

that measures taken by countries having surpluses to dispose of should be framed with due regard to the interests of other countries. As a result of its debate the Conference requested the Committee on Commodity Problems to establish a Working Party to study the problem of the disposal of agricultural surpluses.

The Working Party, which included Representatives of Argentina, Egypt, France, India, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, met in Washington during the early part of 1954. Its Report discussed a number of special measures which might be employed for the temporary disposal of surpluses, but drew attention to the importance of price adjustments as a means of clearing the market and bringing about necessary changes in production. It also suggested that the Committee on Commodity Problems might establish a Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal. This Sub-Committee would help the Committee on Commodity Problems in considering means of giving assistance to member nations in the development of suitable means of surplus disposal and of promoting the observance of the principles recommended by the Conference, in order to avoid harmful interference with normal patterns of production and international trade. The Working Party concluded that the basic long-term solution of the surplus problem was to be found first in "higher levels of consumption through increased incomes, particularly in the less developed areas", second in "increased demand resulting from the growth of population", and third in "adjustments of production through selective expansion and the adaptation of farm production to changing needs".

The seventh session of the Conference, in addition to discussing the general question of world food production and marketing problems, reviewed the entire range of FAO's work in agriculture, nutrition, forestry and fisheries for 1952-53 and approved the programmes and budgets for 1954 and 1955.³

Technical assistance, under both the regular budget and the Expanded Programme, continued to be one of the major activities of FAO. Indeed, the Director-General in his report to the Conference, stated that "What . . . made it possible for the Organization to fill the role originally envisaged was the inauguration of the Technical Assistance Program in 1949. This has provided the spearhead of FAO's action work and enabled it to apply to the problems of individual countries the experience gained from collecting and disseminating information, in making forward appraisals, in organizing intergovernmental action and bringing modern scientific knowledge to the producer on the land." Steps were taken during 1953-54 to bring about the consolidation and intensification of existing activities. The quality of the assistance provided was improved as a result of accumulated experience and the gradual shift from preliminary investigation and initial planning to participation in operational undertakings. Increased emphasis was put on the training of the nationals of the countries receiving assistance, through training centres and by the provision of fellowships. During 1953 there were 624 technical experts, recruited from 54 different coun-

³For a general account of the work of FAO, see *External Affairs*, Monthly Bulletin of the Department of External Affairs, July 1954, pp. 230-34.