

# F. A. S. PUBLIC INTEREST REPORT

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THIS ISSUE:

WORLD FOOD RESERVES

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## NEGOTIATING WORLD FOOD RESERVES: PRESS ON

The world has no organized method of reserving grain against the threat of poor harvests. In this sense, civilized man is as prey to the vagaries of the weather as were our Biblical ancestors. Indeed, the Bible reports that at least some states understood at some times the importance of storing grain in good times against bad ones. Most modern states are less astute. During the last thirty years, American surpluses taught them not to worry about reserves of their own. Their policies have not yet noticed that American surpluses are gone.

It is a hell of a way to run a world. A failure of the monsoon in South Asia could, in a world without food reserves, imperil millions. And less dramatic perturbations in other areas could, and recently did, send food prices soaring. The food prices place a modern equivalent of famine — nutritional stress — on the many millions of impoverished persons; their increase in death rates and in retarded development can be measured.

Governments in the less developed world would prefer the added stability of supply and price which international reserves would provide. Limitations on upward price fluctuations permit them to budget their

foreign exchange. And, of course, assurance of supply protects their citizens.

Governments of most developed nations favor international food reserves for similar reasons. The spiraling effects of the inflation that higher food prices can bring are especially clear to them. And a system of reserves would support the prices which their politically powerful farm groups want, by absorbing grain in times of surplus.

Who dissents? The Russians are, as usual, reluctant to enter into international agreements of this kind. And they are used to believing that they can purchase American food surpluses without difficulty. Since their crop failures have been the largest perturbation in production trends, this is an important obstacle.

But the most powerful opposition lies at home: the American grain farmer, and his traditional spokesman, the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The grain farmer believes that virtually any kind of stocks or reserves are price depressants. When he supports government accumulation of stocks — and he does periodically — it is only in extremis when surpluses

—Continued on page 2

## WHO'S IN CHARGE OF AGRICULTURE POLICY?

Just as the preferences of the Pentagon dominate arms policy, and the traditions of the American doctor delimit health policy, so do the demands of the American farmer determine agriculture policy. What the grain farmers want is simple: government price supports when grain surplus looms and government non-interference when prices soar. These farmers are, in effect, socialists on the bottom and windfall capitalists on the top.

In agriculture policy, the political power of this 5% of our population exceeds that of all the rest of the population: the consumer. To take one example, notwithstanding the terrific consumer concern over rising food prices since the Soviet wheat deal, the President asserted in April, 1976:

"I have no intention of withholding export sales of agricultural commodities for cost-of-living purposes in the U.S. — none whatsoever."

To take another example, if they come from wheat growing states, the most conservative congressmen and senators — men who could not be less sensitive to the humanitarian imperatives of our foreign policy — will often support P.L. 480 (food for peace). Why? Because this gigantic "giveaway" program secures its needs by buying wheat from the farmer. So also for food stamp programs. Anything to create more demand and higher prices.

Most recently, the farmer's political power has been used to eviscerate the American plan for world food reserves. USDA first watered down the U.S. proposal, then began whispering that it was unworkable, and now high officials call the whole matter "a dead issue" because of the "wide range of opinion" on the subject.

But opinion is not in fact so wide. With isolated exceptions, of which America is one, the poor countries and the rich both want a world food reserve system that will help stabilize prices. This is indeed what is needed. The more dramatic food reserve designed against famine alone, being much smaller, need not be organized in such a multilateral and complicated fashion. At the other extreme, the problems which may indeed be arising due to climate change, or to a losing race between population and food production, are too large and persistent anyway to be much ameliorated by storing grain in good times for use in bad.

But in between these two cases there remain the problems of year-to-year fluctuations in supply, demand, and price. These fluctuations are very disruptive of economic policy, of financial planning and of nutritional requirements. And the degree of their disruption would be greatly minimized by the existence of a buffer stock of international reserves. □

already exist. Then he sees the Government purchasing for the agreeable purpose of supporting the price. What he regrets is the possibility that the accumulated reserves will be put on the market when prices are high to prevent them from going still higher.

Two years ago, the Ford Administration began to resist this pressure. Responding to a proposal for world food security of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), it agreed to cooperate. Many months later, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of State agreed on the outlines of a proposal. After its presentation, USDA began backing away from the plan. It is crystal clear that no international reserves will come into being without renewed and sustained presidential pressure.

