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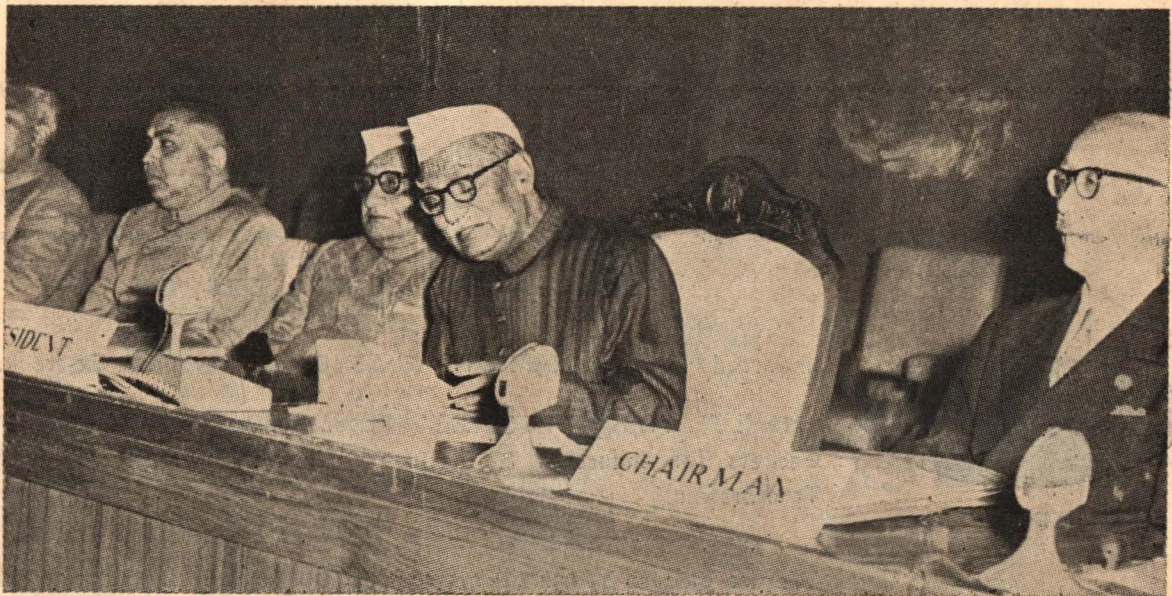
New Delhi, January 1961

No. 1

"...first occasion in history..."

President Lauds initiative of Bharat Krishak Samaj

Afro-Asian meet on Rural Reconstruction opened



Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, inaugurated the Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Reconstruction at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on the morning of January 18, 1961. He expressed his happiness at the fact that the initiative for organizing this unique conference had come from... "our farmers' organization, the Bharat Krishak Samaj".

In his address Dr. Prasad said :

I am very happy this morning to address this Conference of distinguished delegates coming from so many great nations of Africa and Asia. This is the first occasion in history when representatives of the Afro-Asian nations have gathered together to discuss

problems facing agriculture and rural reconstruction in their countries at an International gathering like the present one. This is, therefore, a memorable day and I consider it a great privilege to extend to you a hearty welcome on behalf of my country.

Coming as I do of a family of farmers and having my home in a small village, my interest in agriculture and rural India is as old as my childhood, which I spent among rural surroundings. The idea, therefore, of an International Conference in which will be discussed the most fundamental and yet perplexing problems facing reconstruction of the rural people,

(Continued on page 3)

THE CONFERENCE WAS ATTENDED BY:

One hundred and twenty eight delegates and observers from twenty three countries and five international organizations. The Countries and Organizations represented were:

Countries:

1. Burma
2. Ceylon
3. Ghana
4. India
5. Indonesia
6. Iran
7. Japan
8. Jordan
9. Lebanon
10. Liberia
11. Malaya
12. Morocco
13. Nepal
14. Pakistan
15. Philippines
16. Saudi Arabia
17. Sudan
18. Thailand
19. Tunisia
20. Turkey
21. United Arab Republic
22. Viet Nam
23. Afghanistan

Organizations:

1. Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
2. International Federation of Agricultural Producers.
3. International Cooperative Alliance.
4. UNESCO Research Centre.
5. United States Technical Cooperation Mission.

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thrills me.

I had a similar opportunity of addressing an International gathering in November, 1959 when I was called upon to inaugurate the 11th Session of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers held in Delhi. In holding their conference here at the invitation of the Bharat Krishak Samaj, they met on the continent of Asia for the first time. This great event was followed by one which was still greater, namely, history's First World Agriculture Fair. This gave our people an opportunity to view the achievements of our agriculture in the broad perspective of the achievements made in the various advanced countries of the world in the field of agriculture. It was a rare occasion for us in India and over three million people came to this fascinating and instructive Exhibition of agriculture, rural life and development.

