by the conference on proposals for national and international action."

Delegates also disagreed over the causes of the current world food problems, with some of them emphasising that the fundamental causes lay in the "century-old oppression, exploitation and plunder by imperialist and colonialist powers."

Several delegates suggested that the UN view could have focused more sharply on the central causes, and could have drawn bolder conclusions.

Some delegates were also worried about the deterioration in the present supply situation of a number of staple foodstuffs, and asked the secretariat or the Food and Agriculture Organization to provide a further up-to-date survey of the short-term prospects.

As regards the long term trends, some of the delegates felt

that real incomes in most developing countries would probably rise more slowly than the report envisaged. This would mean a decline in the effective demand for food, but an increase in famine and malnutrition.

LESS MEAT, MORE GRAIN

Delegates also felt that a move away from the use of grain for feeding livestock -- particularly in the developed countries -- could ease the pressure on the grain market. This would allow the developing countries to meet more of their food needs at a lower cost.

The committee decided unanimously that, despite the short-comings of the UN forecasts, the evidence showed an urgent need for a sharper growth in the food production of developing countries. And many delegates also stressed the importance of the UN's declaration of action on the establishment of a new international Economic order.

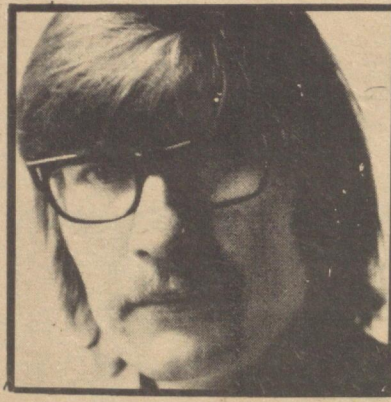
Find us in room 44



PAN will succeed only if it receives opinion and comment from delegates and NGO participants in the conference.

Please let us hear from you. The PAN office is: room 44 - in the semi-basement of the Palazzo, telephone: 596-457, ext. 62.

An apology: we were hoping to publish articles in French and Spanish but, for technical reasons beyond our control, this will not be possible in the first issues. This need not inhibit those who wish to write in either language, as translation facilities are available.



'For many years the plight of the hungry millions has provoked amongst the affluent hardly a pang at all...' Robert Allen sets the scene on these pages, warns 'Don't talk with your mouth full...'

Why you are here

THERE IS a local proverb displayed in one of Rome's restaurants that should be taken down and locked in a cupboard for as long as it remains so brazenly untrue. *Quanno se magna tutto er monno e paro*, it claims: when one eats, everyone is equal.

That, on the contrary, some eat far too much and many eat far too little might be thought reason enough for a world food conference. Yet for many years, the plight of the hungry millions has provoked amongst the affluent few hardly a pang at all -- and then less often of conscience than of indigestion.

The initiatives of September 1973, of which this conference is the fruit, are therefore the more remarkable. First, the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Algiers urged that "in the context of the serious food crisis confronting vast areas and populations of the world, an emergency joint conference of FAO and UNCTAD should be convened at ministerial level in order to formulate a programme of international co-operation to overcome the increasing shortage of food and other commodities, and to maintain stable prices."

Then, U.S. Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger, noting "the growing threat to the world's food supply," proposed a "world food conference be organized under United Nations auspices in 1974 to discuss ways to maintain adequate food supplies and to harness the efforts of all nations to meet the hunger and malnutrition resulting from natural disasters."

So what is so different about this food crisis? First, it was preceded by a wave of optimism. Second, it was (and still is) the biggest ever. Third, it affected the rich developed countries.

When FAO proposed its Indicative World Plan target for developing countries of a 3.7 per cent per year growth in food production between 1961-63 and 1973, it was criticized as too low. The Green Revolution's high-yield varieties of wheat and rice, it was claimed, would do better than that. All that was needed were adequate inputs of land, water, fertilizers and pesticides.

In many ways the claim was borne out. The developing countries enjoyed four successive years of good harvest from 1967-70. In the Far East, food production increased between 4 and 6 per cent. Today, 37 per cent of the wheatlands of the Indian sub-continent are planted to high-yield varieties. An impressive achievement.

But a vulnerable one. In 1971, bad weather was widespread in the developing countries and the increase in production small; 1972 was still worse. Floods in the Philippines during July and August damaged thousands of hectares of rice, and inadequate rainfall in October and November reduced production still further.

Droughts also slashed harvests in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Thailand and much of Africa. In the U.S.S.R., total grain production fell by 7 per cent, wheat by 13 per cent. World food production dropped slightly for the first time since the Second World War.