The case for this effort goes well beyond the moral imperative of feeding the hungry if crops fail. Precisely because of the U.S.'s giant role in grain export, swings in world food prices can produce a whipping of low and high domestic food prices. Food is 25% of the U.S. cost of living. Because the cost-of-living index is built into the wage-price spiral, sudden spurts in food prices can temporarily enrich the farmer at the cost of, among other things, permanently diminishing the savings of all American citizens. More generally, a food-induced spurt in inflation can require Government controls that induce recession, the costs of which are immeasurably large.

Even the grain farmers' best narrow interests are well served by international food reserves. Without reserves agricultural protectionism is encouraged because exporters cannot guarantee supply and importers may decide to grow their own. Thus the American grain farmer's desire for trade liberalization to expand the dimensions of his market is assisted by the existence of world reserves.

In any case, reserves cannot be amassed until relative surpluses are available. And at that point, the farmer will be reasonably sympathetic to reserves simply as a way of absorbing part of the surplus. His only alternative would be acreage allotments to hold down production. What we must all oppose is this kind of cutting down of production until such time as reasonable grain reserves are reconstructed.

The world knows that the only alternative to an international reserve system is a unilateral American grain reserve. If America is to avoid returning to precisely this role, it must quickly press on with negotiating an international set of reserves, so that this structure will be available when the surpluses begin to arise.

One does not have to believe that the climate is changing, or that an era of scarcity is upon us, to foresee the inevitable political problems that are associated with hand-to-mouth existence: determining who will get scarce food, choosing between the hungry and the rich, coping with consumer revolts at home, avoiding disruption of our meat industry, preventing Soviet raids on tight markets, and so on.

Confronting, now, the unreal fears of the American farmer is likely to be a lot easier than waiting to confront the real problems of just about everyone else. □

—Reviewed and Approved by the FAS National Council

## A DISSENT

One Council Member, Dr. Garrett Hardin, could not approve this editorial's endorsement of grain reserves. He argued that such reserves represented a replication of the tragedy of the commons, a tragedy that could only be avoided by a kind of "lifeboat ethics" precluding such sharing. A failure to recognize this fact, he felt, would lead only to still greater tragedy as nations were encouraged and permitted to ignore the consequences of overpopulation.

Two other Council members, supported the editorial because the grain reserves discussed were designed to overcome temporary fluctuations and to do so on an internationally shared basis. But they observed that America should not attempt to do still more — that is unilaterally to provide grain to nations whose difficulties were both serious and continuing.

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## FOOD RESERVES — THE HOPES AND FEARS RESPECTIVELY OF THE STATE DEPT. AND USDA

As figure 1 shows, the United States Government held stocks of wheat for almost a quarter century. These were happily liquidated by the Nixon Administration in the Soviet wheat deal. This ended a period in which America had unilaterally provided the world with three distinct kinds of agricultural backstopping. The surpluses themselves had represented reserves in being. In addition, America had provided potential food reserves in acreage allotment schemes that held production down artificially. And it had also provided direct aid to countries that needed help but could ill afford it through P.L. 480 shipments of concessional food aid.

All three of these humanitarian functions undertaken by America, while wholly consistent with its ideals, were in fact motivated by the political muscle of its farmers. As President Ford has put this fundamental fact of American political life: "Although farmers represent five to six percent of our total population, they are tremendously important and a productive part of our society. Their views on legislation must be taken into account."

### Surpluses Are Gone

Now there are no surpluses. There is no acreage kept out of production, and little grain available for P.L. 480 shipments. With world food stocks depleted, a worrisome series of years of unsatisfactory weather, and growing needs of less well developed importing nations, the world requires famine reserves and it needs sufficient buffer stocks to prevent wild price swings. Now the need is here and the solutions are gone.

The main obstacle lies in the attitudes of the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Department officially takes an "O.K. but" position:

"Food stocks are needed and they will benefit the entire world, but how large they should be, who should hold them, who should pay for them, and how they should be managed are complex subjects. The need for a minimum level of stock is obvious. The need for larger stocks should be carefully considered. While their advantages are obvious, their disadvantages are less obvious but also significant. The management of such large stocks would have a major impact on food production and prices."

The caution of U.S. and other national agricultural authorities is well understood by FAO. One of its articles on this subject observed:

"however satisfying to the logical mind, global schemes based upon some degree of surrender of national sovereignty and interests have so often failed to clear even the first hurdles of international negotiation that a less ambitious approach was clearly essential."

