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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Sir Douglas COPLAND	(Australia)
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. CAFIERO	Argentina
	Mr. PETHERBRIDGE	Australia
	Mr. WOUFRON	Belgium
	Mr. CHEN	China
	Mr. RIBAS	Cuba
	Mr. PSCOLKA	Czechoslovakia
	Mr. EL-TANAMLI	Egypt
	Mr. AVILES MOSQUERA	Ecuador
	Mr. LEGATTE	France
	Mr. MISHRA	India
	Mr. SALUESEN	Norway
	Mr. TAFAZZAL ALI	Pakistan
	Mr. OZGUREL	Turkey
	Mr. SPANDARYAN	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. BARNES	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. STREET) Mr. STIBRAVY)	United States of America
	Mr. ALFONZO-RAVARD	Venezuela
	Mr. STANOVNIK	Yugoslavia

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. ROUX	International Labour Organisation
Mr. McDOUGALL	Food and Agriculture Organization

Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

<u>Category A:</u>	Mrs. LUSARDI	International Chamber of Commerce
	Miss KAHN	World Federation of Trade Unions
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. BLOUGH	Principal Director, Department of Economic Affairs
	Mr. CAUSTIN	Department of Economic Affairs
	Mr. DUMONTET	Secretary of the Committee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: (a) LAND REFORM: REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE REPLIES OF GOVERNMENTS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON LAND REFORM: REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION (E/2526, E/2524, E/AC.6/L.94)

Mr. MISHRA (India) regretted that his Government had received the two reports (E/2526 and E/2524) too late to be able to study them as thoroughly as it could have wished. In fact, at first, in view of his Government's great interest in the land reform measures and the reorganization of agricultural economy, he had wondered whether he could not urge the postponement of the consideration of that item until the next session. But on second thoughts, to keep up the interest of the Council in the matter and advance action in that field, he had felt that he should contribute to the discussions as well as he could in the circumstances by focussing attention on some vital considerations.

With regard to the first report, he was happy to note that the land reform measures undertaken by his country had been considered by the Secretariat to be most impressive in terms of the numbers and areas affected, but he pointed out that the report was no longer up to date and contained no record of the rapid changes which had occurred in India. Through the Five Year Plan now in progress, India was hoping to complete the first part of a programme designed to abolish intermediaries and to reform the system of land tenure; it was hoped to reorganize the country's agricultural economy completely during the period of the second Five Year Plan. The implementation of such reforms was, however, in some cases slowed down by the lack of statistical data. A land survey was essential and India hoped to complete it as soon as possible.

Before deciding on future action, it was necessary to determine whether the rate, direction and scope of the changes which had occurred were satisfactory and whether they had promoted agricultural development in particular and economic development in general. The question therefore arose whether the results achieved could be properly assessed on the basis of the information presented in the report, with a view to charting a future course of action.

The report had been drawn up under paragraph 8 of resolution 370 (XIII) under which the Council had requested information on progress in land reform, on any obstacles to the adoption of proposed measures and any suggestions that

Governments might have concerning international action to promote land reforms; it had also requested the Secretary-General to analyse the information received and to present conclusions and recommendations to the Council. The report fulfilled the first three requirements but hardly the fourth. It was stated in the preface that the purpose of the questionnaire had been "to make possible an assessment of the extent of progress". A little further on came the statement that "progress, rather than level of achievement" was the subject of the report. It was difficult to see what was meant by "progress" or the difference between "progress" and "level of achievement". That difficulty was increased by the later statement that Part III summarized "the major development described in the preceding parts" and reviewed "the extent of achievement in relation to the need for further measures...". The purpose of the report did not seem to be very clear.

The report nevertheless contained much useful information: it gave an idea of the reforms which had recently been carried out and provided details which were not available in any other document. Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that the task of the Secretariat, which had had to deal with sixty countries with a total of 1,300 million inhabitants and 2,000 hectares of agricultural land, had been far from simple. If the report did not entirely meet the requirements of resolution 370 (XIII), it was perhaps because that resolution had not been explicit enough and Governments would not have been in a position to provide the concrete economic information required. The confusion between "progress" and "the level of achievement" was perhaps inevitable in the circumstances.