Good weather returned in 1973, bringing a small recovery but little relief. The 1970-71 season so far represents a peak in world production, which we have not yet regained. Meanwhile, populations continue to increase. By 1973, per capita food production in Latin America had declined to the 1961-65 average, in the Far East was fluctuating around it, in the Near East was 2 per cent down, and in Africa 5 per cent down.

Prospects this year are again grim. U.S. maize production will be much lower than last year. Canada is faced with its smallest wheat harvest for more than ten years. The Soviet Union's wheat production is falling below target. Erratic rainfall in many Asian countries is either flooding or parching the rice crop.

Three years of bad harvests in so many countries have more than halved grain stocks. World wheat stocks are estimated to have fallen from 49 million tons in 1971-72 to 20 million tons today; coarse grain stocks from 54 million to 21 million tons in the same period.

Naturally, prices have rocketed. Wheat has doubled from \$70 a ton in 1972 to \$148 a ton today; corn (maize) has trebled from \$56 to \$164 per ton in the same period; and rice has gone up by almost three and a half times from \$151 to \$515.

Not only have grain prices risen, but also those of fertilizers, oil and oil-derived products, shipping, and so on. Fertilizer prices are three times the 1970-71 level, shipping costs tripled in a year, and oil price rises like those of 1973 (from \$2.48 a barrel in January to \$11.65 in December) are well known.

Rises like these wound developed countries, cripple developing ones. Their governments no longer have the money to pay for essential imports. The current account deficit of the developing countries last year was \$10 billion and this year could be \$20 billion. A number of countries cannot afford to buy food even on deferred terms or expanded credit. The external public debt of the developing market economies increased from \$19 billion in 1960 to \$60 billion in 1971. In the same period, annual debt service rose from \$2.1 billion to \$6.1 billion.

The inflation pinching the bellies of the poor has also been pinching the purses of the rich. Governments of developed countries are having to cope with angry housewives, recalcitrant trade unions, and an international money market in such disarray that economic collapse for many of them is a real possibility.

At a time when developing countries require to be rescued from their balance of payments difficulties, the potential rescuers find themselves facing deficits that are almost as oppressive. It is a time when aid as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product is lower than it was in 1961, and when its purchasing power is declining. A time, what is more, when governments (rightly or wrongly) feel their constituencies would be unsympathetic to any call for a transfer of resources from them to developing countries.

It is a very good time for a World Food Conference. For this crude conjunction of biological, political and economic events has brought home the inescapable interdependence of all nations and the folly of governments' persistent refusal to behave accordingly. It is not a comforting message. It has provoked in the massive industrial powers a kind of geopolitical change of life, for its logic is that a shared world must share resources, and the rich have most to give.

Thanks to the rising price of oil, they have started by giving (albeit involuntarily and with bad grace) enormous amounts of their money to the OPEC countries, transforming the cartel into a new power bloc. The political realignment that this is causing, and for which the Conference is now the stage, has triggered attempts to lay the blame for the current crisis on



OPEC.

This is, of course, nonsense. The price rises and shortages of nitrogenous fertilizers are partly due to the high cost of oil, but also to a cyclical trough in production. Most of the high price of grain is caused by the tremendous pressure of demand, much of which comes from the high meat consumption of affluent areas like North America, the Soviet Union and Europe.

The developed countries' cattle, pigs and poultry consume a greater quantity of cereals than the developing countries' people. If you insist on talking with your mouth full, you should at least choose your words carefully.

Nor did the current high cost of oil products cause the original poor harvests, although it makes recovery from them extremely expensive. These failures were due partly to bad weather, but partly to our putting all our money on a vulnerable food strategy -- a strategy that depends for sustained success on optimum climatic, economic and social conditions.

There are at least 460 million malnourished people still

today, as well as millions more who are simply hungry, because we sought to apply industrial agricultural techniques to a primarily non-industrial system.

This is not to belittle the Green Revolution's successes so far, but the fact remains that the hungry world fell short of its annual food production target by a third (2.6 per cent a year between 1961-63 and 1973, instead of the Indicative World Plan's 3.7 a year). And in contrast to the progress with wheat, only 15 per cent of South Asia's rice lands are under high-yield varieties of rice.

With their requirement for a high level of management, well-maintained irrigation systems, and large applications of fertilizers and pesticides, the high-yield varieties are best suited to those farmers who are fully integrated into the market economy. But such people are a minority.

About 75 per cent of the population of developing countries are small subsistence farmers, with little or no land or money. If they are to provide themselves with a sustainable food supply, the Green Revolution should not be abandoned. It should be revolutionized.