Although I have no first-hand knowledge of the actual conditions of the rural people in the various countries of this group, I believe it is correct to say that our problems in most countries of Asia and Africa are, more or less, similar. First and foremost, many of us have got out of our political bondage only recently. In this country, our agriculture is backward. The yields in most cases are low. The farming community is poor and not very highly educated. The land tenure systems are antiquated and need suitable reforms. In most cases I believe, the holdings are small and do not always enable a family to provide for all its needs and improve its agriculture. The co-operative movement which is the hope of the rural communities is weak and coming up slowly. The net result of all this is that the problem of freeing our people from hunger and malnutrition stares us in the face. These are, I am told, among the problems you propose to discuss here. Another factor at the root of these ills is that the number of people dependent on agriculture is too large. It is a recognised principle of economics that the prosperity of our countries varies inversely with the numbers dependent on agriculture. We have, therefore, not only to improve the conditions of the rural people but also to see that many of them are gradually diverted towards industries or other suitable vocations. In this connection it is obvious that cottage and small-scale industries open up large vistas of whole-time or part-time employment in rural areas.

These, in any case, are the problems that we have to face in India. It is, therefore, most appropriate that you have met here in this Conference this morning to tackle the situation from various angles. I am sure that your deliberations would be fruitful. Your coming here would give you not only an opportunity to have a free exchange of views but to learn from the experience of others and also to have a look at our country and know at first hand what struggles it is putting forward to improve its economic position. For developing countries, this exchange of thoughts should prove a very great asset and the social contacts that would emerge from this will no doubt lead to better understanding and greater solidarity among our various countries, irrespective of politics or other

extraneous considerations.

I have gone through the items on the agenda which you propose to discuss in this Conference. All the subjects have an important bearing on the economy of the rural people. I understand that all the countries of Europe, the two Americas and Australia have very well established farmers' organisations. They have done yeoman service in their countries in the cause of agriculture. In the Asian and African countries, this movement has still to spread. Healthy, non-political, non-sectarian organisations of farmers devoted to promoting the welfare of their farmers and raising the output of food would, I think, be a great supplementary force in establishing and also strengthening the economy of our countries.

I am happy that my country has been chosen as the venue of this first meeting of the Afro-Asian nations. I am further happy that the initiative for the same has come from our farmers' organisation, the Bharat Krishak Samaj.

Friends, you have my most cordial good wishes for the success of this Conference which I have much pleasure to inaugurate.

Address by Dr. S. Nasu

Earlier, Dr. S. Nasu, Japanese Ambassador in India, who was President of the First East Asian Rural Reconstruction Conference, held in Tokyo in 1955, addressed the meeting, He said :

I take it as a great honour conferred upon me to make this introductory remark about the historical background of this Conference, as the President of the First East-Asian Rural Reconstruction Conference, out of which the present one has grown.

It was in August, 1955 that the first East-Asian Rural Reconstruction Conference was held in Tokyo, with participation of 12 countries, namely, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaya, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of China, Thailand, and Viet Nam. There were also special guests attending it, who represented F.A.O., I.F.A.P., I.C.A., and the Asia Foundation.

The sponsor was a special Committee enlisting all important agricultural organizations in Japan, which enjoyed the fullest support of the Japanese Government, especially its Ministry of Agriculture. The delegates consisted partly of Government officials but mainly of representatives of Agricultural Organizations or farmers themselves who could speak out quite freely their minds. The aim of the Conference was to discuss more important agricultural and rural problems with special stress upon the standpoint of agriculturalists. It also aimed to develop the wider vision as well as the spirit of international co-operation among the farmers of Asia. The main topics were the Community Development, the Village Co-operatives, the Farm Land System and the Improved Agricultural Techniques. The exchange of views and outspoken discussions were very fruitful, and the Confer-

ence ended in a big success. The resolutions passed were that the Conference ought to be convened from time to time in different parts of Asia, and that the International committee for that purpose should be set up. The speaker was elected as the Chairman of that committee.