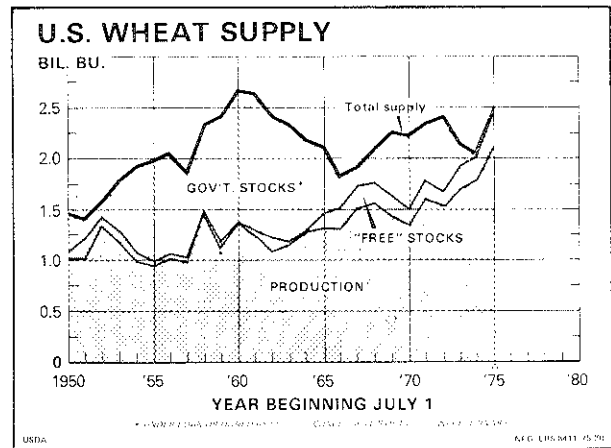
With this in mind, FAO's Director-General put forward a proposal in November 1973 for an "International Undertaking on World Food Security" that put as little pressure on individual countries as one could imagine.

Member governments would undertake only:

"To follow national stock policies which, in combination, maintain at least a minimum safe level of basic food stocks for the world as a whole."

They were to be left to be free to hold their stocks as they wanted.

This has been repeatedly emphasized. For example, on



September 18, 1974, President Ford said we were prepared to join in a "world-wide effort to negotiate, establish, and maintain an international system of food reserves. But each nation must determine for itself how it manages its reserves." This emphasis arises from the hostility of American grain farmers to "government-held" reserves. Thus, he advised the Newspaper Farm Editors of America on April 27, 1976, that:

"Our plan is to have this reserve held privately, and not in government hands. I don't believe we should accumulate in the hands of government vast reserves that in effect over-hang the market."

What does "held privately" mean? Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz talks of a safe dual reserve in the form of privately owned grain and the ability of farmers to cut back on the grain they need to feed livestock. Saying we had a reserve policy that was working "exceptionally well" he observed:

"Today, instead of a government eagle stamped on the steel grain bins scattered across the country, you see a private trademark or an individual farmer's name — that's the real difference."

### Privately Held Quantities Don't Add Stabilization

But the privately held quantities do not represent any added stabilization of the market; they are simply part of the market. They are accumulated and dispersed in accordance with normal commercial expectations. Only governments can plan for the commercially unexpected poor (or abundant) period or the period far off the commercial trade horizon. And hence only government reserves can be useful supplements to commercial trade in stabilizing price in these extremes.

The second reserve of which Mr. Butz speaks — that inherent in the ability to cut back on livestock feeding — is a food reserve only in the sense that human fat is a food reserve for starving humans. In effect, Mr. Butz is suggesting that we permit high price swings, and foreign demand, to threaten our meat and dairy industry. Is it not nonsense to equate an international reserve that would protect these industries by avoiding high price gyrations with a "privately-held reserve" that is, in effect, the damaging destruction of these industries?

There may be new ways to subsidize private traders to hold stocks on a long-term basis, in available quantities consistent with the U.S. proposal for international food reserves. But they have not yet been invented. So far, the talk of privately held reserves is simply the kind of agreeable double talk that farmers like to hear, and that Secretary Butz likes to provide them.

## THE U.S. PROPOSAL

Subsequent to President Ford's September 18, 1974 speech, Secretary Kissinger spelled out U.S. desires in an address to the World Food Conference. The U.S. wanted all major exporters as well as the largest importers included. (This means in particular that if the Soviet Union did not participate, we would not be obliged to persist). It wanted exchanges of information on levels of reserve and working stocks, on crop prospects and on import-export intentions. (Here again the United States would be able to withdraw if, as seems likely, the Soviet Union and perhaps China were unwilling to provide such information). However, as an encouragement to states to participate, there would be preference for them. Thus, in principle, if the Soviet Union did not participate, exporters would combine to deny it sales of grain until others were satisfied.

How difficult this denial would be can be easily imagined. There would be loud outcries from farmers who would see the denial of a ready and wealthy buyer as holding down prices. (Sixty percent of American wheat is exported). As President Ford put it during his campaign for renomination:

"I have said and I have repeated in Illinois, Wisconsin and Texas that I will never use the export of our agricultural commodities as a pawn in international relations."

### Size of Reserves

In deciding on the size of the reserves, the Department of State argued for 60 million tons, but USDA thought of this as too likely to depress prices. Thirty million tons was agreed, 25 million to be wheat and the other 5 million rice. This was estimated to cover 92.5 percent of projected shortfalls from the world production trend. According to the U.S. plan, America would hold about 20% of this reserve (six million tons), the Soviet Union about 15%, and the European Community about 14%. The People's Republic of China, if it participated, would hold about 6%; most experts expect it to avoid the enormous requirements associated with famines before the creation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. (It may become a modest exporter).