'Swords into plowshares is fine, plows into shares is not...' Robert Allen, acknowledging the obstacles in the way of action, spells out what the conference has to find the will to achieve

PROBABLY the main reason why the world food problem has never been solved is because we lack the political will. At the moment we grow enough food to feed everybody. People starve because it is not in the right place, is too expensive, and is being eaten by somebody else -- somebody who does not really need it.

In the recent past we have concentrated on technical solutions, largely because the political consequences of doing otherwise appear so awkward. And the unfortunate lesson of the recent past is that technical and economic inputs are essential adjuncts to primarily social and political reforms, but they are not alternatives to them. Swords into plowshares are fine, plows into shares are not.

No doubt it is naive to expect delegations to face up to the awkward political decisions necessary in a mere ten-day conference. Much more likely, perhaps, is some diplomatic horsetrading, some emergency relief for those hardest hit by current deficits, and institutional arrangements for overcoming future short-term problems and for continuing discussions about the long-term.

Is this enough? The avowed aim of the conference, after all, is to agree on the measures necessary to provide all humanity with a quality diet at a cost the poorest can afford. This is a staggeringly difficult undertaking, and it is inconceivable that it will be achieved without an unprecedented effort at understanding and goodwill on the part of all delegations and some sacrifice.

There are two separate but related problems. One is the ever-present background problem of millions of malnourished and under-nourished. If the developing countries cannot increase their own food production, their numbers are projected to rise to about 800 million.

This assumption is probably optimistic as it is based on the average performance of the developing countries between 1961 and 1973, which prior to 1970-71 saw harvests which could now prove exceptional. The prospect of the gap between population and food production widening progressively until collapse intervenes is very real.

To prevent this, money is needed: \$16-18 billion a year in the Secretariat's opinion, and unlikely to be an underestimate. Of this, the foreign exchange requirement is \$5.3 billion a year. The sums foreseen as coming from the World Bank, other multilateral agencies and bilateral donors amount to about \$2.7 billion, leaving a shortfall of some \$2.6 billion.

No doubt there is room for argument about how precisely the money should be spent, and this will alter the form in which it will be required. But there is no doubt either that the flow of funds to the developing countries must be much greater than the current \$1.5 billion a year -- both from the old rich (Europe, North America, Japan, Soviet Union, etc.) and from the new rich (the OPEC countries). There will of course be disagreements within and between these two groups about how much should come from each country, and so far there is little evidence that these will be resolved quickly. For as long as they are not, the investment programme will be delayed.

Until the long-term proposals take effect, the developing countries will need emergency short-term aid. The problem is one of an acute shortage of critical inputs at prices they can afford, like fertilizers, and of food. The estimated shortage of 1.5 million tons of fertilizer this year could deprive developing countries of 12 million tons of grain. A Fertilizer Fund has been set up to receive donations of both cash and nutrients.

This season, FAO estimates that the 16 countries most seriously affected by the high costs of grain, oil and fertilizers need to import between 8 and 12 million tons of grain at a cost of about \$2.5 billion. Emergency requirements such as these are likely to persist for some years, and even if all goes well, to recur periodically thereafter. Thus in addition to investment aid, the wealthier countries will have to commit themselves to emergency funding.

To ensure money and inputs can be sent to the right place at the right time, certain institutional

improvements are necessary.

- Information. A central authority is needed to whom countries can send up-to-date demand-production information: the probable size of harvests, import requirements and export potential. Without such information, appropriate action will be later than it need be. Furthermore, developing countries which could increase production if given the incentive of export sales, however modest, could have their market guaranteed instead of seeing it suddenly disappear because of a bilateral agreement between the importer and a major producer country.

- Stockholding. Stocks should be built up in all countries, but inevitably in most this will be a very slow process. The main burden will continue to fall on the major producer countries, USA, Canada, Australia, Argentina, the EEC countries, Thailand, Japan. Stockholding should be coordinated by the same institution dealing with information.

What is required is that the producer countries commit themselves to setting aside a proportion of harvests for emergency food aid.

- Money. Institutional arrangements are needed for recycling money to developing countries with a per capita GNP greater than \$1,000. The money is needed for lending to developing countries at low interest over long periods, and purchasing grain from stockholders.

Some system is necessary for easing the payments difficulties of developing countries much more rapidly and substantially than at present, without disrupting local markets, whether of developed or developing countries.

What is not needed is a proliferation of bureaucracy for its own sake, an institution that sounds nice as a conference resolution. Equally, as Secretary-General Maret observed to the third session of the Preparatory Committee: the institutional framework "would have to reflect the world community's political will to eliminate the scourge of hunger. It would have to be a credible organ for mobilizing the new resources needed and speak with greater authority to both developed and developing countries than any existing mechanism."

