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# **FINAL REPORT**

## **The Sixth Conference of the Americas on Malnutrition as a Factor in Socio-Economic Development**

Sponsored by the Bureau of  
Latin American Affairs and  
the Office of the War on Hunger  
of the Agency for International  
Development, United States  
Department of State.

May 18-23, 1969  
Balmoral Hotel  
Bal Harbour, Florida

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Conference Director's Report</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
<b>Recommendations of the Workshops</b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
<b>Program</b> . . . . .	<b>7</b>
<b>Officials of the Conference</b>	
<b>Officials of Workgroups</b>	
<b>Schedule of Activities</b>	
<b>Digest of Major Talks</b> . . . . .	<b>11</b>
<b>Pictorial Roundup</b> . . . . .	<b>20</b>
<b>Participants in the Conference</b> . . . . .	<b>24</b>
<b>Major Speeches</b> . . . . .	<b>29</b>

## Director's Report

### THE SIXTH CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS ON MALNUTRITION AS A FACTOR IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

For those who attended the Sixth Conference of the Americas on Malnutrition, the appearance of this report will be ample, I believe, to recall the spirit of dedication which pervaded the meeting and the results which were achieved. It would appear quite superfluous for your Conference Chairman to add any words to those already spoken . . . and recorded.

Instead, I would like to use this space to pay tribute to an esteemed colleague, whose dynamism and unfailing spirit were significant factors of this meeting, and, in fact, at all six of this series of interamerican conferences on malnutrition since their inception some seven years ago. . . . and who will no longer be with us as we pursue the difficult path of fighting hunger and malnutrition in this hemisphere in the years ahead.

On March 28, 1970, cancer took the life of Leonard G. Wolf. In his 44 years, Len succeeded in business, as a U.S. Congressman, as a Food for Peace Officer in Brazil, as Coordinator of "Operation Ninos", and most recently, as Executive Director of the American Freedom From Hunger Foundation. He was equally at home in the halls of Congress, industrial executive suites, and the shacks of the unfortunate who are forced to live in the slums around the great cities of our countries. And wherever he went, he left an impact . . . a call to action . . . and action itself. Things happened when Len was around!

I know there are many people in Latin America who have with me the personal loss of a valued colleague and a dear friend. I will always recall him as a man in motion . . . for my own memories include our working together in many places . . . helping to lay out new feeding programs in the slums of old Panama, the favellas of Rio, and the barriadas around Lima . . . planning colonization projects in the rugged area of eastern Paraguay . . . conducting seminars in Mexico and Ecuador . . . and crying for the dead, while conducting relief operations after the El Cobre earthquake disaster in Chile. Wherever he went, his influence was felt.

Len was present at all six of these conferences. He co-chaired the third conference with me in Brazil, and he served as Conference Chairman for the fourth and fifth meetings in



LEONARD G. WOLF



MARTIN J. FORMAN

Mexico and Peru. It seems only fitting that we dedicate this report to him, as a tribute, not as a memorial. For the memorial to Leonard G. Wolf is the sparkle in the eyes of millions of children, a sparkle which might otherwise not have been there, if it were not for him.

Adios Lenordo.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martin J. Forman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Martin J. Forman

Conference Chairman

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKGROUPS

## THEME I: THE NATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATING NUTRITION AND FOOD POLICY IN NATIONAL PLANNING FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ratifying the definition of Health as set forth in the WHO constitution, the group considers good nutrition to be indispensable to Health; and also considers nutrition to be a primary factor in learning and productivity which both bring about social well-being.

### The Committee recommends:

- 1—That educational programs be intensified to encompass greater numbers of people and different social groups, and that methodology in nutrition education as used to date be revised in a way that the term “educate,” which in fact means a change of attitudes or habits, is effective.
- 2—That the integration of nutrition programs be encouraged in national development plans and that top-level planning include techniques in this field.
- 3—That nutrition and food committees be established, or similar organisms at the high-government level, so that they will orient, stimulate, co-

ordinate and evaluate the actions that will develop in the fight against malnutrition.

- 4—That governments study incentives toward the increased production of food products.
- 5—That in every country, the relationship between local production of food and the increase in population be studied carefully and that necessary measures be taken when problems arise.
- 6—That the stimulation of development in the technology of agri-business becomes a basis for industrial development in our countries.
- 7—That studies are made of the existing relationship between the size of the family, its income, and the nutritional needs of its members, especially the children, and that more adequate measures be established in each country in accordance with its demographic policy within the frame of its plans of socio-economic development. That the best systems of trade be studied with the purpose of facilitating the acquisition of food of greatest need to the population.

## THEME II: COORDINATION OF NUTRITIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AT NATIONAL LEVELS

### The workshop groups meeting to study this point made three major points:

- 1—It is recognized that coordination is indispensable at all levels, and for this, we recommend the creation of nutrition and nourishment committees or similar organisms at high governmental level that will coordinate, supervise and evaluate the actions that would be taken in the fight against malnutrition. The integration of this com-

mittee will take place in each country according to its own circumstances.

- 2—We recommend to the governments the active participation of these committees in the planning of development programs.
- 3—It is recommended that international and private agencies—the economic interests in the production of foods—be formed to consider the nutritional needs of populations.

### **THEME III: ROLE OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FOOD AID IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Considering that social and economic development is a process that will take several years, it is necessary that internal and external aid be continued until such time as the countries are capable of being self-providing or when the actual situation is considerably improved. The Committee recommended:

- 1—That foreign aid be used so as to increase the local food production inasmuch as nutritional aid is part of the collaboration for development. The same should be planned and oriented to such level as is determined by the collaboration policy.
- 2—That nutritional aid should be considered as supplemental in character to the national effort and as a stimulus to the economic development of each country. The programs of national nutritional aid should be directed to effectively improve malnutrition.
- 3—That nutritional aid be accompanied, if possible, by technical assistance.
- 4—That techniques of food preservation to avoid spoilage due to poor canning, transportation, and marketing techniques be developed as a means to increase food availability.
- 5—That adequate funds be provided to take the maximum advantages of foreign nutritional aid.
- 6—That all food aid should be put to the utmost use, not only from the nutritional standpoint but also, in a very special way, from an educational standpoint.
- 7—That in view of the many sources of nutritional assistance, the coordination at a high level is indispensable in meeting objectives. This coordination should take into consideration the production plans, imports and exports.
- 8—That since maternal, infant, preschool and school-age groups are the most seriously affected by malnutrition, we suggest the establishment of adequate services pursuing the double purpose of educating the mothers and curing the children in accordance with O.M.S. recommendations (*Journal of Tropical Pediatrics* 13, Dec. 4, 1967).
- 9—That the governments should encourage private enterprises to produce foods of high protein value, giving priority to locally produced foods, rather than imports.
- 10—That laws should be passed dealing with food enrichment which would solve public health problems. These laws would deal with iodized salt, flour enrichment, fortified milk, water fluoridation, etc.
- 11—That the food aid policy must be defined within an equality frame between donors and beneficiaries.

## **THEME IV: IMPORTANCE OF FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

### **The workshops made the following recommendations:**

- A) Ones directed to the training of professionals in the nutritional field and related sciences (taking into consideration nutrition in its multi and inter-disciplinary character).
- B) Those related to nutrition education programs that tend to improve the eating habits of the population.

### **With reference to the first aspects, the groups recommend:**

- 1—The reinforcement of technical and economic responsibilities of the schools of diet and nutrition at the university level so that they may afford adequate academic preparation.
- 2—The organization of post-graduate programs with regional character which will cover countries of the same socio-economic background, to furnish a superior preparation in nutrition to technicians and professionals with similar disciplines in health, education, agriculture, economics and other fields.
- 3—The elevation of nutrition and education in medicine, public health and nursing schools, furnishing them competent personnel in the field of nutrition.
- 4—The incorporation of the teachings of human nutrition into the curriculums of agronomy, veterinary and zoology schools, and in general, in all technical schools dealing with the production, processing, distribution and marketing of foods.
- 5—The orientation of the nutrition courses in post-graduate schools not only toward the aspect of academic investigation but also in its projection towards the community: the utilization of the results of the experiences in the different centers of learning.
- 6—The avoidance of the exodus of professionals and adopt academic and economic incentives to obtain stability, especially at their places of work.
- 7—The organization of short courses on nutrition at the regional level to train economists, planners, anthropologists, sociologists, public administrators and businessmen. In general, professionals of all socio-economic sciences related

to nutrition or those in public positions, from whom knowledge could contribute to the development of a nutritional policy. Support those centers and programs already in existence.