Due to some reason or other, the Committee could not function as desired and the convening of the second Conference was much delayed. But the delay was not without its unexpectedly better outcome. Because the Indian Farmers Forum consented to become its host last year, and, after much deliberations among the people concerned including Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh and myself, it was finally decided to expand the Conference as to include all the Member Nations of F.A.O. in Asia and Africa. The result is that the present Conference is attended by 23 nations in Asia and Africa and also by the representatives of give International Organizations. For the birth of this First Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Conference our sincere appreciation and thanks are due to the Farmers Forum, India.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen! Before concluding, may I add a few words of explanation about the *raison d'être* of this kind of conference in the present-day world where various international conferences abound even in the sphere of agriculture. It may be briefly summarized as follows :

firstly, the importance of clarifying farmers' point of view in connection with governmental policies and measures ;

secondly, not only full understanding of rural population with regard to governmental policies is needed, but also their initiatives in co-operating with as well as complementing those measures ought to be fostered ;

thirdly, formation of the farmers associations ought to be encouraged in those countries where they are lacking ;

fourthly, usually rather limited vision of farmers ought to be widened so as to realize that many important agricultural problems now must be considered in their international aspects, and, therefore, international collaboration of farmers is becoming the problem of the day, which even politicians are not fully aware of ;

fifthly, those countries which have more or less similar economic, social and cultural backgrounds can profit very much by exchanging their views and experiences through actual farmers ;

sixthly, in this part of the world, members of I.F.A.P. are very much limited, and so we need some organization to supplement it.

The foregoing argument, I hope, will be sufficient to dispel any doubt about the significance of this Conference. Indeed, we are looking forward to its speedy and healthy growth under the guidance of Dr. Deshmukh, and we are sure that this and more Con-

ferences to come are destined to contribute their important share for developing agriculture and for building up rural democracy in this part of the world.

Now I am at the end of my speech, and my last function is to hand over the baton of presidency of the Conference to Dr. Deshmukh, President of the Farmers Forum, India.

Thank you.

Welcome Address by Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh

Following Dr. Nasu's speech Dr. Panjabrao S. Deshmukh, Union Minister of Agriculture and President, Bharat Krishak Samaj, delivered his address of Welcome. He said :

1. I consider it a signal honour to have this opportunity to extend to you a most hearty welcome on behalf of the Bharat Krishak Samaj and the 280 million farmers of this country. It is a unique occasion in the history of these two great continents when distinguished representatives, both officials and non-officials of two dozen nations of Africa and Asia are meeting together for the first time to discuss problems of rural reconstruction facing their countries. We are indeed very grateful to all of you for accepting our invitation and giving us this opportunity to act as your host for this first conference.

2. As many of you know the East-Asian Rural Reconstruction Conference met in Tokyo during the latter part of 1955. That Conference had decided that the Second Session may be held in India. H. E. Dr. Nasu who was in fact the father of the idea and also the Chairman of this first conference suggested to us that we should hold the second session in New Delhi during 1959-60. The Bharat Krishak Samaj was, however, then engaged in holding the First World Agriculture Fair and also in playing host to the Eleventh General Conference of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers which was meeting on Asian soil for the first time.

3. The Governing Body of the Bharat Krishak Samaj which met a year ago decided to call this conference in the beginning of the current year. It, however, proposed that the scope of the conference be widened to include all independent nations of Africa and Asia who were members of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

4. We are meeting here to-day at an important period in world history. It is for the first time that the two great continents of Asia and Africa are coming into their own. The shackles of foreign domi-

nation are being gradually broken as can be seen from the fact that many of us have just rid ourselves from foreign rule and we are entering the family of free nations.

5. In most of these countries however, agriculture is struggling hard to shake its primitive garb. In many respects, it still continues at a very backward stage of advancement. The output of food and fibre is not enough to meet the growing need. Holdings are generally small and where they are big we do not always get the best out of them. Population is increasing at a fast rate and poverty and hunger in rural areas are staring us in the face. People need food as also education. Rural economy again has to be properly balanced with the growth of industries. These are some of the vexed problems which all of us are called upon to solve.

6. In endeavouring to achieve progress and raise the standard of living of our people, the very first thing we have to attempt is to take agriculture out of its medieval conditions. It has, therefore, to be modernised and equipped with every kind of new implement and technique. The farmer has to be carefully educated to take to new methods. His credit needs have to be met so that he may be able to obtain good seed, sufficient fertilisers and best implements. He has to be prepared also to own and follow the principles of cooperation and prepare himself to reconstruct his social and cultural life, since his economic betterment is closely linked with the process of rural reconstruction that is being planned for him. Unless the economy of the rural people is properly stabilized, it would be difficult to create a proper equilibrium between the agricultural and industrial advancement of our countries. A backward agriculture may completely inhibit the industrial growth of the country.

7. Our Governments have undoubtedly been making intensive efforts to raise the status of agriculture and improve the conditions of our people. This is not, however, a simple task. It needs constant and concentrated attention of the Governments as well as the people. Effort by Government alone is not however sufficient to produce the desired results. It is my firm conviction that we cannot ever think of attaining our objectives unless the people become active partners in this process and cooperate with various efforts which are initiated for them.