### Department of Agriculture Pessimistic

The key issue in any plan for world food reserves lies in the rules with which the reserves are to be accumulated and released. The obvious method is to buy when grain is selling for low prices and sell when it is expensive. The price is, after all, the most plausible signal of grain availability. Grain sells for low prices when it is in surplus, and for high prices when it is scarce; prices are the market's appraisal of whether shortage is impending or not — which is what any world reserve scheme wants to know.

However, the Department of Agriculture is intensely and uniformly opposed to using price as a trigger. Its experience with such arrangements left it badly burnt. It feels that it was forced to buy up more surpluses than warranted under the international Grains Agreement (1967) while other states with various price-avoidance schemes were able to achieve their farm goals while circumventing the agreement. Price schemes leave it at a "distinct disadvantage." Indeed, it considers that most of the eight different international wheat agreements have

## RESERVES ACADEMIC

**Senator Bellmon:** I think that we need to keep in mind that in this country annually we feed 5 or 6 billion bushels of grain to animals and that constitutes a tremendous reserve. All we have to do to get that grain available for people is to let the price go up to the point that it is not economic to feed it to animals and it is all available for human consumption. There is a reserve of billions of bushels that does not cost the Government or anybody else a dime. It is there anytime the people want it. We take it away from the chickens and the pigs and the cattle and it is available for human consumption.

So the whole talk about reserves, as far as I am concerned, is somewhat academic.

—May 1, 1975

failed within months or a few years to do what was expected of them.

Politically, as well as technically, price triggers raised the specter that the Department fears most: the price depressant effects of reserves. It has become axiomatic in the Department that there is no way to maintain reserves without depressing prices in some fashion or other.

For these reasons, when the Department acquiesced in State Department pressure to put forward some kind of world reserve plan, the plan proposed that the trigger be based on *quantity*. The notion was simple: when production went above the trend line, the reserves would be increased. When production was below the trend, the reserves would be made available.

Under this scheme there was not, in theory, any necessary limitation on price at all. Price is determined by supply and demand. It has no necessary connection with production trends. For example, if supply were above production trends, but demand even higher, prices would be rising even while the reserve system was buying up "trend surpluses" — and in so doing adding to the pres-

—Continued on page 5

## USDA LAUDS INSTABILITY

Instability also plays an important role in encouraging efficiency throughout the economy. Economists agree that one of the significant factors in recent price inflation has been the long-term boom. Consumer demand has been so strong that companies — and farms — have felt less pressure to sharpen their management pencils.

"Stability" does not achieve such results. It delays them, discourages them, sometimes even precludes them. Price changes do not cause instability; they help correct it.

It is nonsensical to talk of "stability" in farm commodities today except in an international setting. And who is it that would have the authority of omniscience to impose stability world-wide? And would the shortcomings and costs of international stability be any less significant than those incurred domestically? Of course not, for the same economic principles apply.

—From Speech of Clayton K. Yeutter, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture; May 1, 1975

Continued from page 4

sure on prices. Thus it would be purchasing when there was not any real surplus, but only an improvement over historical production expectations.

The anomalies of this scheme became apparent to the Department after the proposal was made. Now some of its experts say it is "not sure that the quantity method can be made to work." More generally, it sees no other scheme in sight. One official observes it is:

"not possible as yet to foresee participants being able to agree on a continuing basis as to what constitutes a situation for building of stocks or letting them be drawn down.

"None of us, as technicians see much possibility of setting up any kind of rules Governments could agree to."

Thus the effort to find a suitable mechanism to run the reserves is just as far away or further than it was when the scheme was proposed.

The State Department — which needed eight months to agree with USDA on four pages of general explanatory discussion of the U.S. proposal — is not unhappy about the quantity trigger. It feels that quantitative production trends will be highly correlated with price anyway. And there is a general feeling, in State, European Economic Community circles, and among outside observers, that a compromise could be worked out between the U.S. emphasis on quantity triggers and the desires of almost everyone else for price triggers. In effect, both kinds of indicators could be used in some combination.