- 8—The incorporation of the teaching of nutrition into the curriculum of universities.
- 9—The organization of short courses on nutrition directed to other community groups, and in general, to those individuals potentially able to be utilized as communicators.
- 10—The request of increased collaboration from the national, international and bilateral organisms to obtain their economic aid to implement or improve the institutions in charge of training personnel in the nutrition field.
- 11—The encouragement of the creation of nutritional information centers in each country that will disseminate information on teaching programs on nutrition existing in Latin America.
- 12—The unification of terminology and the pinpointing of nomenclature as a base in the understanding among specialists on the subject.
- 13—That promotion in the maternal-infant care services of educational programs in nutrition for pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers.

In reference to the nutritional education programs that tend to improve the population's nutritional habits, the groups made the following recommendations:

- 1—To reinforce the coordination of nutrition education programs at national, regional and local levels with the purpose of improving the nutritional habits of the population.
- 2—Collaborate with the communications systems existing in the countries to offer a better understanding in matters of food and nutrition, with maximum coverage in the rural sectors.
- 3—Request government authorities to establish an appropriate regulation to avoid the wrong use of commercial advertising of food products of popular consumption that lack nutritional value.
- 4—Propose that applied food technology be utilized by private business for the welfare of the community in accordance with the customs and food habits.
- 5—Propose that personnel dealing with food preparation have fundamental knowledge of hygiene and food handling.

- 6—Involve the community with problems related to malnutrition.
- 7—The aforementioned recommendations acknowledge that American countries have the qualified

human resources to efficiently contribute to the solution of the nutrition problems on the continent within the socio-economic development frame.

#### **THEME V: ORGANIZATION OF INTER-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR COORDINATION OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR BETTER NUTRITION.**

**The group made these recommendations:**

- 1—That the governments of American countries establish in the shortest possible time the organization and exercise of a good policy integrated within national development planning and based primarily on the needs and resources of each country.
- 2—That the coordination of international assistance to the countries be realized through the national organisms charged with national food policy.
- 3—That the coordination of the international assistance in the Americas should be effected in accordance with one of the following alternatives:
  - a) Through an organization structured within the Organization of American States.
  - b) Through another international organization already in existence.
  - c) Through the creation of a new Inter-American Commission charged with coordinating these actions.
  - d) Or through other means the governments may consider convenient.
- 4—That the governments, together with the international organizations, urgently recognize that the problem of malnutrition warrants those alternatives.
- 5—That the provisional Inter-American Council already organized (CIMA) continue its action before the governments to finalize its determination and obtain approval for a meeting of representatives with decisive powers.

# **PROGRAM**

## **CONFERENCE STAFF**

<b>Conference Director</b>	<b>Dr. Martin J. Forman</b> Director, Nutrition and Child Feeding Service Office of the War on Hunger AID/Washington, D.C.
<b>Assistant Conference Director</b>	<b>Mrs. Joyce King</b> Program Officer Nutrition and Child Feeding Service Office of War on Hunger AID/Washington, D.C.
<b>Program Committee</b>	<b>Dr. Gerald F. Combs, Chairman</b> Chief, International Unit Public Health Service, Health, Educa- tion and Welfare Bethesda, Maryland.  <b>Dr. Walter Santos, Liaison Member</b> President, Brazilian Society of Food Service and Food Technology Rio de Janiero, Brazil  <b>Dr. Roberto Castillo Quant</b> Liaison Member Vice-Minister of Health Managua, Nicaragua
<b>Domestic Press Officer</b>	<b>Mr. William Platt</b> PR/Vietnam Bureau AID/Washington, D.C.
<b>Latin American Press Officer</b>	<b>Mr. Sam Burks</b> Press Service/LA USIA
<b>Conference Assistants</b>	<b>Miss Amy Pound</b> Agency for International Development Washington, D.C.  <b>Mr. Edward Rice</b> Agency for International Development Washington, D.C.  <b>Miss Patricia Lewis</b> David Pearson Associates Coral Gables, Florida

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## **PLENARY SESSION CHAIRMEN**

Opening Session

Dr. Roberto Castillo Quant  
Nicaragua

Country Reports

Dr. Lucila Sogandares  
Panama

Themes I and II

Dr. Raul Cadena G.  
Ecuador  
Dr. Gustavo Hermoza Mariscal  
Peru

Themes III and IV

Dr. Juan Antonio Gomez  
Colombia

Theme V

Dr. Jaime Leon Atlas  
Argentina

Closing Session

Dr. Walter Santos  
Brazil

## **WORKSHOP CHAIRMEN**

Theme I

Ing Humberto Leon, Honduras  
Dr. Romero de Leon, Guatemala  
Mr. Cesar Astudillo, Ecuador

Theme II

Dr. Otto Retana, Guatemala  
Dr. Marcelo Alejandro Pico, Argentina  
Mr. Juan Zenteno, Bolivia  
Lic. Santiago Ibanez, Mexico

Theme III

Dr. Roberto Kafuri, Brazil  
Sr. Isidoro Planella, Chile  
Mr. Ricardo Mendez, Ecuador  
Mr. Raul Bedoya, Bolivia

Theme IV

Dr. Armando Ace Piaz, Nicaragua  
Dr. Victor Hernandez Perez, Peru  
Dr. Mario Campagnoli, Argentina  
Dr. Francisco Piedrahita, Colombia

Theme V

Mr. Inderjeet Beharry, Guyana  
Dr. Jose Otamar de Carvalho, Brazil  
Dr. Juan Pishedda, Chile  
Sra. Marta de Anzueto, Guatemala

# SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Sunday—May 18

2:00 p.m.

Registration

6:00-7:30 p.m.

Delegate reception at Balmoral Hotel

Monday—May 19

9:30 a.m.

Convening of the Conference by Dr. Gerald F. Combs

Invocation by The Reverend Anthony Naverete, Pastor, St. Hugh's Catholic Church

Opening remarks by The Honorable Elton Gissendanner, Mayor, City of North Miami

Opening remarks by the Honorable Maurice Ferre, Commissioner, City of Miami

Address by U.S. Congressman John Culver

Keynote address by Dr. George Graham, Johns Hopkins University

11:00 a.m.

Country reports

Argentina—Dr. Mario Campagnoli

Bolivia—Dr. Cecilio Abela

Brazil—Dr. Manuel Ferreira

Colombia—Dr. Francisco Piedrahita

Chile—Dr. Julio Santa Maria

2:00-5:30 p.m.

Country reports

Dominican Republic—Dr. Miguel A. Ortega P.

Ecuador—Mr. Cesar Astudillo

Guatemala—Dr. Otto Retana

Guyana—Mr. Inderjeet Beharry

Honduras—Sra. Ernestina Caballero De Sota, Ing. Humberto Leon

Jamaica—Miss Sadie Campbell

Mexico—Lic. Santiago Ibanez

Nicaragua—Dr. Armando Ace Piaz

Panama—Dra. Lucila Sogandares

Peru—Dr. Gustavo Hermoza Mariscal

Organization of Central American States, ODECA—Sra. Victoria de Diaz

Uruguay—Dr. Julio Barros Mendia

6:00 p.m.

Reception at University of Miami Faculty Club

Tuesday—May 20

9:00-10:30 p.m.

*Theme I*—Importance of Integrating Nutrition and Food Policy in National Planning for Socio-economic Development

*Main Speaker:* Dr. Salvador Zubiran, Director, National Nutrition Institute—Mexico

*Supportive Speakers*

Dr. Cecilio Abela, Public Health, Vice President Bolivia Nutrition Committee—Bolivia

Dr. Miguel A. Ortega, National Planning Office, Technical Secretariat, Office of the Presidency—Dominican Republic

11:00-12:30 p.m.

*Theme II*—Ways to Coordinate Nutrition Activities at the National Level for Socio-economic Development.