Whether or not this need is met by a brand new body or a substantial reinforcement of one or more existing ones does not really matter. What is essential is that the objectives of the institution, as of the conference as a whole, be achieved without further delay. If a public relations opportunity like this won't get results, what will?

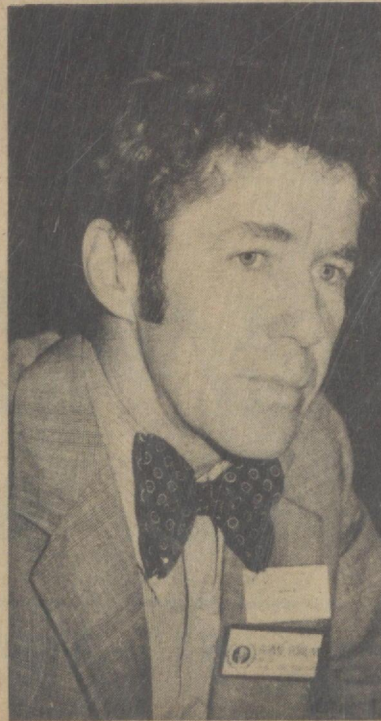
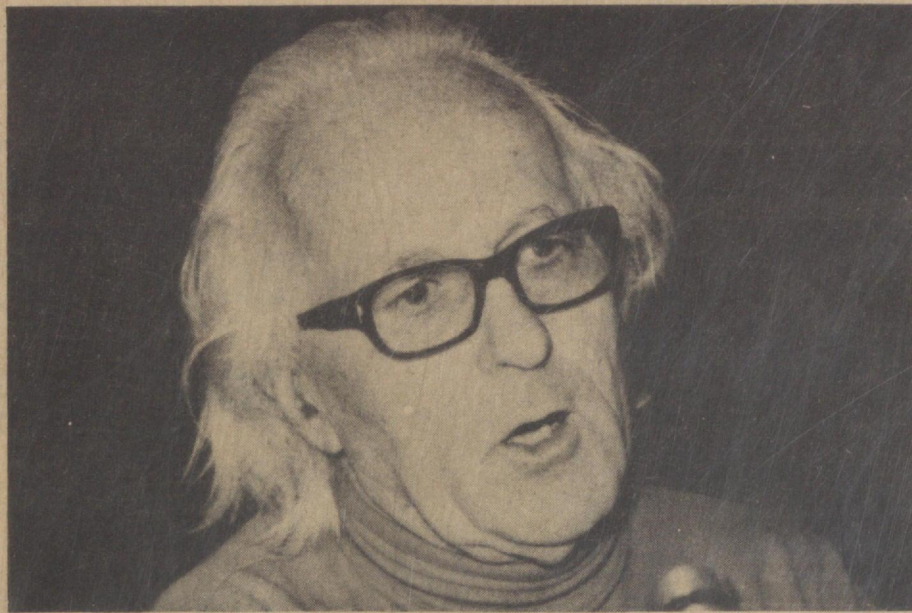
Let the world know - NGO plea

A PLEA for more reporting of the conference was made at the meeting to launch non-government organization activities yesterday.

A North American representative suggested that after the World Population Conference recently in Bucharest the world gained the impression from media reports that the conference had been a failure -- what was needed was positive reporting of this conference, which did not simply highlight the conflicts.

Meetings with the representatives of the multinational companies and big landowners were sought by the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

He suggested that it was not enough for NGO observers to talk to government representatives. Investment and production decisions were in the hands of the companies and landowners, he said.



Making friends and hoping to influence people - delegates at the NGO Press Conference

Fertilizer Fund—

Conference's likeliest baby?

by Gamini Seneviratne

The likeliest baby to be born in Rome this fortnight is an international body to co-ordinate the production and distribution of fertilizer. It was conceived in Sri Lanka and was first presented, as the World Fertilizer Fund, at the 30th session of ECAFE held in Colombo last March.

Since then Dr. Henry Kissinger, Sheik Yamani and the fertilizer industry itself, through its advisory committee in FAO, have shown interest in fashioning the fund's future. Organisations like UNIDO, FAO and IBRD have already started work on certain aspects of it. The Executive Secretary of ECAFE has formally proposed that the World Food Conference adopt the fund and the meeting is expected to play the midwife without too much ado.

In Colombo on the eve of these Rome talks, Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike told me: "Food is obviously the most critical area for developing countries like mine, and the adequacy of fertilizer supplies could make the difference between hunger and plenty."

"The whole purpose of the fund is to enable developing countries to get on with the so called Green Revolution and the modernisation of agriculture

through high-yielding grain varieties without the type of constraints that have emerged recently."