The time would seem to have come to analyse and interpret the results of land reform from the points of view of employment, production, income, savings, investments, social justice, agricultural development and economic development as a whole. In India a plan of enquiries through universities and research institutions had been drawn up in consultation with the Research Programme Committee of the Planning Commission to assess the effects of the reforms undertaken by the State.

He also wished to point out how in India, where the Government had established a Central Land Reforms Organization responsible for evaluating the results obtained and reporting from time to time upon the operation and progress of the measures of land reform, land reform was being considered from the point of view of both agricultural production and the various interests which were at stake. It was necessary to consider the effects which might be produced by each measure. A stage would soon be reached when the slow pace of the industrial development of the under-developed countries would constitute a serious obstacle to the progress of land reform. In a previous study the United Nations, in co-operation with FAO, had made an enquiry into "Defects in Agrarian Structure as Obstacles to Economic Development". But in a number of cases it would be realized that it was not so much defects in agrarian structure that were obstacles to economic development as lagging economic development that was an obstacle to some of the urgent reforms in agrarian structure. All land reform measures were designed to modify the system of production and distribution. In the agricultural sector land reform might result in a release of labour, which, in the absence of a corresponding inflow of capital and industrial development might have undesirable economic effects. It was therefore necessary to do everything possible to ensure that agricultural and industrial development proceeded simultaneously. The Indian Five-Year Plan stressed the need to develop industry as well as agriculture and the Indian Government hoped that action on both fronts would proceed according to plan.

It might be useful to refer to the great land distribution movement for the benefit of landless peasants now under way in India under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave, a great disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. It was one of the greatest experiments ever made in social revolution, as the movement was based on the voluntary relinquishment of land by the people, big and small. Quite apart from the quantitative results that might be obtained, there could be no doubt that the movement was creating social sanctions and preparing people's minds for far-reaching legislative measures and actions.

With regard to the report "Rural Progress through Co-operatives" (E/2524), he was pleased to note that it recognized that co-operatives could not exist unless the necessary conditions of economic progress, namely the development of transport and communications and reform of the land tenure system, were provided. In India, the re-organization of the agricultural economy was in the direction of co-operative management of villages where land and other resources would be considered as a unit. The Indian Government was already taking measures to promote the development of co-operatives.

On the whole the Indian delegation approved the suggestions in the report. Several problems relating to co-operatives should, however, be studied in greater detail and recommendations concerning them should be made. The draft resolution submitted by India and Egypt drew the Committee's attention to two such problems. It referred first of all to the various types of help which co-operative societies required from Governments in the economic and social field to enable them to operate. In the second place, it was necessary to specify the sectors where co-operative organization appeared desirable. He urged the Committee to approve the joint draft resolution sponsored by the Indian and Egyptian delegations.

Mr. STANOVNIK (Yugoslavia) said that land reform constituted the most vital element in the economic development of the countries considered underdeveloped today. Such countries fell into two main categories: those with a large population, insufficiently developed industry and rural over-population, and those having a backward agriculture but vast land areas that remained uncultivated because of the shortage of manpower. The first type predominated in Asia and the second in Latin America. Land reform was no less important for the former countries than for the latter; the only difference was one of method.

The initial step in any constructive policy of economic development was a more equitable distribution of land in order to achieve three basic objectives: maximum productive employment, the maximum level of productivity on the existing technical basis, and the social transformation necessary for the modernization of agriculture and the industrialization of the country. The Yugoslav delegation had

always maintained that the agrarian problem could not be solved by means of land reform alone but that its solution was linked to a policy of integrated economic development. If low agricultural productivity in areas with surplus population was to be raised by means of a redistribution of land, new employment opportunities had to be created; in other words, the country had to be industrialized and unused land had to be developed. The agrarian structure was a consequence of century-long traditions, geographical conditions, political history and the level of development of the national economy. Although it consequently varied a good deal from one country to another, the fact that no general pattern or absolute principles could be discerned made it possible to take advantage of the vast reservoir of experience gained by all countries. In that connexion, the Yugoslav delegation wished to congratulate the Secretariat on its extremely useful analysis of the replies received from Governments (E/2526) and its study of the problem of co-operatives (E/2524).