*Main Speaker:* Dr. Julio Santa Maria, Nutritional Advisor, Ministry of Health—Chile

*Supportive Speakers*

Dr. Manuel Ferreira, Superintendent of Planning Unit, Ministry of Health—Brazil

Dr. Jorge Wahanik, Assistant Chief, Technical Assistance Division, Department of Planning—Colombia

12:30 p.m.

Luncheon and Fashion Show

2:00-3:30 p.m.

Four simultaneous workshops on Theme I

4:00-5:30 p.m.

Four simultaneous workshops on Theme II

6:00 p.m.

Reception at Yatch South Seas

Wednesday—May 21

9:00-10:30 a.m.

*Theme III*—Role of Internal and External Food Aid in National and Regional Socio-economic Development.

*Main Speaker:* Dr. Walter Santos, President, National Food Commission—Brazil

*Supportive Speakers*

Dr. Romeo de Leon, Chief of Nutrition Section, Department of Public Health—Guatemala

Dr. Julio Barros Mendia, Chief, Nutrition Department, Ministry of Health—Uruguay

11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

*Theme IV*—Role of Food and Nutrition Education on Socio-economic Development

*Main Speaker:* Dr. Carlos Tejada, Division of Training, INCAP

*Supportive Speakers*

Miss Thelma Stewart, Ministry of Education—Jamaica

Dr. Edson Franco, Secretary-General, Ministry of Education—Brazil

2:00-3:30 p.m.

Four simultaneous workshops on Theme III

4:00-5:30 p.m.

Four simultaneous workshops on Theme IV

6:30 p.m.

Luau

Thursday—May 22

9:00-10:30 a.m.

*Theme V*—Organization of Inter-American Council for Coordination of Policies and Programs for Better Nutrition

*Main Speaker:* Dr. Roberto Castillo Quant, Vice Minister of Health—Nicaragua

*Supportive Speakers*

Dr. Juan Antonio Gomez, Director, Childrens Hospital—Colombia

Dr. Juan Allwood Paredes, Director, Department of Health, Organization of Central American States—ODECA

10:30 a.m.

Combined workshops on Theme V

2:00-5:30 p.m.

Four simultaneous workshops on Theme V

8:00-10:30 p.m.

Meeting of workshop Chairmen and rapporteurs.

Friday—May 23

9:00 a.m.

Address by Dr. Addeke Boerma, Director-General, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Rome

10:00 a.m.

Presentation and adoption of resolutions

Future structure for international coordination

12:30 p.m.

Luncheon

2:00 p.m.

Closing ceremonies conducted by Dr. Martin J. Forman

Address by Dr. Pedro Daniel Martinez (Read by Lic. Santiago Ibanez)

# DIGEST of MAJOR TALKS



**Dr. George Graham**  
**Chairman, Pediatrics Department**  
**Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland**  
**Director of Research**  
**British-American Hospital, Lima, Peru**

Dr. Graham emphasized that the long-term goal of national development should be "optimal physical and mental growth for all the people." In this respect, he added, certain objectives are immediately attainable. These are the prevention of mortality and morbidity caused by malnutrition, together with the high attendant costs of medical treatment, and the widescale distribution of supplementary foods high in protein content.

Dr. Graham pointed to the existence of heredity and environmental factors which influence socio-

economic development as much—if not more—than the availability of nutritional foods. He also said that many children in the United States suffer from over-nutrition which relates to cardio-vascular ailments in later years.

In the final analysis, he said, "it is important to place nutrition in its proper perspective in relation to human growth and development." Dangers from malnutrition and excessive nutrition are equally great, he added, and the ideal answer, therefore, lies somewhere in between.

Dr. Salvador Zubiran  
Director  
National Nutrition Institute  
Mexico, D.F.

Human nutrition and socio-economic development are two closely related concepts which cannot be separated, as one depends on the other. It cannot be accepted that a country whose men are not in a good nutritional state can be capable of having an adequate socio-economic development. Such development implies a correct nutritional state which is the fundamental factor in reaching the best physical and mental condition of man and his welfare. Nutrition must be, therefore, an objective of development, as well as the indispensable way to reach it.

Socio-economic development is a process leading to an increase in human productivity through better use of effort, thereby achieving higher living standards. This is a never-ending process, as it always leads from one conquered state to another.

Increase in productivity is achieved through an ample and adequate use of the human and natural resources available to nations, which in turn implies better mental and physical training of its men and the complete use of its resources through the use of the most advanced technology.

When nations limit themselves to a primary type of land cultivation and only grow crops to satisfy their subsistence needs as well as apply a rudimentary industry to satisfy the immediate demand for basic consumer needs, they will not be able to reach the living standards reached by those countries which have obtained a higher yield through the application of better work methods producing capital to accelerate the process of development. The first-mentioned nations are condemned to live a life of poverty and even of destitution. Two-thirds of the world's population are in this painful situation. Unfortunately, this includes the greater part of our Latin American countries, as they have not been able to incorporate themselves into the industrial civilization of our time and thus enormously widen the horizon of human possibilities.

The industrial revolution divides the world into two groups: one select minority of countries which is economically advanced, and the other group, in which we are included, living in a state of insufficient development some distance from the level of the first group.

Several considerations can be made regarding this situation that prevails in the world. Among this great

majority of nations with insufficient development we can still find those that only have a static economy, maintaining themselves from a type of agriculture that barely covers subsistence, with rudimentary industry or the most elementary handicrafts, only producing the barest essentials for life. We find countries at different grades of development, which through the great effort of their men and governments, have achieved a greater capacity for their populations, creating more advanced industries, strengthening trade, and thus attracting capital benefits to bring them closer to the select minority called "developed." Nevertheless, in this great intermediate group just mentioned, the socio-economic development is not uniform at all social levels, nor in all geographic zones of the country, and it only benefits a minority of the population concentrated in urban centers, establishing the painful contrast of a better life for them, side by side with those who live in the country in a most primitive manner, without receiving any of the advances or benefits that have been obtained by the group which can be called "privileged." It would seem that within each of these Latin American countries there exist two different countries—one eminently poor, which cultivates the land, and which receives food of marked biological inferiority and insufficient modern technology, insufficient health protection and insufficient resources for the most elemental education. These facts explain why the population of such a country, covering more than 50 percent of its inhabitants, produces less, consumes less and barely contributes to progress. The other is the one with industries, ample trade, larger capital resources, and whose men, residing in urban centers, are better qualified, better educated, eat a more varied and balanced diet, have greater opportunities for progress and participation in the country's general progress.

In viewing the over-all sad panorama of life in Latin American countries, in which the most urgent needs are not satisfied (food, for example), incorporating the so-called marginal population must become a pressing objective to pursue with all zeal, so that their lives may gain human dignity. These goals must constitute the most vigorous challenge to all societies of the world. It was so accepted and understood by the Presidents of the Republic of

America, and their signed declaration, filled with noble purposes and precise objectives, just need to be carried out to achieve the welfare and happiness of our countries. I quote the following concepts from the declaration: ". . . In order to promote the rise of living standards in the life of farmers and the betterment of the conditions of the Latin American rural population as well as its participation in social and economic development, it is necessary to give a greater stimulus to agriculture in Latin America, based on integrating programs of modernization, colonization and agrarian reform, when the individual countries demand it. Such programs should be oriented to increasing food production in Latin American countries, with sufficient

volume and quality for their populations. These concepts confirm that only through an intelligent national policy on nutrition, in which public and private sectors participate, can these objectives be achieved. This policy must be initiated with intelligent and coordinated planning of efforts to attain goals of adequate food consumption, which satisfy the needs of men.

We should take advantage of this occasion, in which we find men united with utmost dedication to study the possibilities of nutrition aid so that we may project more feasible programs, with the hope that they do not become merely documents, but a guide and beacon for a program of decided and passionate action.

Dr. Julio Santa Maria  
Nutritional Advisor  
Ministry of Health  
Chile

As I began to consider my topic for discussion, I suddenly realized that I had said "yes" to the organizers of this conference with a perfect "underdeveloped" attitude—without any thought to its complexities or my limitations in approaching it. I did not have time to enroll in a basic course in economics. So here you find me, confronting the theme and treating it as a clinical case rather than attempting to analyze, as an economist would, the factors in the malnutrition/underdevelopment equation. And here is the first question: What is the cause of the disease? Without answering we would never know what activities we must coordinate to cure the disease.

