

External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

No. 61/20 Proposal to Establish a "World Food Programme"

Statement made by Mr. Gordon Aiken, M.P.,
Representative of Canada in the Second Committee
of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

I should like to open my remarks with an expression of my Delegation's sincere appreciation for the generosity of the Committee in agreeing to proceed today with consideration of this urgent and important item.

I should like, secondly, to offer the congratulations of my Delegation to the distinguished Secretary-General and to the distinguished Director-General of the FAO for the stimulating and challenging addresses with which they so fittingly introduced the discussion of the World Food Programme.

We are today embarking on the final stage of our journey, begun a year ago, to develop a new international and multilateral approach to the tragic problems of hunger and malnutrition in so many parts of the world. Let us rise to our responsibility and press on to achieve something truly effective and worthy of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman, this is a particularly happy day for my Delegation, which is privileged to recall the proposal made on September 26, 1960, by the Prime Minister of Canada, the Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, to the General Assembly for the creation of a World Food Bank.

Members of this Committee are already aware of the action taken at the 1961 Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome. Acting on developments set in motion by General Assembly Resolution 1496 (XV), the Conference established the outlines of an initial experimental three-year programme. This programme, and the means to put it into operation, are our primary concern today.

Turning now to the draft resolution contained in Document A/C.2/L.617 sponsored by Cameroun, Denmark, Liberia, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, USA and ourselves, I would like to refer firstly to the annex attached to the resolution. This annex contains the principles unanimously adopted by the entire membership of the FAO, which includes the vast majority of the countries represented here today. These principles were the result of four weeks of diligent effort at FAO to arrive at a workable and effective programme. For this reason, we have in the first operative paragraph of the resolution proposed that this Assembly accept the principles agreed upon by the FAO, and in so doing approve the establishment of the World Food Programme. Shortly stated, the resolution provides for the establishment of an initial experimental programme for three years of approximately \$100 million contributed on a voluntary basis, to be undertaken jointly by the UN and the FAO with the co-operation of appropriate inter-governmental bodies. The plan provides for contributions in the form of appropriate commodities, acceptable services and cash.