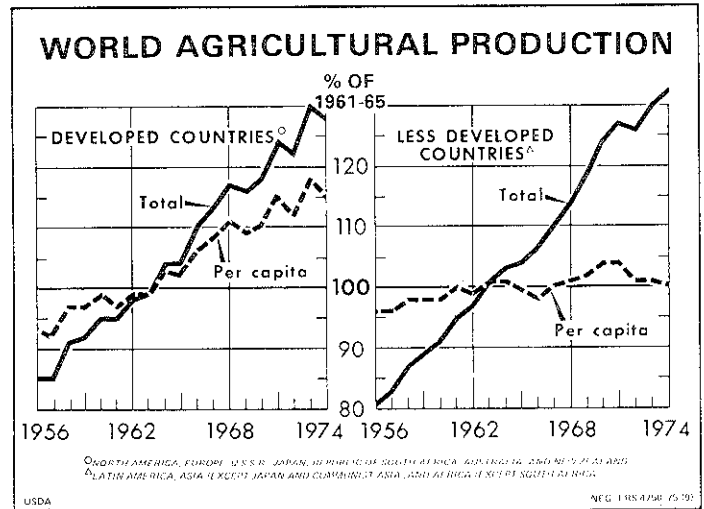
**USDA "Dead Set Against" Price Stabilization Reserve**

USDA is not going to want to compromise. It feels, correctly, that the other nations are not concerned with famine reserves, but rather want price protection (above and below). They want some kind of price stabilization reserve; this, of course is just what the USDA is most leery of. One official observes that the Department is "dead set against" going this route.

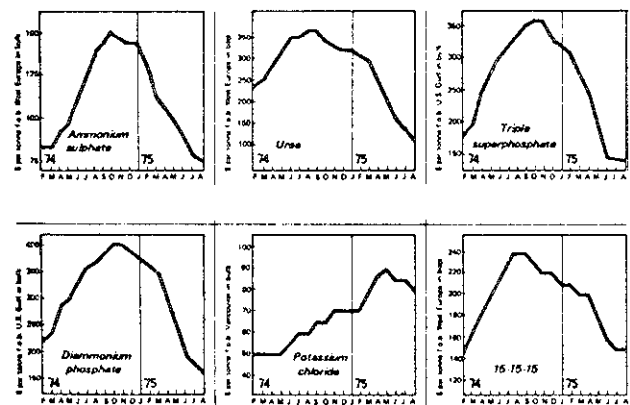
USDA seems to feel now that little is to be gained by pursuing the matter. It feels that the Department of State is now impressed with the technical difficulties. And it wonders if some other method of dealing directly with the reserve problems of states risking famine might not be preferable. (For example, one might help them finance grain repositories and/or help fill them through concessional sales).

Paradoxically, while the world has become more and more concerned about food reserves during the production roller coaster of the 1970s, the Department seems to have become less concerned. When USDA succeeded in selling the last of stocks in the Soviet wheat deal, its experts were uneasy that there might be trouble. Had they foreseen the poor crop here in 1974 and the bad Soviet wheat crop in 1975, they would have expected real problems. Now they feel that the price system was able to handle these problems. And some experts wonder if a world food reserve mechanism would have worked as well.

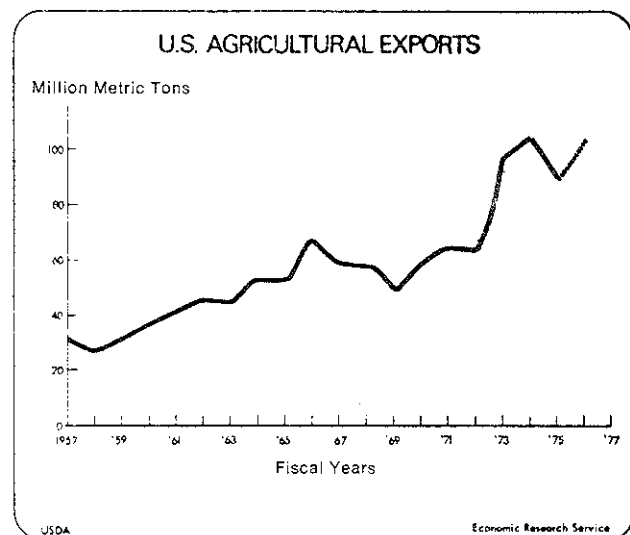
Just as so many throughout the world have now accommodated themselves fatalistically to living below a nuclear sword of Damocles, one gets the uneasy feeling at the Department of Agriculture that the world might learn — from the absence of disasters thus far — to live without food reserves. Perhaps nothing is so dangerous as accomodating oneself to living dangerously. □



**RECENT INTERNATIONAL PRICE TRENDS FOR PRINCIPAL FERTILIZERS**



Source: British Sulphur Corporation, *Fertilizer International*, No. 75, September, 1975, p. 5.