Malnutrition/underdevelopment.

Which factor in this equation is the cause? Which is the effect?

Treating a third degree case of malnutrition in an infant who is barely surviving, it may seem absurd to start a cultural, social, economic and political analysis of its mother, its family, its community, its country, the world at large. The medical emergency calls for immediate action to save the child, even if its enzymes are irreparably damaged. But, if we want to keep his forthcoming little brother from ending up in the same condition, the question is pertinent, as only a correct answer can cause preventive measures to be taken. Unfortunately, the pathogenic agent of malnutrition cannot be isolated in the lab, nor can it be tinted and photo-

graphed to show healthy people in order to impress them. I must reiterate that our "virus" is a negative condition.

One gets malnutrition only in one way: by not receiving the necessary nutrients. This condition presents itself only in the following circumstances:

1. Lack of foods
2. Lack of economic capacity to buy them
3. Lack of ability to buy the needed ones
4. Lack of metabolic capacity to utilize them effectively.

It is not necessary to present proof that secondary malnutrition constitutes the minor percentage of cases. There is already data to indicate that microbes fare better in the malnourished. Infection is not the primary cause of malnutrition—though admittedly it makes the malnutrition more serious.

Therefore, as a social problem, the other three factors are the important causes of malnutrition. Restating them in economic language, they read as follows:

1. Low or inadequate food production
2. Low gross national product with inadequate distribution in the population groups
3. Low educational level.

Thus stated, they are just one of the many signs and symptoms which diagnose underdevelopment. Therefore, one may conclude that *malnutrition is a direct result of underdevelopment.*

**Dr. Roberto Castillo Quant**  
Vice-Minister of Health  
Nicaragua

It is a pleasure to appear before you to present the theme, "Organization of an Inter-American Council for the Coordination of Policy and Programs for Better Nutrition."

The information I am going to offer you is the result of one of the various recommendations presented at the Fifth Conference of the Americas held in Lima, Peru, September 21-29, 1967. At this Conference, unanimous vote approved the establishment of an international coordinator to promote the execution of the pending programs to supply solutions to the problem of hunger in the Americas.

On this basis, a provisional Inter-American Council for Better Nutrition was established in Miami on May 22-29, 1968, and it was charged with the preparation of what is today known as "The Act of Miami".

The steps in solving the problem of malnutrition on the American continent are multi-faceted. The governments and public and private sectors, both national and international, have tended to attack this problem as independent groups. Even though their objectives may be identical, the global effect of the problem is somewhat diluted due to their lack of integration.

Therefore, this justifies the creation of an Inter-American Council for the Coordination of Policy and Programs for Better Nutrition, which would integrate all activities, such as education, health and production, inherent in the process of socio-economic development in the Latin American countries. During the Miami Meeting of May 22-29, 1968, a provisional committee was formed by representatives from the member nations of the Alliance for Progress. The committee, conscious of the great problem of malnutrition, subscribed unofficially to the Act of Miami of the Inter-American Council for Better Nutrition.

By means of creating the International Council for the Coordination of Policy and Programs for Better Nutrition, this first group of directors delineated the specific objectives for the promotion and coordination of national efforts and international cooperation destined to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in our countries.

To insure its success, the council will endeavor to implement the following basic specific objectives:

- a) The creation of a national organization in each country of the Americas which will

coordinate the efforts of the public, private, and international sectors involved in the fight against hunger and malnutrition and the stimulation of the adequate function of those now existing programs.

- b) The formulation of a coordinated nutritional and alimentary policy.
- c) The interchange of information and experience about the problems and their solutions.
- d) Provide information about financial resources. Support the applications of the member countries before the international agencies, government and private entities which collaborate economically, or technically, in the field.
- e) To organize, coordinate and make available the financing of regional and continental meetings.
- f) To participate in coordinating the actions of international agencies, both official and private, which work in this field at the continental level.
- g) To suggest guidelines and courses of action that would lead to the fulfillment of the above-mentioned points, whether by direct government request or in anticipation of it.
- h) In general, take any steps necessary to obtain the goals of the council.

We are certain that the previously delineated plan will promote and consolidate the efforts that have been independently operating in our respective countries. They will permit us to act with more unity in the implementation of the necessary means to combat this common problem, malnutrition, which burdens millions of human beings in this part of the world.

Prior to the formation of the Council for the Coordination of Policy and Programs for Better Nutrition, it will be necessary to form national organizations concerned with nutrition and food, in accordance with the political and administrative characteristics of each country. Furthermore, they should be integrated with the public, private and international sectors that work in the field of food and nutrition with the object of harmonizing their actions.

The International Council for the Coordination of Policies and Programs for Better Nutrition will consist of representatives from the above-mentioned national organizations, as alternate representatives.

These will form the directorate which will establish an executive secretary office in the charge of a salaried executive who will be designated by the Council through the directorate's recommendation.

Authorized representatives of the international, official or private agencies who work in the field of nutrition and food can also become part of the organization when they are invited to participate.

The Council will elect representatives who will function in the directorate as President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member, by a simple majority of the votes of the member nations. In addition, two alternate directors will be elected who will replace board members in case of temporary or prolonged absence. A member of the directorate cannot be elected for more than two consecutive periods.

The basic function of the International Council for the Coordination of Policies and Programs for Better Nutrition is evidently that of coordinating the efforts that governments include in their national plans of economic and social development with those made by national and international agencies and by the private sectors in their efforts to improve nutritional conditions. It will offer technical assistance based on the existing information. This technical assistance will be in phase with the planning or execution of technical, financial, biological, demographic, socio-economic and cultural aspects of the problem of malnutrition.

The Council will promote action at the national and/or regional level by groups associated with the food problem and will provide the means of financing specific programs for local and regional implementation.

It will make available to governments and interested groups plans suggesting eventual priorities,

and the way to obtain better coordination, efficiency and results.

Based on the analysis of the information obtained by the Council and in accordance with the size of the problem and the possibilities of solution, the Council will promote the indicated action at the international level so that the economic and human resources necessary are obtained in the countries where needed in order to provide the adequate development of activities oriented to the following:

1. Operational and technical investigation.
2. Recruiting and training of personnel.
3. Provide adequate orientation in the entire application of action in the field of food and nutrition.

The Council will be financed by means of yearly proportionate quotas from member countries, in accordance with the Inter-American system already established.

Official and private contributions of national and international organizations will also be considered as a source of financing.

In order to attain this goal with which we have been delegated, and in view of the urgency of beginning a coordinated action against hunger, we suggest that the keynote of this Sixth Conference, where the most representative elements in the field of food and nutrition are to be found, make permanent the provisional Council established in this city one year ago.

To accomplish the above, it will be necessary for each one of us and our governments and international and private agencies to immediately take the necessary steps to give official sanction to the Inter-American Council for the Coordination of Policy and Programs for Better Nutrition in accordance with the Inter-American system now established.

Dr. Pedro D. Martinez  
Vice-Secretary  
Secretary of Health and Welfare  
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Human equality is and should be the fundamental goal sought in social and economic development—equality in economic opportunities, equality in education and health. Without them all efforts on behalf of the betterment in production and economy are senseless. Without economy, education or health assured for everyone, democracy is a utopia; freedom and creative capacity are only occasional manifestations, products of injustice and privileges.

Without fundamental equality, there might be individual enrichment and even collective, but not real, economic development. Refinement might be accomplished, but never a genuine social development.

If the economic, health and educational rights remain as a purpose only, no conflict or diversity of opinions are entailed. But as soon as they are intended to go from ideals to reality, we will find conflicting interests, opposition, struggle and violence. It is, thus, that human equality, and for that reason economic and social development, demands altruism and the giving unto others, and calls for a new life philosophy based upon cooperation to achieve efficiency, social welfare for individual happiness, collective progress for personal development and freedom for the flourishing of the spirit.