8. The history of the advanced countries itself teaches us the lesson that without the people's initiative and efforts, we can never hope to attain a higher standard of living. Farm organisations have played a distinct part in the history of many countries. Such organizations in many countries enabled the agricultural producers to voice their difficulties and convey their feelings on matters pertaining to their profession to proper quarters and also helped the Government to ascertain the views of the primary producers on important questions which affected them vitally.

9. Today the organisations of the farmers occupy

a position of honour in all the agriculturally advanced countries of the West. They have done a yeoman's service to the cause of agricultural production.

10. In India the rural people live in more than five hundred and eighty six thousand villages and they number more than 280 million. It is difficult for any Government agency to reach all of them. The Government is sparing no pains to bring about a change in their economic condition—but to improve their living standards they need to have more money in their pockets. This can be achieved only if they are able to raise better crops. But there are many hurdles in the way of their achieving this end, such as the smallness of the holdings, the limited purchasing and staying power of the farmer, inadequacy of credit and knowledge of new techniques, insufficiency of supply of things necessary for better farming and so on. All these things have to be provided to him and the importance of cooperatives for improving his condition brought home. Such a task can be undertaken and appropriately discharged only by the leadership coming out of their own ranks for which a proper farm organisation is the most vital need. I have no doubt this matter would be discussed in all its bearings at this conference as the first subject on the agenda deals with it.

11. In India we embarked on this rather late. The Farmers' Forum, India was born only on April 3, 1955 but, within less than six years of its existence, we have undertaken unusually big tasks and it is most gratifying that we have been able to discharge them well. Apart from holding the International Federation of Agricultural Producers' Conference and the World Agriculture Fair, the Farmers' Forum brought into being the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation. We have also decided to play a big part in the 'Freedom from Hunger Campaign' sponsored by F.A.O. We have now started holding National Agriculture Fairs in various parts of India and we are about to embark on the establishment of the Farmers' Cooperative Bank of India. We are naturally proud of what we have been able to achieve. But we want to push forward at the same speed in the future.

12. It is very fortunate that we have amongst us not only Ministers, top-ranking administrators and experts but also many representatives of the farmers and farm organisations. I again welcome them all most heartily and hope that this first Conference which we have ventured to call will lay the foundation for many more similar conferences to come in later years.

13. Rashtrapatiji ! It was most gracious of you to have consented to inaugurate this Conference inspite of such great pressure of work. We are deeply beholden to you for your unceasing kindness in blessing the efforts of the Bharat Krishak Samaj and having honoured us by being its most respected Chief Patron. I will now request you to be pleased to address and inaugurate the Conference.

MESSAGES

I wish to inform your Excellency that the Government of the Union of Burma are quite convinced of the necessity and importance of the Conference which will promote cooperation of the Afro-Asian countries in the field of rural reconstruction.

—THAKIN TIN MAUNG
Minister for Agriculture and Forests
Government of Burma

* *

It gives me great pleasure to send my greetings and good wishes to the organizers of and delegates to the Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Conference. I regret my inability to take part personally in this Conference, but can derive some satisfaction from the fact that FAO is well represented by a number of my senior colleagues who, I am sure, will make a worthy contribution to the success of the Conference.

2 The problems of rural populations form an important part of FAO's work. The Preamble to FAO's Charter specially refers to the need for collective action for "bettering the conditions of rural populations" and "raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the people". In the recent past FAO's interest in this field of work has been quickened by the impact of sweeping social changes in large areas of the world. It has been increasingly recognized that while more spectacular and dramatic changes have taken place in the spheres of political action and urban economy and living, the basic source of strength for sustained development lies in the vast rural areas where the great majority of the population is engaged in agriculture and other primary occupations. It is a wholesome and reassuring development of our time that the governments of the developing countries are giving particular attention to the need for rural reconstruction, and are initiating programmes, such as community development, land reform, extension services, marketing organization and cooperatives for the economic and social betterment of their rural communities.

3 This Conference, therefore, meeting in New Delhi after an interval of five years, will serve a very useful purpose by bringing national leaders from different countries to tell their own stories and compare notes with one another on both the successes and failures of their various endeavours. The Conference will no doubt have a close look at the community development programme which has been staged in India as a comprehensive scheme of nation-building through rural reconstruction. The Conference will also, I am sure, give particular attention to the crucial problem of adjustment to rapid social changes in Africa which is now under way.

4 In this context I may refer to the Freedom From-Hunger Campaign launched by FAO. The basic

aim of the Campaign is to mobilize public opinion for the employment of all known techniques for the realization of a progressive increase in agricultural productivity which is the foundation of all rural welfare in under-developed countries. An important aspect of the Campaign is the emphasis it places on the participation of rural populations in the reconstruction programmes which cannot achieve the desired results in an atmosphere of apathy or hopelessness. Whether in extension work, community development or other programmes designed to improve the agricultural infrastructure, the essential condition of success is a spirit of self-help and willing collaboration. I was happy to learn that the programmes undertaken in India under the impetus of the Campaign are directed to this end. Let us not forget that hunger, which is a concomitant of poverty, remains the greatest challenge to humanity. Your Conference can help to bring a message of hope to the millions of rural people in Asia and Africa by giving the Freedom-from-Hunger Campaign the support that it needs.