The thinking behind the fund is that market forces alone should not be allowed to regulate fertilizer supplies. The cyclical fluctuations of supply and demand, say its advocates, must not any longer control this vital element in not merely food production but the very economies of the developing world. Some other mechanism must be devised to ensure adequate investment and therefore supply at reasonable prices.

The present fertilizer famine has been aggravated by the so-called energy crisis. Nearly 90 per cent of today's world nitrogen fertilizer production is based on natural gas and petroleum feedstocks.

But the shortage and astronomic prices are the result of earlier oversupply of fertilizer followed by falling prices and severe cutbacks in production in the west.

A shortfall was inevitable, given the pattern. It is this pat-

tern which the fund aims to change. The obvious solution is to see that adequate production is maintained on the basis of guaranteed markets over long periods.

In normal circumstances the industry would be multiplying its production as fast as possible given today's prices. In normal circumstances that would bring about a speedy, temporary solution to the current crisis. But, apart from the fact that these ups and downs are regarded as undesirable for such a crucial commodity, normal circumstances have been upset by the oil situation.

If, however, the short-term solution to the fertilizer shortage is frustrated, by the high cost of raw materials as far as the traditional fertilizer producers are concerned, the oil situation may have cleared the way for lasting solutions.

As the fund sees it, if there is a co-ordinating body to look after both investment and markets, the thing to do now would be for it to effect a merger of the expertise of the industrialised

countries (who now lack cheap and assured supplies of raw materials) with those countries which have the raw materials but lack the expertise, and the developing countries which could provide the guaranteed long-term markets.

Such a body could induce adequate investment -- in fact bridge the current investment-gap between the US \$2,000 million, which FAO estimates is required today, and the five or six hundred millions which industry might now invest -- and maintain it.

The gap in investment, a Sri Lanka delegate told PAN, could well be made up by a joint venture of the World Bank, IMF, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank and others willing to give fertilizer priority in investment.

Sheik Yamani, of Saudi Arabia, has said that his country was prepared to allow all its vast natural gas resources, which are now "flared" and go up in smoke, to be used to manufacture fertilizer. Natural gas (methane) is the ideal raw

material to be used extensively and cheaply.

A body like the proposed World Fertilizer Fund could co-ordinate its use in the whole Arab world. In Rome today President Boumediene of Algeria is expected to make a significant contribution on this aspect of the fund.

In the short-term Sri Lanka sees the fund's main function as a soft-loan agency which will provide balance of payments support for the countries worst hit by the fertilizer crisis. The IMF could take over this function with the fund playing an advisory role. If so, the IMF's resources will have to be increased. Here it is thought the OECD lands, particularly the Arab oil producers, could lend to the IMF monies earmarked specially for fertilizer purchasers in the short term.

One of the features of the present shortage is that it is apparently felt even by the producing countries. In fact an important cause is the increased acreages which North America particularly has brought under the plough. The US, for example, has extended its wheat acreage by 40 million. The world shortfall in nitrogen supplies is estimated at a million tons this year.

Even given the money, developing countries will not be able to get the vital supplies. A million tons of fertilizer is estimated to equal 8 to 10 million

Continued on Page Seven

Barbara rises above it all —

IF NORMAN Borlaug, Father of the Green Revolution and Nobel prizewinner, had his way, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and a dozen of the other key ministers and heads of state at this conference would be locked into a room for ten days without food and for the last three days without water.

Only by such an outrageous act, Borlaug argued to the Rome Forum, the meeting of experts that met here last Thursday, Friday and Saturday, would the big decisions that have to be taken to avert world-wide famine get made. Borlaug went on to tell the assembled group of 26 economists, meteorologists, agronomists, biologists, bankers and businessmen that he had just completed an eight-month visit to a large number of Third World countries.

He was convinced that the situation was now so serious that "it was no longer a question of tens of thousands dying, no longer of millions, but maybe of tens of millions or even hundreds of millions."

Lester Brown of the Overseas Development Council and arguably the United States's number one authority on food, concurred with Borlaug's observations. "There is evidence," he said, "that death rates are moving up in at least 12 and perhaps as many as 20 developing countries." Brown suggested that part of the reason why world population growth in 1974 is a remarkably low 1.7 per cent is this new phenomenon of rising death rates.

Although there was a wide range of opinion at the expert group, with Jack Heinz, the millionaire baked bean manufacturer at one end of the spectrum, and Jacques Chonchol, formerly Allende's Minister of Agriculture at the other, no one belittled the immensity of the crisis. On that there was, with only minor reservations, unanimity. Most of the experts felt that the "Assessment of the World Food Situation," the basic

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preparatory document of the conference, although painting a bleak picture, had erred on the cautious side.