Let's not fool ourselves: our goal is clear. It is equality. Without it there will be no development or health. It has been repeated time and again in this meeting that without nutrition there is no health, no development, no justice, peace or dignity.

Malnutrition is the expression of technical incapacity and disorganization or of oppression and exploitation of men by men. It is an index of injustice, of the abuse of individual command, national or international powers or of all of these at the same time.

In order to improve human nutrition it is urgent to terminate the abuses and outrage of powers, just as it is urgent to promote food production. The demographic planning or the development of technology is as important as the obtaining of justice and equality. There is as much hunger because of economic exploitation as there is because of ignorance: the display of opulence shown by the majority of the countries causes as much malnutrition in the world as does poor production. The economic privileges take away the bread of the majority and

with it the human capacity and the possibility of the correct exploitation of the natural resources.

At this Sixth Conference of the Americas on Malnutrition, the most important aspect of the problems have been confronted. Situations and new national experiences have been expressed: the factors of production, commerce and consumption of food have been stressed in reference to planning and coordination in training personnel, as well as educating the public in internal and international cooperation of nutritional population growth, policy in technological development, financing and many topics of vital importance. Food is a remedy of dubious value, or is only transitory and collateral. The solution must come from each group and from every country. The one who gives benefits more than the one who receives.

I think there is much truth to all of this. Progress cannot be achieved with charity grants to creatures chained by poverty, ignorance, sickness and malnutrition, originating from privileges, abuses and calamities. Let us remove the chains and sing together the happiness of being equal. With unilateral help let us build a vigorous structure capable of developing efficient and mutual help, equality, dignity and progress.

I am an inveterate optimist. I am convinced that a meeting such as this, independent of the technical information, generates new attitudes, gives new perspective to the problems and new dimensions to our purposes. When convening these conferences, the Agency for International Development of the United States is proclaiming its determination to accept work.

We have advanced in history by pursuing equality, listening, respecting rights to differ and promoting the organic coexistence of mutual dependency. At this conference, we perceive the serenity and reflection of mature men, the enthusiasm of youth and the equality of humanity for all.

I do not know whom we should thank more—the organizers of the conference, the participants or the speakers. The latter have offered words which synthesize knowledge: sometimes adventurous of thought and always with creative meditation. The sincerity and effort shown are the basis for confidence and faith in the future. Our gratitude to all

is equal. We offer our most enthusiastic congratulations for the success obtained.

Let us coordinate our efforts and resources based

on one philosophy of objectives and the same policy of action without accepting restrictions on our decisions or submitting to systems of imposed authority.

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Dr. Carlos Tejada V.  
Director, Division of Education  
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The concept of nutrition as an independent science corresponds to modern times. Not until the last two decades has nutrition become a well-defined category of a multi- and inter-disciplinary science with its own philosophy and special objectives and interests.

Up to this time, nutrition has always been considered a subject integrated with such specialties as medicine, physiology, biochemistry and some agricultural and animal sciences. The theoretical speculations and the research work in this area were carried out within the fundamental structure of the institutions or departments where such works were performed. For example, in the case of a department of physiology, nutrition was considered part of that department and its focus was mainly physiological; consequently, its multi-faceted nature was not taken into account.

Studies carried out in the last years have demonstrated that inadequate food and its corollary, malnutrition, are the result of a combination of several closely related factors that make a vicious circle, a chain difficult to break if multilateral measures to attack this problem are not put into practice.

Consequently the application of such measures requires the availability of many resources—human, institutional and economic. It is worth adding that in developing countries these resources are not sufficient to combat the malnutrition that is prevalent there.

The problem arising from the use that the human organism makes of the nutrients has worried innumerable investigators; they have come to the conclusion that this utilization is the result of a series of related factors. This phenomenon can be defined in three steps: from soil to the market, from the market to the stomach and from the stomach to the cell.

The integral concept of what nutrition is has forced revision of nutritional policy and academic programs. In effect, this discipline is no longer a collateral or subordinate science of other branches of human knowledge and has become a complex multi- and inter-disciplinary concept that links it-

self with other sciences, but offers a global and independent concept of what nutrition is.

In concrete terms, nutrition is basically the result of the interaction of three groups of sciences which are inter-related by a common denominator—nutrition: 1) Sciences related to food production, storage, processing and transformation 2) Socio-economic sciences interested in the study of distribution, marketing and food consumption in general 3) Health sciences whose main interest is food consumption and the utilization of nutrients by individuals.

The professionals involved with each of these disciplines collaborate in the integration of the nutrition unit according to their interests and previous formation. These professionals, who have carried out studies or have had additional experience in nutrition, are the ones who have succeeded in past and present in developing the new multi- and inter-disciplinary concept of nutrition. These professionals, nevertheless, still need a wider, fundamental and complete training in nutrition according to this new concept. For example, it is true a zoological technician is interested in nutrition, but only in those aspects related to his specialty. His interest in nutrition, in other words, does not go beyond his particular discipline and does not cover other areas that could be of great help to him for a more meaningful planning of his work programs according to the needs, resources and habits of the population as far as nutrition and diet are concerned. The physician is interested in nutrition, but here again, only from a relatively narrow point of view. He has not been formed nor motivated to understand that the nutritional problem cannot be solved through unilateral action. He must depend upon the cooperation of those professionals who work in the field of productivity, marketing and food consumption.

According to this new philosophy, it is necessary to plan new careers, change the structure of some of the present professions or offer postgraduate studies to the professionals wishing to increase their knowledge of nutrition.

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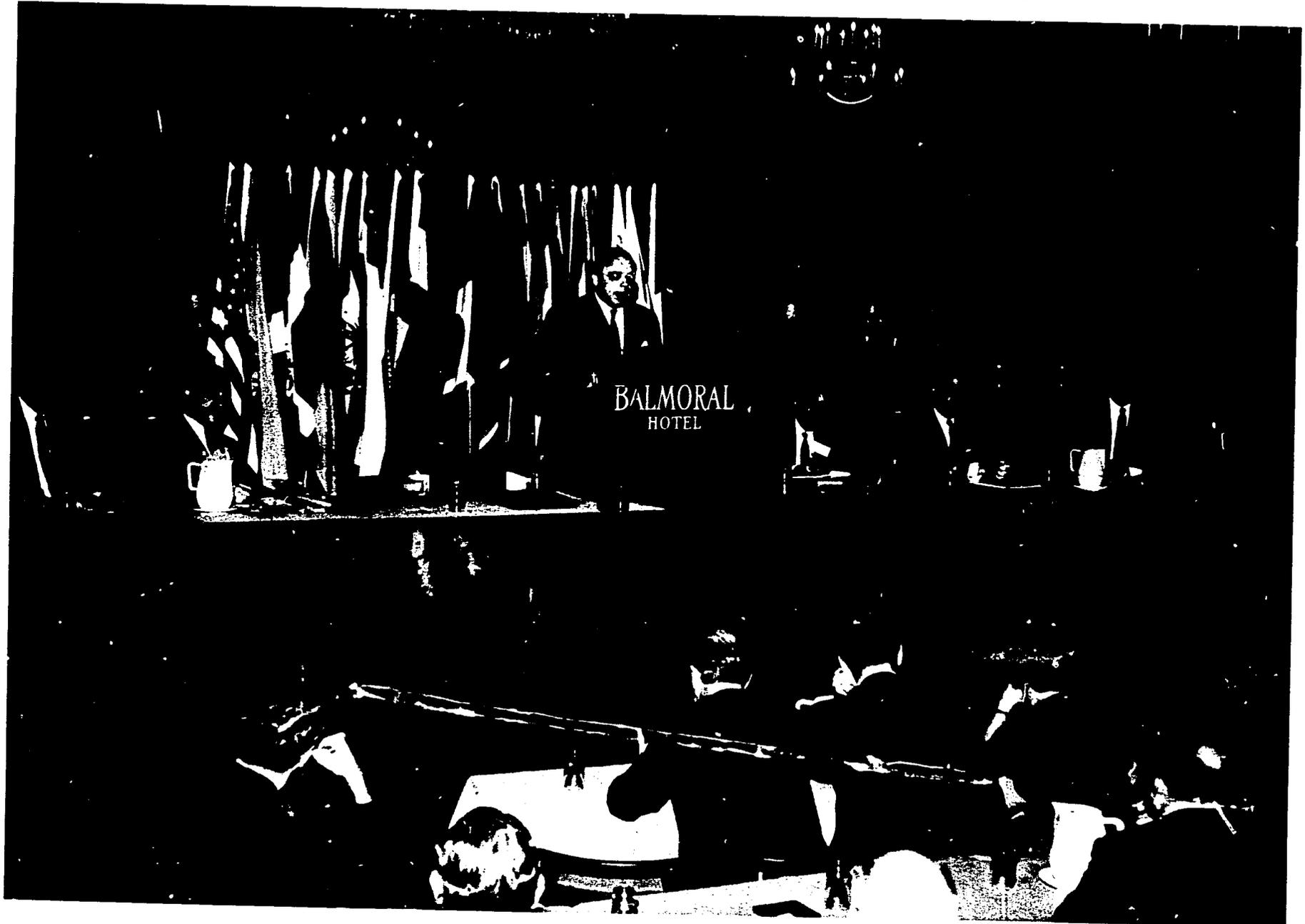
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# MAJOR SPEECHES