Before the war, the agrarian population in Yugoslavia had constituted 76.3 per cent of the total population while the income derived from agriculture had represented 50.3 per cent of national income. There had been 102 agricultural inhabitants for every 100 hectares (247 acres) of arable land whereas the comparative density had been 52 in Germany and 48 in France. Yugoslavia had therefore been an overwhelmingly agrarian country in which the agricultural sector of the economy had been under-developed, under-productive and over-populated. Moreover, the agrarian structure had been very much out of balance. While properties up to 5 hectares had constituted 68 per cent of the total number of farms and only 28 per cent of the total arable land surface, properties of 10 and more hectares, considered large in Yugoslavia, had constituted only 11 per cent of the total number of farms while accounting for 44 per cent of the total arable land surface. Thirty per cent of the farms had been less than 2 hectares in size, or too small to support a family. Furthermore, 39 per cent of the farmers had not even had a plough of their own and agrarian indebtedness had been high.

Immediately after the war, the Government had carried out a far-reaching land reform under which the large land-owners had surrendered 1,504,000 hectares, or 11 per cent of the total arable land of the country, which had then been distributed to agrarian families and the families of "colonists", while part had been retained to serve as the basis of State farms. The maximum size of farms had been fixed at 30 hectares and later, in 1952, individual ownership of arable land had been restricted to 10 hectares.

Thus, the land reform had resulted in the effective elimination of large private properties and properties consisting of arable land used for non-agricultural purposes. Side by side with the land reform, extensive industrialization of the country had been undertaken by the Government with the result that the percentage of the agrarian population had declined from 76.3 to 61.7 while the share of agriculture in the national income had declined from 50.5 to approximately 28 per cent in 1953. Although the land reform had temporarily solved the problem of agrarian over-population, it had contributed only modestly to the introduction of modern techniques in agriculture. In order to continue the transformation begun by that reform, an agrarian policy aimed at the three following objectives had had to be applied: (a) increasing productivity by means of the mechanization of agriculture, the more extensive use of fertilizers and a better selection of land, and therefore intensive investment; (b) creating new employment opportunities for the manpower which would become available in the agricultural sector as a result of those measures; and (c) appropriate planning of social organization to permit the integration of small non-economic farms into larger units adaptable to the use of modern techniques with due consideration of the need for incentives for individual producers.

The first step had been to industrialize the country in order to increase national production and national income to permit in turn the intensification of investment in agriculture. Accordingly, in the first post-war years, only 10 per cent of total investment had been made in agriculture while 62 per cent had gone to industry; that was why agricultural production in the post-war period had exceeded pre-war figures by only 2 per cent. From the beginning, the Yugoslav Government had been fully aware of the difficulties which were bound to be created by the temporary concentration of efforts upon industrialization. However, it had endeavoured to achieve a simultaneous increase in agricultural productivity, in particular by favouring all kinds of co-operatives even though they often did not possess satisfactory economic foundations. Such problems had not resulted from an incorrect concept of economic development but from the inevitable phenomena that accompanied large-scale investment in industry and other circumstances such as pressure from certain neighbouring States, droughts, etc.

The initial stage had been passed and agrarian policy had become one of the chief concerns of his Government. Many of the measures of State control that had been unavoidable in that first stage in view of the need to ensure the food supply of a growing urban population, were becoming superfluous and even harmful to further progress. At the present time his Government was giving every encouragement to co-operatives, because it considered that they might provide a means of overcoming the contradictions existing between the fragmentation of farms caused by the high density of population and a more productive economy based on large-size farms. Although his Government considered a modern agricultural economy based on large-scale, properly equipped units a desirable objective because of the opportunity it provided of achieving maximum productivity, it did not think that the fact should be overlooked that farmers needed time to assimilate new problems.

At the end of 1952, co-operatives had owned properties to the extent of 20 per cent of the total cultivated land area and there were practically no farms in Yugoslavia not included in one way or another in some kind of co-operative system. In that connexion, he was surprised to note that the report prepared by the Secretariat in collaboration with FAO and ILO (E/2524) had given little attention to the problem of co-operatives in Yugoslavia.