—B. R. SEN
Director General
Food and Agriculture Organisation of the
United Nations

* *

Deeply regret that pressing matters here, which will also effect world Agriculture prevent my presence at Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Reconstruction. In this era of expanding freedom and democracy nothing is more important than strong peoples organizations and I urge you to build firmly in the service of farm people. I hope you will also support the Freedom from Hunger Campaign of the Food and Agriculture Organization in the service of all mankind. With best wishes for a successful conference.

—JAMES G. PATTON
President
International Federation of Agricultural Producers

* *

The International Cooperative Alliance regards economic development in rural areas to be of paramount importance. Voluntary cooperation will enable the farmers not only to raise their standard of living but also to play a continuously increasing role in the formation of a democratic welfare society.

—MAURITZ BONOW
President
International Cooperative Alliance

CONCLUDING PLENARY SESSION

At its Concluding Plenary Session on January 25 1961, the Delegates to the twenty-three-nation Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Reconstruction proposed to set up a permanent organisation to be known as Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organisation (AARRO), subject to the approval of their respective Governments and the farm organisations.

The Conference set up a provisional Executive Committee of eleven to frame the structure and work out details of the proposed new international organisation. The committee will consist of the President of the Conference: Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh, the three Vice-Chairman: Mr. Ibrahim Mahdavi (Iran) Mr. Le Vang Dong (Viet-Nam) and Mr. Nijjai Ahmad (Morocco). Rapporteur; Raja Mohammad Afzal of Pakistan, and Mr. G. Watanabe of Japan, Mr. Sami Hasan Abo Elzz (UAR) Mr. M. Balasaygun (Turkey) Mr. J.J.

Ghann (Ghana) His Excellency Dr. S. Nasu, Ambassador of Japan in India and the Secretary-General of the Conference, Shri K.D. Sharma.

At the invitation of the United Arab Republic, the Conference decided to hold the next session in that country next year.

Subject to the approval of various governments and Farm Organisations it was proposed that (1) Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federations be set up at the National level in different countries and international trade, be started,

in agricultural commodities through these Cooperative Organisations, and (2) An International Cooperative Bank should be set up. As a preliminary, however, there should be National Cooperative Banks in the various countries, so that a Federation could be created later on.

In India as a start Farmers Cooperative Bank of India Ltd., had already been registered.

The Conference unanimously approved the four Resolutions passed by the four Committees on (1) Farmers Organisations and their Role in the Promotion of Rural Economy (2) Cooperation as a Major Means of Rural Reconstruction in Developing Countries. (3) Agrarian Reforms. (4) Freedom from Hunger Campaign.

Resolutions

Committee I

Farmers' Organizations and their Role in the Promotion of Rural Economy

The Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Reconstruction, after

Hearing from the Delegates to the Conference the different stages of development of the Farmers' Organisations in their countries, and

Realising that non-Governmental, non-political and non-sectarian organisations of farmers can play a dynamic and potent role in helping the Governments to formulate healthy and sound farm policies and extending requisite information to farmers to develop their agriculture, marketing and rural industries and also educating them to adopt the principle of cooperation and initiating formation and growth of cooperatives, and

Recognising that such voluntary farm organisations can bring about the most needed collaboration between farm women, farm youth, social welfare and rural health organisations committed to work for the advancement of the rural community,

and feeling strongly that such farm organisations can effectively help in bridging the gulf which exists between the Governments and the farmers for tackling the arduous task of rural reconstruction in developing countries.

Resolves that the formation of non-Governmental, non-political and non-sectarian organisations of farmers is the immediate and pressing need of many Afro-Asian countries. It urges upon the Governments concerned that they should give this matter their most serious and urgent consideration, and, where these organisations do not exist, offer the necessary encouragement to farmers and/or take steps to enable them to organise themselves and afford continued assistance, as well as financial assistance in the initial stages, for their growth and healthy development, where they have been formed but have not been able to get over their initial difficulties. This is the

immediate need of all countries for supplementing the efforts of their inadequate Agricultural Extension Agencies which are charged with the task of extending information to farmers and securing their cooperation for running the campaigns launched for rural reconstruction. These farmers' organisations, to be really effective, should be independent of Government control so that they can voice the feelings of their constituents freely. They should also apply themselves fully to taking part in the integrated programme of the development of agriculture as well as rural life. The Governments should give a very high priority to the formation and development of farm organisations so that the progress of agriculture, which is at present facing considerable setbacks, may progress at a quicker pace. Without the active assistance of the Government in this important move, the growth of farm organisations in the coun-

tries may not be as healthy and constructive in their approach as they should.

