

A P P E N D I X

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

NUTRITION AND FOOD MANAGEMENT

I. International Surveys by FAO of Existing Conditions

Statistics: The committee notes that "good national food management largely consists of political and administrative skill in applying scientific and statistical knowledge to the improvement of human nutrition and agriculture." Knowledge of consumption habits and nutritional status as well as statistics of acreages, import stocks, prices, etc., are essential.

Hence the committee recommends:

That detailed studies of the techniques of measuring and comparing the food consumption and nutritional status of the western and less developed countries be undertaken by FAO and that particular attention be paid to the type of statistical materials required.

Immediate steps to meet urgent problems: Attention of the delegates at the conference is expected to be focused on immediate steps to meet the most urgent problems of malnutrition, especially in the less developed countries. The committee gives greatest urgency to measures affecting the vulnerable groups - i.e., those people who are most subject to physiological stresses and strain and who are least able to obtain for themselves the right kind of food.

The group includes expectant mothers, nursing women, pre-school and school age children, adolescents, the very poor, workers in industrial countries and native labour in tropical and colonial territories. In pre-war Austria the sickness insurance institutions found that special attention had to be paid to the health and nutrition of adolescent apprentices in order to prevent sickness and breakdown when they became workers. Methods used included summer vacations with abundant good food, fresh air, rest and medical attention. Britain during the war made provision for extra foods for this group.

In seven years the mortality of a group of native workers in the Belgian Congo fell from 53 to eight per 1,000 as a result of improvements in feeding and housing.

Measures taken by various countries include direct distribution of food supplies, food-stamp plans, cash relief allowances, school and in-plant feeding schemes, etc.

The committee recommends:

That FAO arrange for a detailed study of special food distribution schemes for vulnerable groups and for a study of the relative values of cash allowances versus food-in-kind relief programs.

Methods of transporting and preserving foodstuffs: Great progress has been made during wartime in the transport and preservation of foodstuffs. The test of a product or program, however, was, "Will it help the war?" rather than, "What will it cost?"

Problems like these arise: "Can a cheaper winter egg or milk supply be obtained by using a dried product produced in the season of peak production?" ... "What are the economic and nutritive values of fresh green winter vegetables as compared with quick-frozen?"