He pointed to three significant changes which no one had successfully predicted, yet which when taken together, had changed the food situation beyond all recognition. First, Brown said, it was not foreseen that in 1970 the world fish catch would take a sharp downward turn.

MORE DISAPPOINTMENTS

Until then it had been assumed that the catch would go on increasing until the end of the century. Second, no one foresaw that the USSR would in 1972 make the political decision to maintain its rising consumption of food irrespective of the outcome of its harvest; and that the annual fluctuation in the Russian harvest is equal to the average annual increase in the world harvest.

Third, no one anticipated that by 1974 the Americans would have returned their vast acreage of idle crop land to cultivation and that there still would not be enough food produced to overcome scarcity and bring down prices.

Another area of common ground for the forum was established by Walter Orr Roberts, the climatologist. He pointed out that although there are two opposing schools of thought on whether the world is entering a new climatic regime there was no debate of four key observations: that the north pole has become colder since 1950; that the growing season in the middle and high latitudes has shortened by one week since 1945; that the period 1920-1960 was very favourable climatically for food production, and that the fluctuations in climate are becoming very

large especially on the borders of desert regions.

However, when it came to the discussion about what should be done the unanimity of the group which had been carefully nurtured by its chairman, Barbara Ward, began to fall apart.

The first draft of their declaration was thrown out on Saturday morning. It was rejected by a coalition of ideologues and scientists. The latter were perturbed by the report's omission of hard fact and the former, as one member put it privately, by its 'schoolboy socialism.'

The second draft, produced in the evening was much more acceptable. The analysis had been toughened. The rhetoric was more subdued. Phrases like "making a profit out of poverty," an accusation levelled at the Americans and the OPEC countries, had been taken out. Even so no concession was made to those who had earlier argued for a positive mention of the role of private investment.

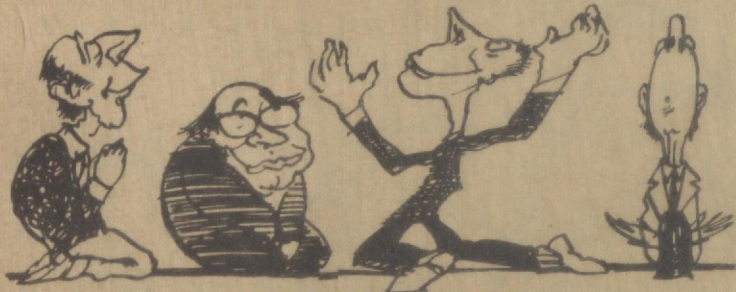
QUICK CHANGES?

Criticism now centered on the paragraph that called for a decrease in western consumption so that grains could be liberated for immediate use in countries with chronic food shortages. Two questions were raised. Would the kind of grain that North American cattle would stop eating be the kind of grain acceptable by Indians and Africans? And second, just how quickly would a voluntary sacrifice of 4 ounces of meat a week by rich-country citizens begin to make an impact on the hungry nations? And if it could not make an impact in the next three months why mention it?

Barbara Ward herself had to save the hour by making the strong point that the important thing was that public opinion should start "signalling" to the western livestock farmer now before he began another fattening cycle. The final text resolved the difficulty by suggesting, at least by implication, that in the end rich country governments will have to make the decisions on reducing consumption, not the individual citizen.

By eleven o'clock on Saturday evening it looked as if the text was home and dry. But on Sunday there were well substantiated rumours that Heinz and perhaps Borlaug would not sign. Population, they were reported as saying, had not been given enough prominence. It is also known that Heinz was worried about the omission of any reference to the contribution of agribusiness.

In the end all 26 participants agreed to sign and the Declaration was presented today to Mr. Sayed Marei, Secretary-General of the World Food Conference.



Supplies

Continued from Page Six

tons of grain foodgrain production.

Developing countries will be short for the next two to three years, but can they get at least what is available? Some three or four million tons of fertilizer are estimated to go on North American gardens, lawns, cemeteries and other non-agricultural places.

The mere existence of a body like the fund would not ensure re-channeling of these supplies, which would make the difference between adequacy and starvation in some regions. But it could, perhaps, extend the successes of FAO's recently activated International Fertilizer Supply Scheme which has so far obtained 50,000 tons from the fertilizer industry this

year.

Urgent assistance is also required for fertilizer manufacturing countries within the developing countries themselves. Sri Lanka is not yet involved in this but it notes that its neighbours, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, to name but three, have the plant and do produce fertilizer.