Having organized basic industry and established favourable conditions for the automatic growth of the means of production, the Government would continue the process of agricultural transformation, which would be favoured by the effects of industrial activity on the market, and by the taxation and credit policies of the State. The freeing of agricultural products from administrative restrictions had had the effect of reducing the disproportion between the prices of industrial and agricultural products to the extent of 5 per cent in favour of the agricultural producer. Moreover, the Government had intensified State investment in agriculture. In 1954 it would amount to 15.3 thousand million dinars as against 6.4 thousand millions in 1953, and to that sum must be added the total of individual investments by the peasants themselves, estimated at some

18 thousand millions. At the same time, the tax policy of the Government aimed at protecting the small agricultural producer and co-ordinating the development of agriculture with the general economic development of the country. Within the limits of the tax system, the agricultural producer could produce and trade in complete freedom. That freedom maintained his spirit of initiative while national policy sought to ensure the needs of society as a whole.

In connexion with the report entitled "Progress in Land Reform" (E/2526) the Yugoslav delegation felt that analysing Government replies to United Nations questionnaires was an extremely useful procedure because it gave a clear insight into the practical problems encountered in different countries. It would be most desirable if the Council decided to have such studies made at regular intervals. His delegation therefore welcomed the suggestion of the Indian delegation that measures should be taken to pool and exchange information, ideas and experiences. On the other hand, it did not think that the approval of a declaration concerning land reform could yield the results expected. It also did not consider it practical to create a special fund for land reform as suggested by some Governments. The suggestion was in fact only an additional argument in favour of the proposal to establish a Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development. He felt that international resources should be used only for the direct promotion of economic development whereas in the case of agrarian reform the biggest financial problem was that of compensation to dispossess landowners. However, much could be done by increasing technical assistance to countries engaged in land reform and although his delegation did not think that the Haitian Government's suggestion concerning the organization of technical brigades was likely to produce the best results, it recognized that the forms in which technical assistance was granted should be based on the experience thus far gained by the Governments directly interested.

Miss KAHN (World Federation of Trade Unions) said that General Assembly resolution 625 (VII) and resolution 370 (XIII) of the Economic and Social Council laid down a fundamental programme for land reform on the grounds that it was an essential element of economic development. In part A of its resolution 625 (VII), the General Assembly recalled the belief it had expressed in its resolution 524 (VI) that rapid improvements in existing agrarian structures and land tenure systems in many under-developed countries required large-scale financial outlays, and, in part B it considered that the defective agrarian structure in several geographical areas of the world was among the factors preventing economic development. The General Assembly had also requested Member States to give its decisions the widest possible publicity, in order to ensure that the policy recommendations of the United Nations should be widely known and understood. The progress being made was slow, and there was reason to think that the unanimity which had been reached in the Assembly did not yet exist in the international community and that opinions were still divided.

At the World Conference of Agricultural and Forestry Workers and Working Peasants organized in Vienna in October 1953 by the Trade Unions International of Agricultural and Forestry Workers, a trades department of the WFTU, it had become apparent how general was the pressure for land reform. The conference, which had been attended by 159 delegates and 46 observers from 60 countries, had declared that land reform was a measure of social justice and had called for the application of democratic agrarian programmes which would limit the area of agricultural holdings and ensure the distribution of the estates of large landowners, agricultural corporations and the state among agricultural workers and the smallholders with insufficient land without cost to the latter. The conference had also called for the restitution of land occupied by settlers to the indigenous inhabitants. With regard to the under-developed countries and colonial territories the Third World Trade Union Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions, in October 1953, had strongly recommended land reforms involving vast programmes of agricultural development. The Congress had recognized the interaction of agricultural and industrial production and concluded that such programmes should be regarded as an essential condition for any real improvement in the position of non-agricultural labour in the under-developed countries.