The Conference further urges upon the Governments of various countries to ensure the effective association of the representatives of farmers with all committees, panels, boards and commissions on agriculture, rural reconstruction, cooperatives and other Coordinated activities, which may be set up by them at the national, State and other levels. They should include the representatives of farmers in as many delegations as possible to international meetings and conferences connected with agriculture and rural Reconstruction, particularly called by the Food and Agriculture Organisation or other international agencies operating in this field. This is the general procedure adopted by the developed countries. The Conference feels that this is the appropriate time when Governments should realise the need of making the farmer an active partner in formulating and initiating all activities connected with his profession as well as his social and cultural life, so that the implementation of any plans and campaigns initiated by the former may be reasonably assured.

The Conference appreciates very much the important role which is

being played by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in focussing the attention of Governments of various countries on problems facing their agriculture and providing them with the knowledge how to get over them. It expresses its heart-felt thanks for co-operation and assistance made available to this Conference by the F.A.O. and hopes that it would intensify its help for setting up farm organisations in the Afro-Asian countries and impress upon Governments to bestow their earnest attention upon this matter. It further urges that the Food and Agriculture Organisation's procedures, through which it may avail itself of the advice of farm

organisations on all important issues which the F.A.O. is engaged in tackling, will be fully taken advantage of and, if necessary, strengthened and refined.

The Conference notes also with satisfaction the useful role which is being played by the I.F.A.P. in bringing about collaboration between farm organisations in more than thirty countries and acting as their voice on the international level. It hopes that as progress is achieved in the establishment of nationally representative farm organisations, more countries will join the Federation. It thanks the I.F.A.P. for their helpful collaboration in making this Conference a success.



A view of the delegates on the opening day

Committee II

Co-operation as a Major Means of Rural Reconstruction in Developing Countries

- i. Scope and State of Development of Cooperative activity.
- ii. Principles—member relations and understanding.
- iii. Organisation and Management Procedures.
 - (a) Member Education and Promotion of Cooperative Laws.
 - (b) Management and Training of Personnel and Business Practices.

The committee felt that many of the agricultural problems confronting Afro-Asian countries, were similar and that their solution lay in increased application of the co-

operative technique. It was recognised that the challenge faced by the cooperative movement in newly developing countries was in many ways novel and more complex than what the movement had been originally devised to meet in the developed countries. The application of cooperative principles and techniques to farming organisation constitutes an important example of this trend.

Scope and State of Development of Cooperative Activity

A view was expressed that the scope of cooperative societies should be widened and increasing emphasis should be laid on their social

purpose. The other view was that the cooperatives had an inherent social content and that instead of making them multipurpose, they should be specialised institutions with single purpose. It was, however, felt that the best judge to determine the multi-or-single purpose nature of the cooperative society should be the members themselves who being aware of their "felt need" would opt for whichever variety they preferred and that no pattern should be imposed upon them.

As a result of statements made by various delegates, it appeared that all countries were conscious of the need to develop and promote cooperative institutions and the

committee noted with satisfaction that the Governments of many countries were sparing no pains to do so and were fully cooperating with the efforts of individuals and non-official organisations in this direction. It was felt that notwithstanding this well-intentioned effort, the stage of development of cooperative activity left much room for progress. It was, therefore, felt that the role of non-official farmers organisations in the promotion of cooperation should be fully recognised and the cooperative movement should be more closely connected with them and draw upon their assistance wherever necessary or possible.

The committee felt that credit expansion could not be an end in itself. It had to lead to increased production and better living conditions for the producers. As the incentives for increased production lay in securing "better returns" for producers, effective marketing procedures and stable price policy became necessary.

As a means to enable the cooperatives to get the advantages of an assured market and further business it was suggested that mutually they should increasingly offer their custom to each other. This activity could be profitably extended to the sphere of foreign trade so that deals could be negotiated well in advance and opportunity could be available to the cooperatives to make outright purchases for their members. It therefore appeared that the role of a coordinating risk-bearing organisation at the national level for export and import could be an important factor in contributing to the success of cooperation.

Principles Member Relations & Understandings

Member relations is the favourable or unfavourable experience that members have with their Co-operative Societies.

Co-operatives bring all sorts of people together who differ widely in their backgrounds, education, social status, religious and economic and political views. Certainly not all of those members are enthusiastic supporters of their organisations. Apathy is a common disease amongst the members of cooperative societies. This turns

members into passive participants and "everybody's business" tends to become "nobody's business."

