

Food policy

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than the management of the agriculture of a single country, Grant said that his organization is opposed to any plan for an international super agency to store and distribute food worldwide. The many imponderable factors in the food production and distribution equation appear to be beyond the skills of any management group, he said. Grant said that efforts in America to manage food were largely ineffectual although much effort, men, and huge sums of money were devoted to the job. "During this forty-year

experiment we swung from shortages to surpluses and back again several times. Apparently, our managers misjudged the weather, economic conditions or consumer desires — or possibly all three at once. On a worldwide basis such errors in judgment would be magnified and potentially catastrophic," he added. "For this reason, if no other," he said, "our organization is opposed to a super supply agency to manage the food distribution." Turning to the need for a viable world food policy, Grant suggested that such a

policy should include several major provisions.

For the short-term problem of distributing food to disaster areas, he suggested an international food fund. All nations would contribute to this fund and food would then be purchased and distributed as needed through existing agencies. Purchases would be made through normal food trade channels, without a politically controlled hoard of food and feed overhanging world commodity markets.

"In view of America's past record of aiding the needy," he said, "I am sure that we could be expected to contribute generously to such a fund. This, we believe, would be preferable to having the major exporting countries maintain huge supplies of stored foodstuffs because these stocks would be deterrents to improved production as long as they overshadowed the market."

Grant pointed out that several major agricultural producers such as the European Economic Community have distorted or prevented needed adjustments in production patterns through the use of unwise state directed and financed management programs.

"We are to the point that I doubt that any of us can afford the luxury of uneconomic production of farm commodities," he said. "Such programs have the undesirable effect of preventing the development of new, more economical production areas because cheap subsidized products accumulated under such programs often are dumped on world markets. We cannot justify or condone the dumping of subsidized food products on the world market."

Turning to the long-term problem of increased food

production Grant called for an all-out effort by all nations to improve the incentives for food production and for the introduction of new technologies and supporting resources into local agriculture.

Grant said that contrary to the wailing of some, the "Green Revolution" is not a failure. He said that these doomsday prophets have overlooked the fact that the necessary fertilizers, pesticides and management often have not been applied along with the new crop strains. "You cannot apply part of a new technology and expect success," he noted. "The new plant strains, where used with the necessary supporting technology and incentives, have increased yields several times over."

"In passing, we might note that many locally adapted native plant strains are immediately capable of greatly increased production through the simple application of modern agronomic practices," Grant said. "They are locally adapted, often disease and insect-resistant, and are widely available."

To get the necessary technology into the hands of producers, Grant suggested that efforts of developed countries to assist the more backward agricultures be intensified. This he said is one of the keys to long-term improvement in the diet of many people.

Pointing to the long time involvement of the United

States in such assistance, Grant said, "We have agricultural scientists and educators on loan to many countries where they help apply more modern technology to local agriculture. We expect to continue this help," he said, "but, there is a great need for such things as fuel, fertilizers, chemicals, and financial backing which the developed countries such as America and Japan could provide."

Noting the recent emergence of Brazil as a major supplier of soybeans in the world oilseed market, Grant said, "I think you have seen demonstrated in Brazil what can happen when funds and technology are provided to some of the less developed agricultures. From limited exports of soybeans five years ago, the Brazilians — primarily with Japanese help — have become a major exporter of soybeans. I am told that there still is vast acreage which might be developed if there is the incentive of a market."

"We have a number of American soybean growers who are upset by this competition for the Japanese market, but as population and markets grow elsewhere, the Brazilian soybeans should not prove to be a problem on a long-term basis," Grant said.

"In summary," Grant concluded, "I believe that we can solve the world's 'food problem' if we are willing to

let food move freely through trade channels, if we intensify our help to the developing nations to modernize their agriculture, and if we are willing to support this technology with the necessary production inputs."

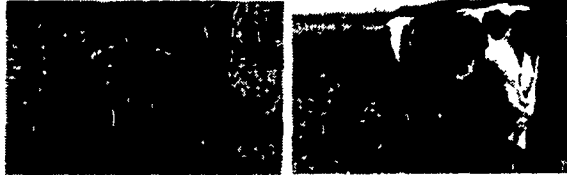
"In spite of some dire predictions to the contrary, I think the world can feed its mainourished if farmers are given the incentive and means to produce. Our experience is that a directive from a manager — by whatever name — does not constitute an incentive, but that an opportunity to make a profit does."