## NUCLEAR FUEL ASSURANCE BILL IN TROUBLE

The Ford Administration has been planning since June 26, 1975, to turn over the task of enriching nuclear fuel to private industry. This effort is roundly opposed by antinuclear groups. But one need not be opposed to nuclear energy *per se* to oppose this undertaking because there is a clear and imminent danger that the terms provided to private industry will be hopelessly generous.

One cannot be absolutely certain. The bill reported out by the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy only sketches the kinds of contracts that ERDA is permitted to draft with private companies. The contracts themselves will later be submitted to Congress.

Close scrutiny of the bill suggests, however, loopholes which contracts could exploit. And, indeed, early versions of the contracts now under negotiation with ERDA did exploit them. Efforts in the Joint Committee Report on S.2035 (H.R. 8401) to foreclose such exploitation seem unlikely to be successful; for one thing, the Committee and Congress must review and accept or reject the subsequent contracts in a relatively short period.

The problem is that ERDA wants to let a contract to United Enrichment Associates (UEA) to build a gaseous diffusion plant and is also sympathetic to the desire of three other firms to build newer and smaller centrifuge plants. It is less concerned about the terms and, as part of the Administration, must comply with President Ford's decision to begin to "privatize" the enrichment sector.

Ordinarily, one could only speculate that industry lawyers were probably supremely capable of running rings around the ERDA contractors—especially in light of ERDA's basic disposition. In this case, however, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) has provided uncharacteristically scathing commentary on the terms ERDA evidently has in mind. GAO observed at one point:

"The assurances envisioned and the potential costs borne by the Government assure that the UEA venture, if approved, would be essentially riskless to UEA."

GAO pointed out that UEA would not have to cope with any of the four kinds of textbook risks which private industry normally accepts.

In a four-page, single-spaced letter sent to every Congressman on June 23, FAS described the situation, and quoted at length from GAO's conclusions. It also sought to clarify certain critical discrepancies between the expressed intent of the Joint Committee and what seemed likely to crop up in the subsequent contracts.

On July 30, an amendment by Jonathan B. Bingham (D., N.Y.) passed by two votes gutting the bill. But, on August 4, the House reversed itself after the bill's main backer, John Anderson (R., Ill.) committed himself to an amendment supposed to preclude the very government assurances FAS had opposed. However, on close reading of the amendment, FAS observed that, as drafted, it did not seem, in fact, to preclude them at all.

Alerting the public interest sector and relevant Congressional offices, FAS induced a quick GAO assessment of the technical meaning of the amendment. That report was due after our September issue deadline; more will therefore appear on Nuclear Fuel Assurance in the October issue. □ (GAO confirmed the FAS charge on Aug. 23)

## HABITAT: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Habitat, the fifth and largest of the U.N. World Conferences inaugurated in Stockholm in 1972, was held in Vancouver, British Columbia this June. Simultaneous with the U.N. conference and its 4500 delegates and observers from 135 countries and national liberation movements, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) held a conference, Habitat Forum, at an ingeniously refurbished surplus seaplane base across the bay from the downtown official conference. The exhibits, lectures, and workshops at the Forum were attended by representatives from nearly 200 NGOs from around the world and tens of thousands of visitors.

Three major tasks had been set for the official conference. It was hoped that nearly unanimous consent could be reached on a Declaration of Principles. During the last hours an amendment indirectly condemning Israel by referring to the U.N. resolution of Fall, 1975, which equated Zionism with racism was passed by the "Committee of 77" (actually over 100 third-world countries). As a result, the Declaration of Principles was passed over the no-votes or abstentions of most of the western developed countries. The U.S. delegation, headed by HUD Secretary Carla Hills and Russell Peterson of the CEQ, indicated that it might not have voted for the Declaration anyway because of other provisions such as those that praised the concept of the New International Economic Order.

### Recommendations for National Action

The second task of the conference was to agree to a list of Recommendations for National Action. Although, of course, it is not binding, the completed list is remarkable in that many of the more than 60 recommendations would have been too radical to gain consensus only a few years ago. Strategic spatial planning, control of land use and tenure, and capture of the increase in land value resulting from public decisions were listed as the duties of governments. Radical planning and public capture of profit from land speculation were weakly opposed by a few of the delegations from strong market economies.