It has been pointed out that the biggest factor in the relationship between the cooperative and the members is the human equation which involves members, director, managers and employees. So the acceptance that any association enjoys among its members depends on the quality of people it selects to direct, manage and carry on its day-to-day operations.

Success here depends on persuasion to accept the ideals and principles of cooperation, the cooperative programme, policies and procedures. This can be achieved partly by building the reputation of the Cooperative, so that members can trust it as their own. This implies building up the financial stability of the cooperative for nothing succeeds like success. "A sound Balance Sheet is the best public relations instrument." The policies and programmes of cooperatives play a major role in member relations. For the best policies and programmes are those that have brought the greatest satisfaction to the largest number of members.

The dividend that the society pays and the method of the payment to its members has a powerful influence on member relations.

To strengthen and solidify member relations and understanding, cooperatives have to keep in mind.

1. That the co-operative is meeting the expectations of its members.

2. That the cooperative is providing its members with information embracing all facts about the cooperative.

3. That the cooperative is truly democratic and is not Secretary's or manager's cooperative or controlled by the officials.

4. That the payment dividend is made at the appropriate time.

Organization and Management Procedures

- (a) Member Education and Promotion of Cooperative laws
- (b) Management and Training of personnel and Business practices.

The Committee carefully considered the views expressed by delegates from various countries and agreed generally that steps be taken to:

- (i) Infuse cooperative spirit amongst the people,
- (ii) Instil confidence amongst them of the usefulness of practical cooperative services,
- (iii) Create feelings of fraternity between those who serve and administer and those who are served, so that their identities are merged in the service of the movement,
- (iv) employ cooperative techniques by example rather than precept.

In order to initiate these steps the Committee felt that:

- (i) cooperative laws and rules should be liberalised where they are of a restrictive nature,
- (ii) tasks of management should remain in the hands of the members.

It was further felt that for the success of the movement, education of the people, in general and of the members and office-bearers in particular, in managing the affairs of the cooperatives was paramount. In addition to training in book-keeping, accounts, and business practices, the executives and office-bearers should be provided with training facilities in marketing and other types of cooperatives; particularly of a vocational nature, which are likely to be developed in the area. Training at primary level, which is the first rung in the ladder of democracy, is imperative for equipping the members in the techniques of managing affairs of greater responsibility in the future.

The Committee was happy to note that the International Cooperative Alliance, the F.A.O., U.N.E.S.C.O. and other agencies were interested in making studies of trends in agricultural cooperation, aimed at widening the scope of the cooperative movement both vertically and horizontally and felt that research and investigation in this field should be intensified in order to serve the interests of the Afro-Asian countries.

Committee III

Agrarian Reforms

1 The Committee having considered the report of various participating countries and having studied the conditions and problems of Agrarian Organisations in different countries is of the opinion that Agrarian Reforms, namely, changes of the tenure system and nationalisation of the agrarian structure is an essential pre-requisite of agricultural and rural development and is necessary both from the point of view of increasing Agricultural productivity as well as for the attainment of social justice.

2 The Committee feels that, to achieve these twin ends, participating countries should address their minds to the provision of broad programmes of agrarian reforms, which should be concerned with not only land reform as an urgent and preliminary step but also with the scale of operation, the supply of credit needs, marketing facilities and the whole range of incentives, organisations and institutions necessary for the farmers to raise their productivity and to increase their income from the land.

3 The Committee feels that an essential ingredient of any programme of agrarian reforms should be the establishment of a tenurial system which would assure for every cultivator security of tenure and a fair return for his labour, without which he would not have sufficient incentive to increase production.

4 For the provision of such facilities for as great a number of cultivators as possible and for the purpose of increasing agricultural production and of realisation of social justice, Governments should endeavour to bring waste, uncultivated and inefficiently cultivated land under production by distribution to cultivators with no land or insufficient land for their use.

5 The Committee also feels that the holdings provided should be made economic units for purposes of cultivation and should be such as to provide sufficient income for the realisation of a decent and reasonable standard of living for the farmers. Where the units are small the agrarian reforms should include the encouragement of cooperative activity and also be concerned with forms of cooperative operations and the provision of cooperative services which will enable the rational and economic exploitation of land.

6 But these reforms of tenure and size of holdings are not enough unless they are accompanied by the creation of facilities for adequate and cheap agricultural credit, marketing and storage facilities, extension services and the provision of agricultural supplies, supported by a balanced resettlement plan. The Committee feels that in the context of the conditions prevailing in the countries of this region, these services should be provided wherever

possible through cooperative agencies. This Committee notes that in many countries the provision of these services has lagged behind the execution of land reforms. It, therefore, stresses the need for an urgent and rapid expansion of these services.

