

FOOD FOR FREEDOM

Dear Friends:

Enclosed please find a copy of a statement prepared at the close of our "Food for Freedom" conference at the Canadian School of Missions, 97 St. George St., Toronto, on Saturday, May 11th.

The conference was planned at an earlier get-together of members of Church, Labour, Agriculture, Women's, and Youth Groups at the same place to study ways and means of providing extra food for the hungry in the famine areas of India, China, and Europe.

At last Saturday's conference we were highly honoured in having, as our guest speaker and consultant throughout three stimulating sessions, the chairman of the Canadian Government's Food Information Committee, Mr. A. M. Shaw. Mr. A. Shea, a member of the same Committee was also present.

Mr. Shaw, who is a well-known Canadian agricultural expert of long experience as Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture in the University of Saskatchewan, brought us in a clear and forceful manner the facts of the world food situation with which he is familiar through many contacts with United Nations Food and Agriculture officials. He also outlined the Government plan for Canada's "SHARE WITH THE HUNGRY CAMPAIGN", now in progress.

On the basis of the authentic information provided, the conference was convinced that the food shortage in India, China, and Europe is so acute that every Canadian should join in the "Share with the Hungry Campaign" in every way possible for the sake of humanity. Increased contributions of Canadian food are essential if the United Nations are to win what the people in Britain are calling the "Battle of Bread".

It is hoped that the enclosed statement may be useful to all groups represented at the conference, and others, in furthering the "SHARE WITH THE HUNGRY CAMPAIGN".

Yours sincerely,

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Chairman,
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May 13, 1946.

FOOD FOR FREEDOM CONFERENCE STATEMENT
Toronto - May 11th, 1946

THE SITUATION

Dr. Henry Richardson, authority on agriculture, speaking in London on March 13th said: "Three times as many people will die of starvation in the next six months as were killed in the whole of the war. The number of potential famine victims at the end of six months is estimated at 60,000,000 dead".

Sir John Boyd Orr, Director of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said on May 8th that the world food crisis would continue "for the next four or five years".

Prime Minister Attlee told the House of Commons in London recently "the plain fact is that millions of people to-day are faced with a scarcity of food and some with absolute starvation".

The Governor General of Canada stated in the speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament that "Unless the need is met, grave disorders, endangering peace itself, must be anticipated".

Mr. LaGuardia, Director of UNRRA speaking over CBC recently said "When I said the situation is critical, it is just that. I wouldn't attempt to describe the conditions in China. They are just too terrible and horrible to adequately describe. And that is also true of India.----- All these hungry people can't eat sympathy. They need bread, and it's up to us to give it to them".

Mr. A. H. Shaw, chairman of the Canadian Government's Food Information Committee said in Toronto on May 11th that "every bushel of wheat, every pound of meat and every egg saved by the Canadian people to relieve famine conditions abroad is picked up by the Government and shipped".

VOLUNTARY ACTION ALREADY TAKEN

Reports from the following Canadian organizations indicate that voluntary relief work is being carried on by Canadians in India, China, and Europe to meet needs of food, clothing, and medicines in those areas: The Canadian Red Cross Society, The Canadian Allied Relief Fund, The Save The Children Fund, The Canadian Jewish Congress, The Salvation Army, The Canadian Friends Service Committee, The Mennonite Central Committee, The Evangelical Lutheran Synod, The I.O.D.E., and the F.O.R.

ACTION RECOMMENDED TO THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT

1. We wish to commend the efforts of the Food Information Committee to promote production and conservation of food through publicity by press and radio, but we urge the government to undertake further effort in the promotion of this food program through the participation of Churches, Farm organizations, Labor unions, Women's organizations, Youth organizations, and other groups.
2. We urge increase of commitments of food to countries of greatest need, particularly, by increased wheat supplies to UNRRA, and that there be the necessary reduction of Canadian consumption of exportable foods even though such a program should make further rationing necessary.
3. In view of the recent recognition that the food problem will continue for two years or more, we urge that the Canadian government should base its food program, both upon the immediate emergency and also on recognition that the food situation in Asia, particularly, is a long term problem of concern to all the world.
4. We support the request of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture for a Committee to investigate the field of farm prices and farm costs.
5. We suggest that efforts should be increased to provide further agricultural machinery for India and China as well as for Europe.

ACTION RECOMMENDED TO ORGANIZATIONS

The Conference confirmed the establishment of a Food for Freedom committee. The purpose of this committee would be to co-ordinate the activities of all interested groups along such lines as the following:

1. To seek the most effective means of relieving famine.
2. To assist the Government's program in every way possible.
3. To extend publicity and public education on this subject.
4. Promote the saving and collection of meat ration coupons.
5. Promote switch in Canadian consumption from exportable foods to other suitable foods.
6. Encourage home gardens.
7. Provide all possible assistance on the farm labor situation.
8. Influence government policy in the direction of an even more aggressive program of food production and conservation and of providing food to areas of need.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE WRITE: The Food Information Committee, New Post Office Bldg., Ottawa.