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AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Resolution Approved 16 June 1951

THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA,

HAVING CONSIDERED the section of the Economic Survey of Latin America 1950 (E/CN.12/217) dealing with agriculture;

CONSIDERING that, during the agricultural year 1949-1950, the per capita quantum of production of the region's principal crops was only 87 per cent of the pre-war levels and that the ratio between the total area harvested and the population does not show any improvement in the majority of countries;

CONSIDERING that although some progress in the total agricultural production of the Latin American countries over the pre-war period can be noted, this progress is still very slow because greater attention was paid during the war and is still being paid to other sectors of the economy;

CONSIDERING that it is important that the agricultural development of the region should be stimulated by devoting the

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greatest possible attention to such development and by making available modern technical skills in order to obviate any lack of balance with the growing industrialization to be observed in Latin America;

CONSIDERING that industrial development tends to increase the urban population which, through its greater earnings, increases the pressure of demand, and that this demand, if it is not satisfied by greater production, not only causes a rise in prices -- as has occurred in many countries -- but also creates an atmosphere in which social disturbances might arise;

CONSIDERING that standards for general application cannot be recommended because the factors affecting agricultural and stock raising development are varied and differ from one country to another, in accordance with their specific ecological characteristics;

CONSIDERING that it is a primary and immediately essential obligation to supply the people with food; and

CONSIDERING that the governments of member states should pay increasing attention to agricultural problems and to all those factors which exercise a direct and decisive influence upon the improvement of agriculture;

1. TAKES NOTE of the section of the Economic Survey of Latin America 1950 (E/CN.12/217) dealing with agriculture;

2. RECOMMENDS that member governments should take inter alia the following measures in the technical field:

/(a) Perfect

- (a) Perfect the methods of professional training of agronomists, who are responsible for applying technical knowledge to farming;
- (b) Make a soil survey of their countries in order to obtain full knowledge of their soils and thus to be in a position to determine their special usefulness in accordance with their principal characteristics, since without such surveys, programmes of improvement, studies of production targets and similar subjects are unreliable;
- (c) Co-operate with existing or projected experimental stations;
- (d) Expand and improve state agricultural extension services;
- (e) Create soil and water conservation services;
- (f) Expand entomological and botanical plant treatment services and enact plant health legislation in such a way that application may be effective, and even drastic if the general interest of the country so requires;
- (g) Encourage farm mechanization, and co-operative methods designed to facilitate it;
- (h) Spread knowledge of the correct use of fertilizers and study the best methods of enabling the farmer to obtain them in due time and as cheaply as possible;
- (i) Enact legislation to protect the farmer by ensuring that the fertilizers or preparations he acquires in fact contain the guaranteed minimum content of nutritive elements and that their price is in conformity with the accepted values of plant foods;

/(j) Stimulate

(j) Stimulate irrigation and communications; and

(k) Give technical and economic assistance to stock raising generally;

3. RECOMMENDS to the governments of member states that they should study the serious problem of the way in which the land is now held, with a view to obtaining a better utilization of land, bearing in mind Resolution 401 (V) of the General Assembly adopted at its 312th plenary session of 20 November 1950;

4. URGES member governments to examine existing conditions of trade and distribution in products of agriculture and stock raising, in order to eliminate the intervention of those intermediaries which serve no social purpose other than that of increasing the price of those products;

5. REQUESTS the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the FAO to grant to governments of member states adequate technical assistance for the integrated development of agriculture in the fulfillment of the relevant portions of the foregoing resolutions;

6. RECOMMENDS that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development pay effective and timely attention to agricultural development projects.