The developing world produces about 15 per cent of world fertilizers. But their factories run, at best, at some 60 per cent of capacity; compared with 90 to 95 per cent in Europe and North America. The low rate is largely because of shortages of inputs and of small, but key, items like spare parts which they lack the ready foreign exchange to buy.

Dr. Kissinger, soon after the World Fertilizer Fund was mooted in Colombo, came up with the suggestion which Sri Lanka regards as heartening

and complementary to its idea. This was for the establishment of an International Fertilizer Institute -- "to be located in a tropical developing country" -- to undertake all research into fertilizers from production technology to use and waste. Research is in fact a vital component of the fund. The Sri Lanka spokesman says, as an example, that "we may well be able to get the same results from half the fertilizer," now used in the world. "But it means diversion of manpower and money for research. This is where we need a single authority; to find and channel the right amounts. Just as we need it to get the Arab gas into use, to decide how much to invest, who is to get the product and at what price. The fact is that fertilizer is as vital to us as oil is to others. We must have a strategy and body to look after it."

Typecast customs tie-up typists

CONFERENCE officials were last night urgently trying to clear from the Italian customs 10 Russian and 5 Chinese typewriters which had been stuck there over the long weekend, immediately preceding the conference.

The typewriters -- not available in Rome -- had been flown in specially from the UN in Geneva for the conference translation service.



We daren't fail - Butz

Mr. Marei
issues
welcome
to PAN

but production is key

Mr. Sayed Marei, Secretary - General of the conference, welcomed PAN on Monday with this statement:

"I wholeheartedly welcome the publication of PAN, which will help us during the conference to keep a close link between all participants.

"I would like to extend my thanks to the people who made it possible to produce PAN.

AGRICULTURE Secretary Earl Butz, leader of the US delegation, flew into Rome last night to give a few brisk beats on his government's free-trade drum.

Although not overtly critical of the oil-producing countries, he repeated President Ford's obliquely censorious remark that food and fuel are the two critical items for the future and that US policy on both was unrestricted production without cartels.

He pledged substantial increase in US contributions of technical assistance, a form of aid not generally harmful of trade. And in declaring the US Government's "genuine and full commitment to utilize our agricultural resources to the fullest" for the benefit of the developing world, he confirmed that the great bulk of the US contribution will continue to be in trade not aid.

Secretary Butz hopes for four things from this conference:

- Real dedication to increase technical assistance, so that



Earl Butz... a few beats on the old drum

eventually all countries may fend for themselves.

- An improved system of guidance for all countries on what food is needed where.

- A better reporting system of areas and times of surplus and deficit.

- Attention to the immediate short-term problem of rescuing those countries most seriously

affected by food and cash deficits.

"This World Food Conference dare not fail," he said. "It must be successful. The degree of success remains to be seen."

So it does. "I hope we don't spend a disproportionate time," Mr. Butz added, discussing the distribution of food. The essential problem is production."

PAN'S MAN PUT OUT!

By Gamini Seneviratne

THE seamy side of international conferences was on view yesterday as the wheeling and dealing for positions at the food conference went on.

These posts - Conference Chairman Rapporteur General and Vice - Presidents of Conference and Chairmen, Vice - Chairmen, and Rapporteurs of Committees - were "apportioned" among the regional groups for Asia, Africa, the Socialist countries, Latin America and the so-called Group B, which one official called "the rich white mob."

As PAN's bedtime approached this latter group was coming to grips with the proposal agreed to by all the rest which was as follows: President - Group B (traditionally from the host country); Rapporteur General - Asian Group (Pakistan); 18 Vice - Presidents - five from Asia, four from Africa, three each from the Socialist countries, Latin America and Group B.

Committees - I Chairman (Africa), Rapporteur (Asia); II Chairman (Group B), Rapporteur (Latin America); III Chairman (Latin America), Rapporteur (Socialist countries);

Each Committee is given three Vice - Chairmen as follows: Committee I - Latin American countries, Socialist countries and Group B; Committee II - African countries, Asian countries and Socialist countries; Committee III - African countries, Asian countries and Group B.

The difference between Group B and the rest is still clear in the organizational strength and the tightness with which they play the diplomacy game. Witness the fact that this reporter sat through every other Committee's deliberations without anyone raising an eyebrow;

But came Group B and everybody who did not look Group B-ish was asked to leave.

My word (given to a tetchy gentleman of uncertain vintage) that I would only listen was not accepted and the Chair (Denmark) was invited to ask me to follow the others.

Thus relieved of my promise to be silent, I can report that as I left, the US delegate was saying; "Although it is tedious to continue the debate at this late hour, we should continue to negotiate to see if we cannot get a better deal."