In her Federation's view the Council should deal more actively with the question by carrying out an objective but critical appraisal of land reform programmes in progress, especially in under-developed countries, and by giving advice and help to Governments ready to undertake such reforms. The report before the Committee (E/2526) was useful in that it described the various measures taken by Governments and revealed the vast gaps which had to be filled. It would have been even more useful if it had explained what practical action had been taken to give effect to the various principles of land reform stated in the Council's and in the Assembly's resolutions. Moreover, the report underestimated the disequilibrium of the agricultural economy in many under-developed countries and Non-Self-Governing Territories, where a large proportion of the land was held by relatively few owners. Nevertheless, the report recognized on page 286 that many countries, on their own admission, had done nothing to create opportunities for acquiring ownership, whether through the redistribution of land or by other methods, although the types of agrarian structure described in their replies suggested that such reforms would be advantageous to tenant-farmers, share-croppers and agricultural labourers. Furthermore, the conclusions in the report did not lay sufficient stress on the effects of the existence of large estates, especially those owned by foreign companies, or in the case of Non-Self-Governing Territories, by settlers from the metropolitan State, as a result of which indigenous peoples were forced to share residual lands usually inadequate in quality and extent.

Generally speaking, the land question in Africa was not dealt with adequately or realistically. The report confined itself to stating that, in the African territories, the Administering Powers did not consider it desirable to institute individual ownership and completely disregarded the long-term consequences of the monopolization of rich and fertile land by small groups of settlers. Furthermore, it did not deal adequately with the adverse influence on national agricultural production and industrialization of monoculture in the countries where it prevailed and where it was controlled by foreign financial interests. The essential feature of land reform was obviously the redistribution of land. It therefore gave rise to different problems depending on whether in the country concerned the large estates were held by nationals or by foreigners, as was the case in Central and South America, South East Asia and Africa. In turn countries embarked upon

land reform programmes faced different reactions abroad. Mexico had not been subject to external objection to its land reform programme which affected large holdings of its own citizens while Guatemala had been sharply attacked for its programme which was nonetheless predicated upon nationalization only of uncultivated lands with compensation to former owners to the full extent of their declared evaluation for tax purposes. Future studies should analyse those aspects of the question in greater detail, and would be more useful if they expressed the area of land distributed as a proportion of the total area of cultivated land, and indicated the number of beneficiaries in relation to the total agricultural population. They should also indicate whether the average areas allocated were sufficient to ensure decent living conditions.

The joint draft resolution submitted by India and Egypt (E/AC.6/L.94) was an important contribution to the study of the question, but the WFTU suggested that the words "and the extent to which structural changes in the economy have ensued from land reform" should be added at the end of paragraph 3 (a) of the operative part. It should also specify that future studies should indicate the extent to which land reform had led to a diversification of agricultural production and influenced the living and employment conditions of both urban and rural workers.

Her Federation considered that, to achieve the objectives of General Assembly resolution 625 (VII) the Council might consider the publication by the United Nations of simple and popular brochures relating to land reform, following the method which had been used effectively in connexion with United Nations work relating to the status of women, human rights and technical assistance. Such publications could help link the parallel though separate struggles of peasants and agricultural and industrial workers throughout the world with that of the United Nations for the achievement of both land reform and basic industrial development.

The WFTU was confident that the Council would take further steps to promote land reform and to stimulate industrial development, which would so greatly enhance the well-being of the peoples of the world.

Mr. MOUDRONE (Belgium) congratulated the Secretary-General on the report on land reform (E/2526) and the report on the rural progress through co-operatives (E/2524). Belgium holdings of one to ten hectares accounted for 82 per cent of all holdings and for 46 per cent of all agricultural land. Holdings of over fifty hectares accounted for 8.9 per cent and those of 100 hectares and over for no more than 2 per cent of all agricultural land.

In those circumstances, land reform, if it were desirable, should be directed mainly towards consolidating fragmented holdings and consolidating rural properties; the density of the population was the principal obstacle to the consolidation of small holdings.