7 The Committee would also like to stress that agrarian reform in itself would not solve the problems of rural over-population and low income. Therefore, Agrarian Reforms should proceed as part of an integrated programme of economic and industrial development.

8 Realising the great diversity of conditions and problems in the countries in this vast region, the Committee would like to stress the need for more specialized and detailed studies of the conditions and needs of each country in relation to land reforms. It, therefore, welcomes the proposal of the F.A.O. to set up a Regional Research Institute for Agrarian Reform in South-East Asia and requests the F.A.O. to consider the possibility of establishment of similar institutions and organisations in other areas of Africa and Asia. It is also noted that most countries in Asia have been coming out with land reforms of various kind and would like to impress upon governments of Africa the need to introduce reforms which would have the effect of transforming the tribal system of land into individual ownership.

Committee IV

Freedom from Hunger Campaign

The Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Reconstruction after,

considering very carefully the causes which are seriously hampering the progress of agriculture and rural reconstruction in most countries of Africa and Asia,

and feeling convinced that Freedom from Hunger and mal-nutrition is

the basic need of the people in those countries to build their energy and reconstruct their economy,

and realising that this could be possible to a large extent only by creating more food by raising the output from land, proper distribution, saving food and damage and waste and changing the food habits of the people.

Welcomes the Freedom from Hunger Campaign initiated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations which has focussed the attention of various nations to this serious problem and brought home to them the urgent need for a concerted action by the Governments and the people,

(Continued on page 12)

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and

Resolves that this timely move of the FAO has the full support of this Conference which if properly directed in the Afro-Asian countries, should help in diverting materially the attention of all concerned towards the gravity of this urgent problem and the need for taking immediate and strong action in combating hunger. The conference, feels that the magnitude of the problem is so great that Governments concerned must ensure the full co-operation of farmers and other people in achieving the desired targets. The Conference urges upon the Governments concerned to provide all possible assistance, encouragement, recognition and incentives to farmers to produce more by ensuring proper marketing of their produce at reasonable and remunerative prices. This factor which may serve to revitalise the whole agricultural situation, is at present lacking in most Afro-Asian Countries and needs an immediate and careful solution.

This Conference notes with satisfaction that, as a call from the FAO, most countries have constituted their National Freedom from Hunger Campaign Committees. It requests other countries, which have not done this so far, to con-

stitute these committees as early as possible so that action programmes for individual areas may be launched without any loss of time. The Conference, however, feels that the best and more fruitful results from the campaign could be expected if they were run by the people themselves with the full assistance and co-operation of the officials of the Governments. If the campaign becomes yet another apendage of extension agency of the Governments, it may hardly serve the desired purpose and may fail to achieve the aim for which it is being launched.

The F.A.O. has already drawn the attention of the Governments to this important point by making the initial effort to secure the cooperation of the non-governmental organizations. It is necessary that these activities should be organized with the fullest collaboration of the non-governmental agencies in all countries. It is further necessary that all agricultural producers or commodity organizations of various countries should be closely associated with the campaign. The need is that such committees should consist of a fair number of representatives of these organizations. It may be further beneficial to have Advisory Committees on the national level

which may consist of representatives of all non-governmental organizations active in the field.

The Conference further feels that as the major field of operation of the campaign lies in the two Continents of Africa and Asia, the collective views of the countries in these regions should be made available to the FAO from time to time, so that it may be possible for the latter to make a correct assessment of the situation. This Conference proposes to discuss this subject during its successive sessions but it considers it highly desirable that an Advisory Committee composed mostly of the non-governmental organisations in various countries of Africa and Asia be also formed to tender advice on important matters.

The Conference notes with satisfaction the creation of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign Fund for which an appeal has been made by the FAO. It requests the Governments to make appropriate contributions to this fund so that it could be possible to run the action programmes in an efficient manner. It also calls upon all farm and other non-governmental organizations in the Afro-Asian countries to realise the need for collecting similar funds at their level so that they could successfully run their programmes to achieve the desired results.

SEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF FARMERS

Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy to Inaugurate

The Seventh National Convention of Farmers will be held, as scheduled, at Calcutta, from February 15, to 18, 1961.

The Convention will be inaugurated by Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy, President, Indian National Congress, on February 16, 1961.

Shri Shriman Narayan, Member, (Agriculture) Planning Commission, will inaugurate the Eleventh Meeting of the All India Farmers' Council on February 15, 1961.

All members of the Bharat Krishak Samaj are requested to inform the date and time of their arrival in Calcutta, sufficiently in advance to the Secretary, C/o National Agriculture Fair, Taratala Road, Alipur, Calcutta 27.

Gram : "Farmforum" Calcutta telephone number 45-5817