One of the six sections of Recommendations was devoted to the need for public participation in order to have effective decision-making. Self-help, use of local resources, and other ideas which have come to be called 'appropriate technology' were mentioned throughout the document. Although at some of the planning sessions for Habitat appropriate technology was very prominent as an end in itself, it was mentioned in the final recommendations only as part of other programs. For example, the recommendations for dealing with squatter settlements emphasized providing services and materials for self-help construction to improve them gradually to the status of permanent housing rather than massive clearance and renewal programs. In many countries where squatter settlements surround every large city, there are no resources for large renewal programs. Also, renewal programs have been found to be expensive and often unsuccessful at providing livable communities in those countries such as the U.K. where resources have been found.

Sanitation and water supply received great emphasis and a date was set as a goal for clean water for all human settlements. Water is also the subject of the next U.N.

—Continued on page 7

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World Conference planned for 1977 in Buenos Aires.

The third task of the conference was to agree upon an institutional arrangement for the U.N. Settlements Agency to be spawned by Habitat. This task was not completed and it awaits the General Assembly in late 1976. There are three major possibilities both in geographic and bureaucratic location. It might be placed within the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) which was itself formed after the 1972 Stockholm Environment Conference and located in Nairobi, Kenya. It might be placed under some other U.N. agency or group of agencies and kept in New York. Finally, a group of Latin American countries led by Mexico wants it to be an entirely new U.N. agency and located in Mexico City. Placing it within an existing agency is favored by many countries including the U.S. who are leery of creating an entirely new agency during times of difficult funding. In addition, it would make sense to keep it within UNEP to avoid artificially separating the human and natural environments, certainly one of the clearest lessons of the environmental movement. If it loses the new human settlements agency, UNEP (already suffering from non-fulfillment of many financial pledges including the U.S.'s) would be in danger of becoming isolated from the mainstream of developing world problems and confined to esoteric environmental programs of concern only to developed countries, such as coordination of global monitoring stratospheric ozone research.

#### **Habitat Forum Produced Principles**

Habitat Forum, the NGO conference, also produced a statement of principles and recommendations for submission to the official conference. These were developed before the Forum began, by what became called the "Vancouver Symposium," 24 internationally known environmentalists led by Barbara Ward, Maurice Strong, and Ambassador Soedjatmoko of Indonesia, and including Margaret Mead, Buckminster Fuller, and Lester Brown. Ironically, although the very reason for its existence and much of the talk and effort was to establish the public's right to participate in decisions, the Forum itself was overpowered, if not actually controlled, by a much smaller group of personalities than the official conference. Possibly this was necessary because of the limited time available to draft a statement but it did cause resentment among many participants. Further frustration was created by the lack of communication between the two conferences.

The Forum produced much more exciting sessions than the official conference, and there were fascinating speeches, exhibits, and debates on appropriate technology, clean water, public participation in settlement planning, China (conspicuously absent from both conferences), multinational corporations, and advanced planning and architecture. However, the informally designed meeting rooms were more visually aesthetic than practical. The lack of proper heating and acoustics greatly detracted from the mood of cooperation and common concern.

The final statement from the Forum contained a strong recommendation for a global moratorium and phase-out of nuclear power. This stand received apparently unanimous support from the Vancouver Symposium, including surprisingly strong public statements from Maurice Strong, former director of UNEP but now head of the new public-private Canadian energy combine, Petro-Canada. Prime

Minister Trudeau reaffirmed Canada's nuclear commitment and said that Canada will do everything it can to prevent misuse of nuclear technology, "but you have to live dangerously if you want to live in the modern age." Papua-New Guinea introduced an anti-nuclear resolution at the official conference that was quickly and soundly defeated.

Three days of debate on nuclear power were held at the Forum with participation by a few of the most well known figures on both sides. The emphasis on energy at the Forum was indicative of the small representation of third world interests among the active NGOs.

Habitat received very little media coverage in the U.S. In fact, two of the three TV networks didn't even send correspondents. For the 1500 media representatives at the conference there was little day-to-day news. The minor demonstrations in and out of the meeting rooms by the PLO, the Ukrainian Liberation Movement, the Canadian Native Americans, the Philippine Insurgents and Greek Cypriots all made news, but the real story was the lack of such disruptions. In the opening remarks, Trudeau at Habitat and Mother Teresa of India at the Forum stressed the same theme: Unavoidably, there are going to be so many people in the future that to survive we must socialize — "Love one another or you will perish" and "Let us love until it hurts." If the beginning of such love is common agreement or methods of dealing with common concerns, Habitat was a small but definite forward step.

—This report from Vancouver was sent, at FAS request, by Mr. Kirk Smith of Berkeley.