The productivity of Belgian agriculture ranked very high in Western Europe and in the world. In order to maintain it, the competent authorities had enacted legislation and regulations which they revised as the situation demanded. The main purpose of those provisions was to safeguard the security of tenure of the cultivator, to maintain farm rents at a fair level, to promote consolidation, to promote agricultural credit at reasonable interest rates, to grant tax relief to small holders, to encourage the establishment and development of agricultural co-operatives, to develop research and publicity services, to promote the establishment of rural industries and crafts and, generally, to improve the economic and social conditions and legal status of agricultural workers. He assured the Economic Committee of his full co-operation.

In connexion with measures to promote land reform at the international level, he said that, from the technical point of view, the competent authorities should take into account the education of farmers, that from the social point of view they should concern themselves with the living conditions of agricultural workers, and that from the economic point of view they should promote the establishment of agricultural co-operatives, agricultural credit, the acquisition of small rural holdings, the consolidation of fragmented holdings and the protection of security of tenure. The technical assistance provided by the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization was a form of international action for agricultural progress, the improvement of the living conditions of farmers and the development of the co-operative movement in agriculture. Belgium had

participated in that action and would continue to do so. His delegation considered that any plan for introducing land reform in a given country should first and foremost be based on local circumstances and allow for practical obstacles. Any general plan for land reform could therefore be usefully supplemented by a study of local conditions; the need for such studies was apparent from a perusal of the Secretary-General's reports and was stressed in the relevant resolutions of the Council and the General Assembly. The Belgian delegation would continue to support any measures which the Economic and Social Council might recommend for promoting the development of agriculture and higher living standards for agricultural populations.

Mr. PETHERBRIDGE (Australia) said that in many under-developed countries the system of land tenure was responsible for social and political instability. The Australian delegation was aware of the part that might be played by land reform in promoting social stability and economic progress, and supported the measures proposed by the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Land reform not only affected the system of land tenure but involved other issues such as the employment of workers in industry, the improvement of techniques, credit and so on. That seemed to be the sense in which the United Nations and organs such as the Economic and Social Council, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organisation and UNESCO understood land reform; different countries interpreted the term differently. Actually, Governments had the responsibility of deciding on a reform and laying down policy. International action would stimulate discussion of the problem at the local level and would give an idea of the efforts to be made and the programmes to be adopted. The reports on progress in land reform (E/2526) and on rural progress through co-operatives (E/2524) contained very useful information. He was glad to note from the Governments' replies to the questionnaire that in the last three years decisive progress had been made in that field. The report also mentioned certain factors restricting land reform which served to illustrate the legal, technical, social, political and other problems of which the United Nations had always been aware in studying that question. Owing to those factors land reform was inevitably a slow

process, and present endeavours could only bear fruit in the future. The report on land reform recognized that in Australia, as in countries like the United States of America, Canada and New Zealand, the ownership of land was widely distributed and the means for acquiring land were satisfactory. The State aided farmers either indirectly by means of credit facilities or directly through grants designed to maintain farm incomes or to permit improvements in cultivation. There was no occasion for land reform in Australia and hence its international role in that field was limited. The Australian delegation was, however, ready to supply the United Nations, the specialized agencies and Member States with all information which might be of use to them. Australian agriculture was very advanced both in organization and technique, but it had to solve certain problems such as that of higher production if it was to keep pace with population increases and export needs.

He congratulated the Secretary-General on the studies carried out. He suggested that the two reports should be supplemented by a summary of the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the field of land reform, including information on technical assistance. Such a summary would show both the steps taken by Governments and the work done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

Mr. LEGATIE (France) congratulated the Secretary-General on the two reports on the question of land reform (E/2526, E/2524).

In his report on the progress of land reform (E/2526) the Secretary-General had pointed out that reforms in the system of land tenure were not of the same urgency everywhere. Without prejudging the individual merits of the several reforms it could be said that they were not, as was sometimes claimed, a sort of panacea.

On the other hand, the report rightly stressed the economic advantages that could result from a better adaptation of the system of land tenure to the conditions of modern life. In that connexion many replies to the questionnaire had gone beyond the strict limits of the subject and described the progress attained by better land utilization. The French delegation was happy to note

that fact for the information was valuable to legislators in all countries interested in land questions. In fact while the aim of the Secretariat report was to contribute to solving the problem of economic development in under-developed countries, it also contained information of great value for the so-called industrialized countries, particularly France. On that point he was in full agreement with the representative of Belgium.