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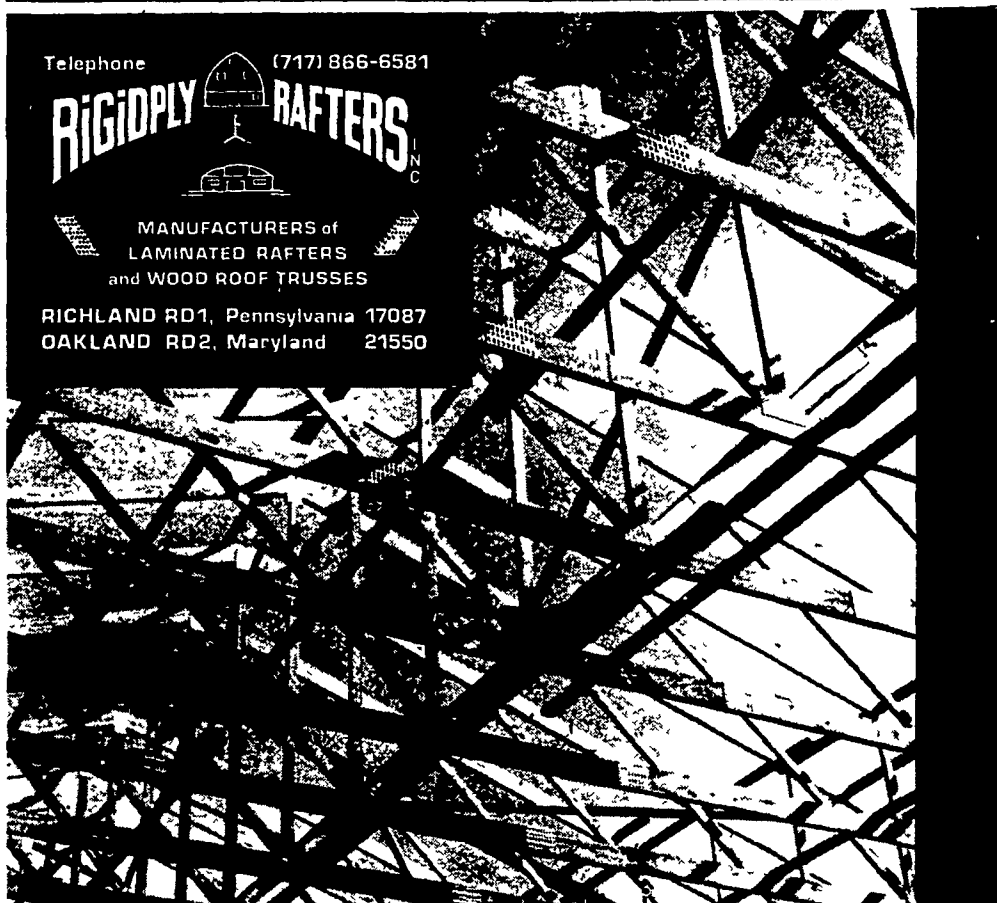
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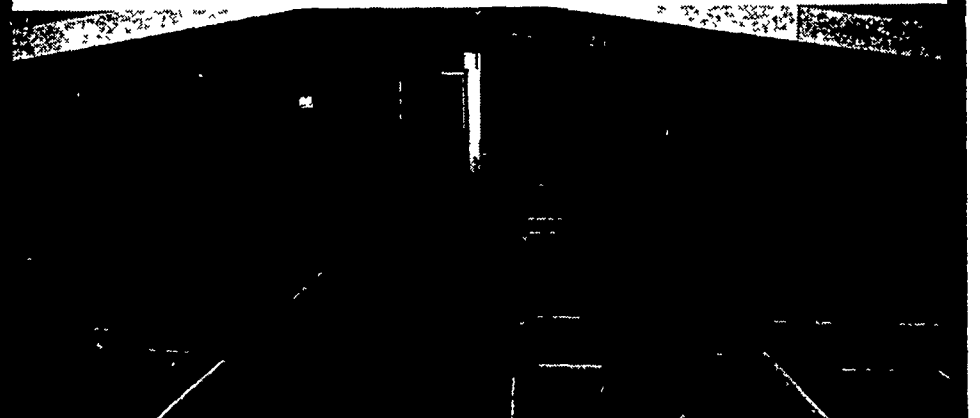
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