Address by Mr. A. H. Boerma  
Director-General of FAO

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be here this afternoon at the closing ceremonies of the Sixth Conference of the Americas on Malnutrition as a Factor in Socio-Economic Development. I understand that you have had a week of extremely interesting and constructive discussions and I am glad to have been able to arrive before you disperse and to be with you for even a short while.

I am at this moment en route from Washington for a visit to some of the countries of Latin America. This makes this Conference a very appropriate stopping-off point. For your meeting is renewed evidence of the determination of the nations of this hemisphere to work together on problems that are of common concern to them. Among these problems, none is of greater importance to the welfare and development of the peoples of the region than malnutrition.

I am very encouraged to see that you treat malnutrition in the context of social and economic development. Hunger and malnutrition are, of course, great evils in themselves, but, as more and more people are coming to realize, they are basically caused by poverty. Only if that poverty is overcome can hunger and malnutrition be made to disappear. It is highly important that the world should realize, as you do, that these two problems are interdependent.

I would only mention one or two elementary examples of the connection between the supply of food and economic and social development. It is obvious, for instance, that nutrition is a vital factor in the economic output of workers—the better fed they are, the more they will be able to work and the less time they will have to take off for sickness and other reasons. To look at another side of the picture, great hopes are now being placed on the possibilities for radically increasing food production held out by such technological advances as the new high-yielding varieties of cereal crops. But, if you have widespread unemployment in rural areas due to overpopulation, there are all the conditions present for social unrest and upheaval which could cause the chances of technological progress towards increased food production to be seriously retarded.

Hunger and malnutrition, however, are only one side of the world food problem. I think I should take a few minutes to go into the main features of this problem, since I have become aware in re-

cent months of a growing feeling in some of the richer countries that it has now largely been solved. This belief, although partly due to the considerable improvements that have occurred in the world food situation since the crisis years of 1966-67, is, of course, far from the truth.

There are in fact two sides to the world food problem. The first is hunger and malnutrition which, as I have said, are closely linked with the whole problem of economic and social development primarily because they are due to poverty. In most of the developing countries, you have large masses of people, many of whom are unemployed or under-employed, who are simply too poor to buy the food they need. This is, of course, harmful to their own health and well-being, but it also damages their countries' economies, of which agriculture is by far the largest part. For their lack of money means a lack of effective demand, which means a lack of markets, which means a lack of any reason for farmers to try and produce more. Thus agriculture continues to stagnate, the whole economic progress of the countries is held back and everybody remains almost as poor as before. The whole process is made much worse by the fact that at the same time population is growing very rapidly, which means that the economic burden of the unemployed and under-employed continues to grow heavier.

The long-term answer to the problem of hunger and malnutrition cannot be provided by measures for simply improving peoples' diets. It is an economic problem and must thus have an economic answer. It is true that food aid has done a lot to alleviate the situation, particularly since it has come to be used as a form of investment in economic and social development projects, many of which are labour-intensive and thereby help to take up some of the employment slack. But food aid can only be regarded as an interim measure. The developing countries must be enabled to stand on their own feet—and this, above all, is what they want. The only way out of the blind alley of poverty is to increase the purchasing power of the impoverished masses, which means increasing their incomes, which means providing them with opportunities for productive work. The first priority, therefore, if we are going to solve the problem of hunger and malnutrition, is to increase the number of wage-earners and the amount of the wages which they earn.

The second side to the world food problem in

the developing countries is how to meet the rising demand for food which is being mainly brought about by an increase in incomes and the growth of population. In the context of the prevailing poverty, the increase in incomes may be relatively small, a reflection of the tantalizingly slow pace at which the developing countries are moving forward. But it is nevertheless very significant in terms of food demand. For, if there is any rise in the incomes of the poor, much of it will naturally be spent on food.

Population growth is also, of course, very significant in the context of food demand. It is estimated that the food requirement of the developing countries will increase by between 3 and 4 per cent a year over the next couple of decades, and that population growth will account for at least two-thirds of this increase.

There are other factors at work in pushing up food demand. One is the exodus of people from the country to the towns, which means that many of them are no longer directly fed from subsistence farming and have to buy their food. Again, there is the growing demand for high-quality foods, chiefly protein, which comes mainly from small, better-off minorities but to which the masses also contribute whenever an increase in their meagre earnings allow them. In the developing countries, the increased demand for protein, especially animal protein, is likely to continue to outrun production for some time to come. According to present estimates, demand for livestock products is expected to grow at about 5.5 percent a year over the next decade or so, while the average annual *target* for increased production is only about 3.4 per cent. This is likely to lead either to a rise in prices, thus putting protein foods once again beyond the financial reach of the poor, or to further imports of these foods, thereby using up scarce foreign exchange just at the moment when the developing countries seem to have a chance of breaking free of the need to import cereals.

The main answer to this side of the world food problem—how to meet rising food demand—lies, of course, in increased production. It is the possibilities for expanded production that have generated much of the new-found optimism about the world food situation in the last couple of years. Faces are turned towards the new high-yielding varieties of cereal crops as if towards a new descent of manna from heaven. Now, Mr. Chairman, I should be the last to discourage optimism, and I believe that a certain cautious optimism is indeed justified if we com-

pare the situation today with what it was, say, three years ago. But, although we have achieved a noticeable advance since then, it is more in the nature of promise than performance.

The high-yielding varieties are themselves a very good illustration of this. There have been some remarkable spurts in cereal production in a few countries. But we are only just at the beginning. For one thing, the varieties that have so far been produced are not suited to some climatic conditions, so that there will be a need to test the behaviour of existing varieties in many countries and to promote research in others in order to create varieties there which are locally suitable. Again, the new varieties will not yield their full capacity without the assistance of many other elements. These include primarily large quantities of fertilizers, plant protection chemicals and a regular water supply—which in itself calls for investment in better methods of irrigation, drainage and flood protection. Farmers will have to be persuaded—and this is certainly not the least difficult task—to change their traditional methods of cultivation. Then, on the economic side, it will be necessary to expand and improve transport, distribution and storage facilities, which in most countries are still inadequate. More credit, more extension services will be needed.

I should now mention the question of improved production, price and trade policies in the context of increased food production. To put the matter in a nut-shell, what is needed everywhere is what I would call a selective expansion of agriculture output linked to both national and international demand. Your Conference is concerned in the first instance with the welfare and progress of individuals and communities within national boundaries. But, as I am sure you all realize, national welfare and progress cannot be achieved on any sizeable scale in the world today if countries act in isolation. Where agricultural output is concerned, the interdependence between the policies and production of different nations frequently means that, if care is not taken, the blessings of some will mean the hardship of others. All countries therefore have a responsibility to look at the possible international repercussions of their increases in production. This applies especially to the richer countries. For, unless they are prepared to liberalize their trade with the rest of the world—with all that that implies—the efforts of the developing countries in economic stature will be largely stultified.

A further point needs to be added about meeting

increased food demand in the developing countries. You will recall that I mentioned earlier that it is estimated that about two-thirds of this increased demand over the next fifteen to twenty years will be due to growth in population. While we are taking steps to meet this demand, we should also consider carefully the problem of population growth, bearing in mind that it can be different from country to country and that possibly there is no single policy or attitude that will fit even a whole continent.