The Secretariat report had not, however, glossed over the difficulties hampering changes in systems of land tenure. Experience had everywhere shown that it was difficult to make any change in the tenure of real property in general and of land in particular. The extreme caution of legislatures in that field might appear discouraging but in most cases was surely justified. In some countries including France, the public had to be prepared a long time in advance and the Government had to wait patiently for the favourable moment at which to apply fruitful reforms. He noted with satisfaction that the Secretariat report took that lesson of experience into account. Personal and sentimental attachment to the land should also be allowed for. In its reply to the questionnaire, the United Kingdom Government had touched on that point in dealing with Africa (E/2526, pages 33 and 34), but what was involved there seemed to be an attachment which was found in every part of the world.

Still, as against the sentimental, social and political obstacles which might prevent Governments from carrying out reforms, one had to consider the harm caused by defective utilization of the land as particularly in poor countries. Accordingly, he noted with satisfaction in the Secretariat report that great progress had been made both in promoting the acquisition of ownership by landless farmers and in increasing the yield of soils for the benefit of their cultivators. He was happy to see that those reforms were being carried out by conventional means which, while not enjoying the wide publicity accorded to certain other methods, were also not so ruthless.

Despite the optimistic conclusions of the Secretariat report, the French delegation considered that an immense task still lay ahead. Without seeking by its recommendations and suggestions to solve the problems confronting Governments, the Council could at least, by continued attention to land reform, by studies called for and by exchange of views, enlighten Governments and encourage them to act.

The report on rural progress through co-operative (E/2524) offered striking proof of the advantages of that method without suggesting that it was in any sense a panacea. In particular, that report explained why co-operation which had yielded very remarkable results in some industrialized countries had not been equally successful in others. In fact, chapter 13, dealing with basic questions of policy on co-operative associations, showed that capital was needed for the establishment of a co-operative and trained staff for its operation. In most industrialized countries the establishment of producer and consumer co-operatives had been easy because the members had a minimum of savings and plenty of technical experience. That, unhappily, was not the case in some under-developed countries where co-operation would be of immense value and where Governments would like to promote it. He fully appreciated the difficulties confronting under-developed countries in that field. To overcome them in the overseas territories of the French Union French citizens had often been called upon to aid the indigenous population in managing their co-operatives and to request the public services to provide the initial capital, in other words, the funds necessary for construction of plant and starting operations.

In France, co-operative for the production, processing, preserving and marketing of agricultural products had improved the quality as well as the presentation of those products. They had contributed to the financing and processing of crops. They had increased the productivity of the farmer and lowered the cost of foodstuffs. There existed in France many co-operatives supplying farmers with fertilizers, seeds and implements and dealing with the first processing of crops. For some years there had been a growth of such co-operatives with a view to collective use of heavy modern agricultural machinery and new techniques for higher productivity in agriculture.

In the overseas territories of the French Union, numerous co-operatives, modelled on those of France, had been set up and had restored to cultivation much abandoned land. Yields had been very greatly increased and part of that progress was indisputable due to the advantages of co-operative action. However, that development of co-operatives in France and in the French Union would not have been so successful if it had not been promoted by a policy of agricultural credit,

in effect, financial assistance from the State. At the moment, French farmers would like co-operative action to offer more help in the marketing of agricultural products; that amounted to asking for co-operative action to solve at the national level the problems which the Council was studying at the international level under items 3 (a) and 3 (b) of its agenda. That comparison was enough to show that co-operative action could only offer a partial contribution to the solution of the problem before it.

Even for that partial contribution, however, a big organizational effort was necessary. In fact to ask for co-operative action in marketing implied an attempt to adapt it to tasks which were traditionally beyond its scope, namely collective production and supply. Now, to fulfil that role co-operatives should possess extensive storage facilities in order to lessen the consequences of temporary overproduction and big resources to keep the machinery of production working in the event of poor harvests. Lastly, they should be able to control the distribution of products in order to limit the margin between producer and consumer prices.

