

RADIO FREE EUROPE *Research*

COMMUNIST AREA

EE & USSR: Agriculture

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EXPANSION IN FAO: OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE

With the admission of Hungary and Bulgaria as members of the Food and Agriculture Organization, all nations in Eastern Europe save Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Albania now belong to the agricultural agency of the United Nations. The only requirement for FAO membership is that a country must belong to the United Nations and contribute in part to the upkeep of the organization.

As the 14th biennial conference of the FAO, now in a three weeks session in Rome, large delegations headed by cabinet-level officials of Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Bulgaria are participating in the agenda of discussions, planning the operations of the agricultural body of the U.N. for the coming two years.

The activities of FAO are worldwide and numerous: the collection and dissemination of statistics on all phases of agricultural activity in every nation where data are available; the introduction of modern technology in the agriculture of nations requesting such assistance through pilot projects and large-scale experimentation; organization of studies and planning for the development of entire regions of a country; and, beyond that, to regional integrated planning embracing several countries such as a Mediterranean basin agricultural development project. Lastly, and most important, the FAO is the recognized leader in the war on hunger in the developing countries of the world, "a war that will require a massive, imaginative, long-range effort unprecedented in human history... Mutual help is the basic tenet of commitment to FAO. No one nation, no single people, no organization can win this war on hunger."¹

Thus, while member nations can benefit from the services FAO offers there are, on the other hand, responsibilities in

1) Statement of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Orville E. Freeman, 7 November 1967 at FAO meeting, Rome.

assisting the developing nations in closing the economic gap that separates so many of them from the western world.

The admission of Hungary and Bulgaria to membership in FAO is indicative of the higher priority now accorded to agriculture in these nations. It is also a recognition of the great voice biological and agricultural scientists are now accorded in the development of their national economies.

From Greece to Poland there is now a contiguous block of countries with similar agricultural problems. Given the FAO's lead in multi-area planning and development it is not unlikely that such regional integrated planning might be conducted in the future. Marshal Tito once thought in terms of a Balkan Federation; a Balkan area plan for development of agriculture appears more feasible.

EXPLANES IN FAO: OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE

The non-participation of the CSSR and the Soviet Union in FAO is due to their own decisions. By their actions they disassociate themselves from a long-range, coordinated global development effort in concert with other developed nations, international organizations, and the less-developed world to raise the economic level of poor nations so as to win the war on hunger and thereby exorcise a spectre that has haunted man since the dawn of time.

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