

M I S C E L L A N E O U S

THE FREEDOM FROM HUNGER CAMPAIGN

The International Review has mentioned in previous numbers the world campaign undertaken by F.A.O., an action on a world scale of which the recent developments are here described by Mr. B. R. Sen, Director-General of that organization :

The first half of the twentieth century has witnessed three major revolutions. The political revolution has given self-government to nearly a third of the world's population and has brought their aspirations for a better life to the forefront of world attention. The revolution in communications has broken down the barriers of distance and language, and the dynamism of ideas can no longer be contained within the limits dictated by social privilege or political considerations. The demographic revolution has imparted to the challenge of poverty and want a new dimension.

It is against this background that the Freedom from Hunger Campaign was launched in 1960 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Its main objectives are two-fold : first, to create a world-wide awareness of the problems of hunger and malnutrition which afflict more than a half of the world's population and which, apart from the human suffering and human degradation that they involve, pose a serious threat to peace and orderly progress, and second, to promote a climate of opinion in which solutions to these problems can be organized both on a national and on an international basis.

In the short time since its launching, the Campaign has already provided a focus for co-operative endeavor for international organizations, national governments, nongovernmental organizations and various citizens' groups all over the world. The 104 Mem-

ber Nations attending the biennial session of the FAO Conference in November 1961 paid unanimous tribute to the significance of this Campaign for the future well-being of the world.

The Freedom from Hunger Campaign attempts to attack the problem of hunger on a broad front and at all levels of economic and social thought and action ; but for practical purposes, it defines three sectors of operation : (a) information and education, (b) research, and (c) action.

The information and education sector will help bring to citizens everywhere a living awareness of the concrete facts and issues, and provide bases for deciding what new national and international policies and action programs are needed. This effort to create informed and active awareness will rise to a climax with the World Food Congress to be held under FAO auspices in 1963. Many international professional and citizens' groups hold forums on Campaign issues. Many national Campaign Committees also organize similar discussions. Representatives from all these bodies are expected to participate in the World Food Congress and help bring into focus policies and action plans for the future.

In order to help communities and individuals to examine the great problems involved, FAO and other international organizations taking part in the Freedom from Hunger Campaign have prepared and now produced a series of studies whose purpose it is to summarize the conclusions reached by the experts. One of these studies entitled, Education and Training in nutrition, of which we give the following extracts, emphasizes the need for reserving a place for education in national campaigns against hunger and malnutrition.

Many countries today are drawing up long-term programs for agricultural and economic development. Programs of education and training in nutrition form an essential part of these comprehensive programs, for a large part of the world suffers from malnutrition and millions still do not have enough to eat.

In more than 20 countries, experience has demonstrated that programs of education in nutrition, combined with teaching improved methods of food production and with feeding programs to encourage better habits of diet, can lead to the more efficient

use of present food supplies. Education in nutrition also facilitates the optimum use of additional food supplies made available through increased agricultural production, improved methods of food processing and marketing, or the donation of foods by surplus producing countries. As a result of improved food habits, the well-being and productivity of the population are increased.

Time and effort are usually necessary to accomplish desired changes in food habits. The individual and the family must be reached and influenced through teaching, demonstration and example. Experience indicates that persons who are known and trusted by the people make the best teachers. Programs of education in nutrition may, therefore, be carried out most effectively through established channels—by the schoolteacher, agricultural extension worker, home economist, health worker and community leader—if they are provided with adequate training and supervision.

In order to provide leaders and workers in the field of nutrition, continued and increased assistance is needed in the following forms : additional fellowships for senior personnel ; professorships and lectureships in nutrition at the universities, colleges and centers where agriculturists, teachers, food technologists, home economists, health and community workers are trained ; adequate library and laboratory facilities. Field programs must be strengthened and expanded to provide trainees with field experience and supervised practice in teaching. Teaching materials and texts on nutrition must be developed and produced in quantity.

If man is to learn how to free himself from hunger and malnutrition, the rate of both technical and material aid to programs of education and training in nutrition must be accelerated.