So far, Mr. Chairman, I have been speaking about the food problem in the world as a whole, although with particular reference to the developing countries. I should now like to focus attention on this hemisphere, although again, by the same token, most of what I have to say concerns Latin America. I am not overlooking the fact that there are sizable pockets of malnutrition and possibly hunger even here in this country. But the United States is much more powerfully placed to deal with the proportionately much smaller plots of misery in its own backyard—and is now actively seeking means to eliminate them.

Perhaps the most obvious place at which to start any consideration of Latin America's food problems is the point at which I left off my review of the world food problem as a whole—namely, population. For it is in Latin America that population has been growing faster than in any other region of the world in the last thirty years, and is likely to continue to do so in the next thirty. Between the outbreak of the Second World War and the year 2000 it is estimated that it will have more than quintupled, rising from 5.6 per cent of the world's total to close on 10 per cent. Now, while population growth by itself is not, contrary to the belief in some quarters, the basic cause of hunger and malnutrition, it does, as I have pointed out earlier, considerably aggravate the problem of poverty which is the basic cause. And while agricultural production in Latin America has so far managed to stay narrowly ahead of population growth, it is clear that a population increase of the proportions I have just mentioned is going to prove very serious. I do not want to elaborate on this. The remedies to the problem are well-known and so, unfortunately, are the obstacles to their application.

Let me now look at some of the other factors. I need not go into the details of malnutrition in Latin America, since this is the general subject of your Conference and you are already fully aware of the

picture. I should just like to confine myself to mentioning a few of the salient features which strike me particularly. The first point which I think needs to be stressed is that the statistics which we often use as a basis for work on the food problems of Latin America give a very distorted picture of the situation. If, for example, one takes the overall figures of per capita calorie requirements and actual calorie intake for the continent as a whole, one finds an apparently healthy situation with intake exceeding the calculated needs. But these figures conceal the very important fact, well-known to you, that food and thus calorie intake are very unevenly distributed over the continent. We in FAO have worked out that the average daily intake of calories per person in Latin America is over 2,500. But, if you break the situation down in a given country, you may well find that in reality there are perhaps 40 per cent of the people virtually starving on less than 1,500, another 40 per cent with less than 2,000 and 20 per cent who are not only extremely well-fed but are wasting some of the food which they buy.

The second important fact, again well-known to you, is that what is eaten by the impoverished majority is normally low-quality, starch food. These people can rarely afford animal protein. I shall have something to say on the problem of livestock production in a moment, but for the present I should just like to draw the main conclusion from the two facts I have mentioned.

This, of course, is that the problem of poverty in Latin America, if not so generally acute as in other developing regions, is still extremely severe by reason of the tremendous inequalities of income. Again, any figures showing average incomes are highly misleading precisely because they disguise these inequalities. I recall seeing, however, some quite reliable figures given for one Latin American country for 1960 which show that one per cent of the people in the country's agricultural sector reported an average family income of \$3,400 a year, which was nearly twenty times the average of the lowest 60 per cent of the population who were subsisting, somehow or other, on about \$175 a year. It is situations of this kind—and there is little evidence that there has been much change for the better since 1960—that almost make one despair. It is encouraging, no doubt, that the American Chiefs of State meeting at Punta del Este in 1967 should have solemnly pledged that "the living conditions of the rural workers and farmers of Latin America will be transformed, to guarantee their full participation in economic and social pro-

gress." But how, one asks, is it ever going to be brought about?

One must not, of course, despair. The fact that problem has been commonly recognized at the highest governmental level is indeed a hopeful sign. And there are others—the improved agricultural policies of most Latin American governments, the rising social expectations of the people themselves, and the increases in external financing and technical assistance for agriculture.

But the problems remain vast. Two of them in particular stand out. The first is how to provide more employment opportunities, not only for the millions in rural areas who live on land which is being worked far below its full potential, but also for the swelling urban populations who live in the slums that are now radiating outwards from the cities. This is, as I said earlier, a general problem in the developing countries. The second is more particularly Latin American. This is how to tackle the great problems of structure, thereby making possible some redistribution of income and more effective farming of the land. Land tenure studies carried out by the Inter-American Center for Agricultural Development (CIDA) in seven Latin American countries, including three or four of the most important, showed that the large multi-family farms—only 2.6 per cent of the total number of farm units—controlled 46 per cent of the land. This pattern of land ownership is a large obstacle to economic and social development. It is an obstacle that only the governments of Latin America themselves can remove.

Leaving now the economic and social background to hunger and malnutrition in Latin America, I should like to say a few words about nutrition itself and then pass on to the question of increasing agricultural production to meet the rising demand for food.

Nutritional levels are, as I have said, very low among the large masses of the poor, and this is mainly an economic problem. There is also, however, something else which is missing besides money—and that is knowledge. In view of the fact that for generations most people in Latin America have largely existed on starch foods and beans, there is a very great need for nutritional education, especially in connection with malnutrition among children.

I might say at this point that the efforts to cope with malnutrition, especially protein malnutrition, in children in Latin America go back to an assessment jointly carried out by FAO and the World Health Organization in Central America in 1950 and

Brazil in 1951. The importance of nutrition in development planning is now much more widely recognized, but, as the present situation shows, a great deal remains to be done. I would particularly propose that Ministries of Agriculture and the departments responsible for national planning should pay much greater attention to nutrition, both by seeing that some of their agricultural experts and economists receive training in the subject and also by including nutritionists in their staff.

To talk of malnutrition is really to talk about a lack of protein. And this leads me directly to the whole question of production.

In the first place, a great deal could be done to alleviate the present plight of the poor by increasing the amount of cheaper proteins, by which I chiefly mean cereal proteins, and by increasing the amount of protein in those cereals. This is one of the most encouraging prospects held out by the new high-yielding varieties—and here I should naturally like to pay tribute to the important pioneering work on these varieties which has been carried out in Mexico. The crossing of cereals having a higher protein content with other strains would mean that more of these higher protein cereals would be within the financial reach of the poor.

Turning to animal protein, I know that Latin America has some special problems at present with regard to livestock production. There is firstly the question of disease, particularly foot-and-mouth disease. Of more serious long-term concern is the decline in the rate of reproduction which, it has been found, is primarily due to deficiencies in what the animals eat and to a progressive deterioration in pasture. Both these problems need to be tackled energetically. An increase in livestock production is one of the highest priorities on the world agricultural scene today. The importance which FAO attaches to this is shown by the fact that we have decided to make the drive to close the protein gap one of the five areas on which we shall be particularly concentrating our efforts in the next few years. In addition, we are preparing a strong action programme in Latin America on livestock production, health and marketing.

Returning to the more general picture, I hardly need to stress that the whole range of agricultural production will have to be increased very sharply if the rising demand for food, about which I spoke earlier, is to be met. This will require investment on a much more massive scale than in the past as

well as the improved production and trade policies of which I have spoken.

Once again, Latin America has some especially acute problems with regard to production and trade. One of the best known is monoculture, which has effectively limited Latin America's agricultural exports to a very few commodities, rendering the region extremely vulnerable to the fluctuations of world market prices. Diversification of crops is therefore something of the highest priority.

The last point I should like to mention in connection with Latin America is trade. So far as trade between Latin America and the rest of the world is concerned, I believe that I have already covered the most important aspects. The glaring fact is that Latin America is now in a position where the terms of trade are heavily against it. Part of the solution lies in Latin America's own hands—by diversifying the crops that it offers for export and by striving in other ways to become more responsive to international demand, capricious as this often may be. But a greater responsibility, as I have indicated, lies with the richer countries to liberalize their trade policies.

In addition to the question of trade with the rest of the world, a word also needs to be said about trade within Latin America. There are here, I think, great possibilities for the countries of the region to help one another and thus to help themselves. Central America has already made good progress along this road with its Common Market. I would hope to see something of the sort spreading more effectively than in the past throughout the whole region. The Latin American Free Trade Association is something which holds considerable promise, but that promise is still far from fulfilment. I am sure that the countries of Latin America would profit immensely from opening up the trade links among themselves, not only because they would derive considerable material benefits from such an exchange, but also because, by integrating their efforts, they would be in a stronger trading position with the rest of the world. I might add that FAO is cooperating actively in the work

of both the Caribbean and Latin American Free Trade Associations and of the Central American Common Market.