Dates for today

0815 -- NGO briefings, Room 35, Palazzo dei Congressi

1100 -- Opening WFC: Election of Officers; approval of agenda.

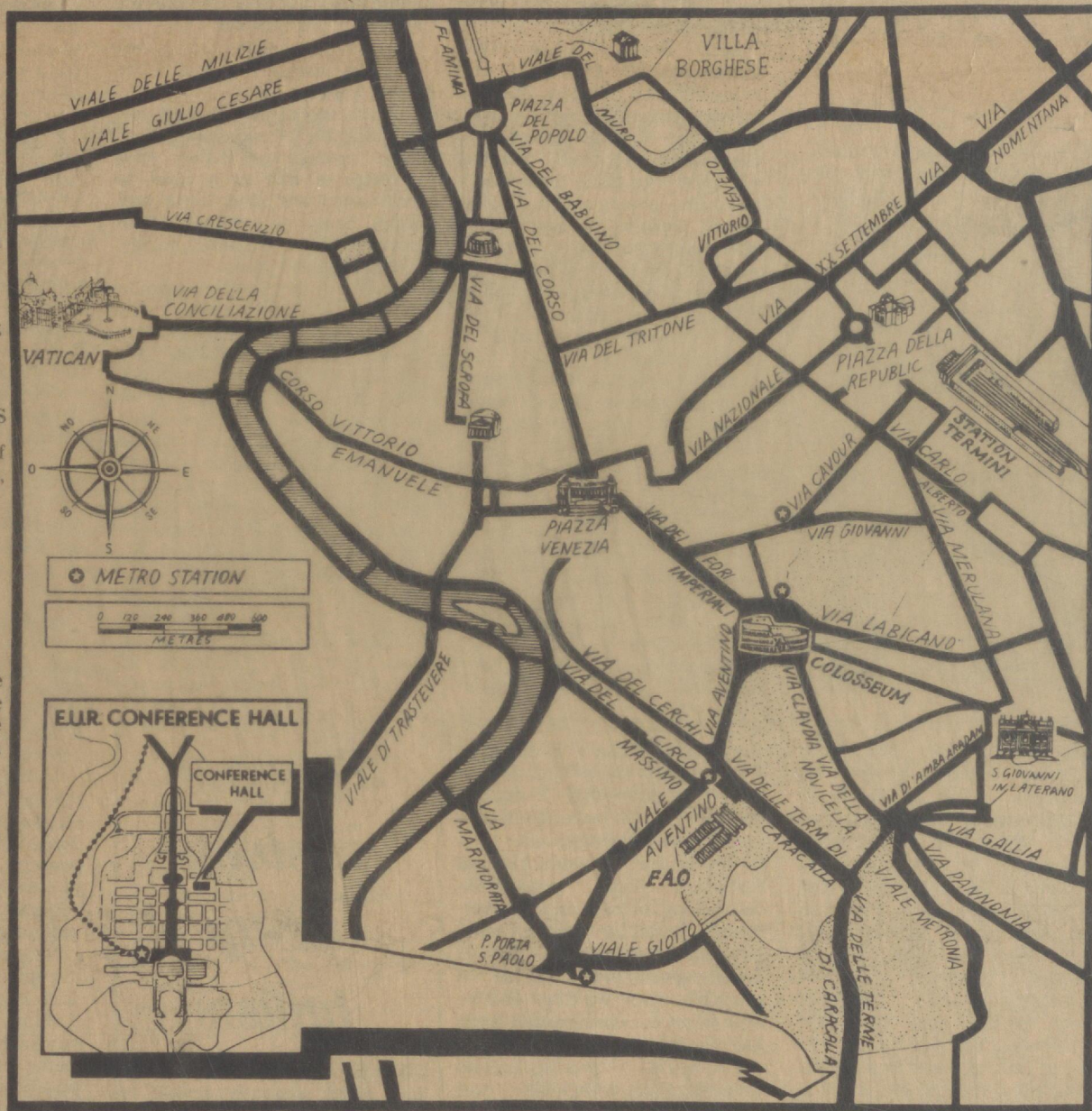
1430 -- Plenary Session: Dr. Henry Kissinger, US

1630 -- Meeting of Christian Organisations, Room 35, Palazzo.

Bus Service

SPECIAL BUSES will be running between the conference center and the Piazza della Repubblica or the Porta Princiara. The buses, which will be identified by UN signs, will stop at the FAO headquarters.

Today, buses will leave their respective stops in the city from 8:15 - 9:15 and between 9:15 and 9:45 every five minutes. Coming back, the first buses will leave at 18:30. From tomorrow, there will be buses at 2200 and 2300 hours.



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