#### **B-1 BOMBER: PERILS OF PAULINE**

In June, we reported on the remarkable and unprecedented May 20 Senate vote to delay the B-1 bomber. On June 25, a House-Senate Conference Committee on the Authorization Bill refused to adopt the delay amendment although, by then, it was in the platform of the Democratic Party.

Unhappily, also, on June 17, by a narrow vote of 207-186, the House of Representatives defeated a delay amendment attached this time to the Appropriations Bill. However, on July 21, by a vote of 15-14, the Senate Appropriations Committee attached a delay condition to its version of the Appropriations Bill. Indications were that the full Senate would again support this delay, ensuring another disputed Conference Committee — this time on the Appropriations Bill.

Most media observers (with the salient exception of the *New York Times*) tended to miss the forest for the trees in analyzing these zigzags. The prospects for the B-1 bomber are not really going up and down with each vote. The point to be grasped is that the B-1 bomber is going to be stopped only if the next president decides to stop it.

The real purpose of these delay amendments is to provide the political context in which such presidential action is possible. In this respect, the B-1 bomber opposition has probably already revealed sufficient strength to make a presidential review in order. Whether construction of the first three planes is actually underway for three months before is a significant — but by no means major — consideration in determining how that review comes out. In this sense, the B-1 opposition has already gone about as far as it can go; only the next administration can do more. □

## NOTES ON DEFENSE OF FOREIGN SCIENTISTS

The protection of the human rights of scientists is a duty that can be vindicated only by the general involvement of the entire scientific community, not just FAS or NAS. With this in mind, FAS wrote leading scientific societies on May 12, asking if they would create some kind of committee inside their society which would maintain data on the human rights problems of foreign colleagues. Interested members of the society could turn to the committee for information. The letter contained copies of the NAS guidelines for its Foreign Secretary and asked whether the society could not effectively adopt similar guidelines.

Our initiative in hawking NAS guidelines to other societies apparently provoked some discussion at an NAS Council meeting. It subsequently determined to invite American scientific societies to circulate its statement of affirmation.

But the affirmation differs from the guidelines. It is a statement of principle which an individual can sign and which, if he wishes, the NAS is willing to accept and file. The guidelines adopted by the NAS have, we believe, much greater significance because they explain what an institution plans to do over the years in vindicating the principles in the affirmation.

Predictably, many societies opted for the easier task of simply circulating the NAS affirmation. In a note signed by ACS's President, Glenn Seaborg, FAS was advised that the Chemical Society had decided to publish the affirmation, but made no reference to our request. FASEB's response was drafted as if FASEB had complied but in fact, read closely, it also had decided only to promulgate the affirmation. (AIBS promised to consider the matter but has not further responded).

The American Physical Society, however, has established a Committee on the Persecution of Foreign Physicists as a Subcommittee of its Committee on Public Affairs and it seems to be acting vigorously. The American Mathematics Society (AMS) is in the process of forming a suitable committee; President Lipman Bers has con-

structed suitable guidelines for review by the AMS Council at its next meeting. AAAS has constructed a Committee on Freedom and Responsibility and effectively referred our request to that Committee; FAS's Director has been invited to serve on the Committee and has accepted.

FAS plans continuing effort to persuade all scientific and medical societies that they should have some mechanism to disseminate material about the persecution of foreign colleagues in their discipline and, when occasion demands, to speak for whoever of their members wishes to be heard.

On related matters, FAS wrote each of the 800 Fellows of the Royal Society in Great Britain and asked them to indicate whether they would be ready, in principle, to sign suitable statements in defense of foreign colleagues when so moved by a particular case. Over 100 responded affirmatively. FAS will appeal to these members when it seems necessary.

On June 3, 1976, Nature Magazine had an article describing the pressures being placed on the Soviet scientific seminars. This was quite a unique case. It involved several hundred scientific lives, who were in trouble precisely for wanting to continue their scientific work in private, after being blacklisted as scientists (for a legal human rights activity: applying to emigrate). FAS advised NAS that this seemed to be one of those cases which deserved the "occasional!" public remonstrance alluded to in the NAS guidelines.

By mid-August, no answer has been received to our letter of July 1, 1976. However, at FAS request, more than 30 NAS members have written to Dr. Handler supporting our suggestion.

This seems a genuine test of the sincerity with which the guidelines were adopted. A public statement would, we believe, deter further pressures on these scientists' seminars. But in the absence of public statements, the pressures will continue. Certainly no case involving so many scientists in trouble for wanting to do science has occurred for years. Will the Academy speak out? Tune in later. □

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