Before I conclude, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a brief word about FAO. All that I have been saying this afternoon is of very close concern to our Organization. For, as you know, FAO is dedicated to the battle against hunger and malnutrition and to helping the developing countries of the world to increase their agricultural production. As a general guide, we are now drawing up an Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development, which will present an analysis of the main issues facing world agriculture in the next fifteen years, and will also suggest the lines along which the major problems might best be tackled. To push things along faster, I have in the last year drawn up a new strategy which consists of five Areas which I believe to be the most crucial in the world food problem of today and on which we shall henceforth be concentrating our efforts. These are: promotion of the new high-yielding varieties; the drive to close the protein gap, which I have already mentioned; a war on waste; the mobilization of human resources for rural development; and assistance to countries in connection with their problems of earning and saving foreign exchange. I would only like to assure this Conference that, in these Areas and in any others where we can provide assistance, FAO is not only willing but eager to do so.

The message that I would like to leave with you today is that there is still so much to be done and that so much of it needs to be done quickly. As I said at the beginning, there is a feeling abroad that hunger and malnutrition have now been largely vanquished and that the whole world food problem will soon be solved. They have not been and it will not be. We cannot afford to delude ourselves into thinking that the improvements that have taken place in the world food situation in the last two or three years can allow us for a moment to relax our efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**The Honorable John C. Culver, (D-Iowa)**  
Member, Inter-American Affairs Subcommittee

It is a pleasure to come to Miami and to be asked to welcome you on behalf of the people of the United States, to this Sixth Conference of the Americas on Malnutrition.

It is not easy for an amateur to greet so distinguished a company of professionals—agriculturalists, scientists, doctors, nutritionists.

Though I am not an expert in any of these disciplines, though I am not a successful farmer or food producer in my own right, and though I have not had the most immediate kind of direct personal experience with the problem of malnutrition, I am profoundly sensitive to the importance of this conference and its main themes.

In the Congress of the United States, I represent an area in Iowa which dramatically symbolizes America's farm crop abundance, and which has benefited for more than a century from the sustained application of new techniques, new knowledge and the miracles of science.

I am also honored to serve in the Congress as a member of the Inter-American Affairs Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee—one of whose principal concerns this year has been to study in some depth the character and consequence of food and rural agricultural requirements throughout the countries of this hemisphere.

So I come to you in a spirit of common concern and common enterprise.

You come to this country at the very time that we ourselves are rediscovering the relevance of malnutrition to our own national destiny.

As you probably know, the President, within the past two weeks, has for the first time sent to the Congress a special message related to programs to deal with hunger and malnutrition.

This message was preceded for more than a year by intensive hearings by several committees of the Congress, and particularly by a special committee of the Senate, of which Senator McGovern has been the Chairman and whose active membership has included Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts, Senator Mondale of Minnesota, and Senator Percy of Illinois.

As President Nixon stated in this message:

"We have long thought of America as the most bounteous of nations. In our conquest of the most elemental of human needs, we have set a standard that is a wonder and aspiration for the rest of the world.

"Our agricultural system produces more food than we can consume, and our private food market is the most effective food distribution system ever developed.

"So accustomed are most of us to a full and balanced diet that, until recently, we have thought of hunger and malnutrition as problems only in far less fortunate countries.

"But, in the past few years, we have awakened to the distressing fact that despite our material abundance and agricultural wealth many Americans suffer from malnutrition. Precise, factual descriptions of its extent are not presently available, but there can be no doubt that hunger and malnutrition exist in America, and that some millions may be affected."

If we have not known before, we are learning now that malnutrition is a malady from which no country has automatic immunity. Though its severity may vary in different countries and in different areas of the world, it is not limited to any racial or ethnic or ideological group. It attacks all people, and properly arouses our common concern. This Conference is testimony to that fact.

I need not recite at length either the economics or the human costs which malnutrition—and undernutrition—levy on us.

—there are still developing countries in which one-half of all children born die before the age of five.

—there are several countries represented here which still have infant mortality rates of over 100.

—studies show that as many as one-third of those deaths can be attributed directly to malnutrition.

—and in this hemisphere, there are countries where serious protein malnutrition affects 20 percent of all preschool children.

But even more significant, and more difficult to probe, are the incalculable human costs which nutritional deficiencies exact.

How are we to assess the loss of productivity and the shortening of productive years brought on by a deficit of proper nutrients and diets?

We know that there is an organic connection between malnutrition and susceptibility to disease, which in turn raises medical costs, brings on mounting and premature work disabilities, and lower social morale and economic initiative.

We do not yet have a large body of data on this, but almost all of it suggests ominously the likelihood of serious danger.

Nutrition, therefore, is not a discrete or peripheral aspect of national or human development. What you will be discussing here has elemental importance for all those concerned with the growth of nations and the health of human societies.

Just as the malady can be universal in its reach, so also, however, the agricultural revolution can sweep across the world. It cannot occur everywhere at the same tempo, at the same level, or in the same time scope. But we do know that the benefits can, in various and differing ways, affect almost every land.

The fact that agriculture is not stagnant can be seen first of all in the fact that almost all of the less developed nations have, in recent years, been able to keep up with—and in many instances exceed—population growth. There is much technology which, if it is carefully tested and adapted, can be translated to the needs of other nations. Not every country must start from scratch and build up for itself a whole new body of knowledge and acquire the safe technological capacity.

In the Inter-American Affairs Subcommittee, my colleagues and I have learned, for example, of the promising introduction in Guyana of new rice varieties from Texas. By substituting 90-day rice for 140-day, and by double and triple-cropping, over 170,000 tons were produced last year. Almost two-thirds of this could be exported to islands in the Caribbean.

The partnership between Mexico and the Rockefeller Foundation is by now historic, but points to other future successes. Not only did Mexico more than conquer a food deficit, low crop yields, and a shortage of scientific management, it also achieved corn and wheat surpluses even in the face of the very rapid population growth, diversified and improved the quality of its crops, and built up a strong cadre of scientific personnel and the outstanding all-Mexican National Institute for Agricultural Research.

Today's Mexico experience and the work of its experts has pervasive influence in many parts of Central America. Indeed, it is a Mexican scientist who has been the principal scientific advisor to the government of West Pakistan—half the world away—in introducing the new short-strawed wheats in that country.

There are, of course, other instances in your experience. Among these have been the development of the cooperative agricultural program in Chile, and the National Agriculture Research Institute with its off-spring of modern experiment stations. Yet another example which we in the United States have followed with admiration has been the establishment of the Colombian Institute of Agriculture which has made a strong contribution to agriculture research extension and education.

In all these examples, we find a blending of effort which is truly collaborative and generative of new efforts elsewhere.

This conference, by its subject matter, and by its composition, affords an unusual opportunity for a genuine exchange of knowledge and experience on this subject. No country and no institute holds a monopoly of information or solutions. We venture here in an area where we must learn from each other and where we must combine our common resources. The pioneering work, for example, of the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama is just as important as that of any institute in this country.

All of us must be the reapers of knowledge, I think, too, that in holding a conference of this nature, we are validating the aspirations which were set forth for us in the Alliance for Progress.

President Kennedy spoke again and again of the transforming effects which the revolutionary ideas and creative energies of all of us in this hemisphere could have.

It is he who set the keynote in 1961, which is fully so meaningful to the work you are undertaking here:

“. . . Our unfilled task is to demonstrate to the entire world that man's unsatisfied aspiration for economic progress and social justice can best be achieved by free men working within a framework of domestic institutions.”

And if there is any truth in history it is this—that a nation that is hungry, can never be free. To the starving mother and children in any nation of this hemisphere, freedom and democracy appear in the form of a loaf of bread—and socio-economic development must proceed from there.

Again, it is a pleasure welcoming you here today, on behalf of the people of the United States. I look forward to meeting you personally, and to participating in the important session which will be conducted this week.