Co-operatives set up expressly to improve the marketing of certain produce, particularly produce susceptible to climatic changes, had been extremely successful. Yet, despite the significant assistance it could give, co-operative action in itself was not enough to solve the problem of regulating the marketing of agricultural products in countries such as France. Co-operative action could only offer a partial solution because it was limited in range.

In the particular instance, those limits were not due to any lack of qualified personnel or capital. They were rather to be ascribed to the fact that individuals were often reluctant to resort to co-operative action as a means of overcoming certain difficulties. Co-operative action in the economic field corresponded to democratic action in the political field. Both were excellent weapons of defence and support for their adherents, but both were also so bound up with principle that they failed to take full advantage of favourable situations. Indeed, the Secretary-General had stressed that deep-rooted similarity between co-operative and democratic effort in chapter 2 of his report (E/2524, page 11). It was therefore clear that, on a certain commercial level, a co-operative association was at a disadvantage when competing with similar private undertakings.

Nevertheless, as the Secretary-General said in the introduction to his report, vast possibilities were open to co-operative associations both in the well-endowed and in the less-developed countries. Very properly, the report stressed the voluntary nature of membership, and equality in the treatment of members, which, in the eyes of the French delegation, were the basic characteristics of the co-operative movement.

In conclusion, he said the Secretary-General's two reports showed that the specialized agencies and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance had a very useful function to perform in assisting Governments to carry out land reforms and in promoting co-operatives. The French delegation hoped to see substantial and sustained results from that international contribution to the economic development of the under-developed countries.

He proposed to speak at a later stage on the joint draft resolution submitted by Egypt and India (E/AC.6/L.94).

Mr. McDOUGALL (Food and Agriculture Organization) recalled that his organization had played an important part in the preparation of the two reports (E/2526 and E/2524) before the Committee.

In 1951, the FAO Conference had taken note of resolution 370 (XIII) of the Economic and Social Council and had decided to implement the recommendations contained therein. Stressing how necessary it was to eliminate the defects in various existing agrarian structures and to promote the rational utilization of natural resources, it had invited its seventy-one member States to examine their agrarian structures in the light of the ECOSOC resolution and to further popular understanding of rural betterment. Furthermore, it had agreed that the question of land reform could not be isolated from the other aspects of social and economic life and indeed had to be considered as part and parcel of the general programme of economic development. Finally, while recognizing that FAO might be of assistance to member States in carrying out their land reform programmes, the Conference had expressed the opinion that, in the final analysis, basic measures had to be taken by the Governments themselves as part of their national programmes.

Consequently, the 1951 Conference had adopted a resolution urging the Governments of member States to take immediate steps to implement Economic and Social Council resolution 370 (XIII), and requesting the FAO to assemble information on land tenure and allied subjects with a view to analysing and making it available to interested member Governments; to organize, with other entities of the United Nations, such arrangements as might be useful to enable each United Nations agency to make its fullest contribution to implementing the ECOSOC resolution; to review the programme of work of FAO with a view to ensuring a high priority to problems of reform of agrarian structures; and to assist Governments, by provision of technical assistance on programmes designed to promote desirable land reforms. His organization had already published several technical monographs, prepared pursuant to those decisions.

At its seventh session, held in Rome at the end of 1953, the FAO Conference had adopted two resolutions, one specifically inviting member Governments interested in improving their agrarian structures to take full advantage of the international help available through FAO, and the other dealing with the establishment in Latin America of a centre of agrarian studies.

The question of land reform raised several problems of a political nature, among them that of the relative merits of ownership and tenancy. His organization took the view that international agencies were not in a position to express opinions on that subject, and that the problem was one to be dealt with in each country by the Government. On the other hand, help and advice from international agencies might be very valuable in matters of policy and technical problems such as agricultural settlement and security of tenure, the living and working conditions of paid agricultural workers, the creation of rural industries, the establishment of profitable agricultural holdings, farm credit and the reduction of indebtedness, encouragement to co-operative organizations, maintenance of machinery, taxation policy and so forth.

The General Assembly and the Council should continue to stress how important it was to eliminate the defects in the various existing agrarian structures. It would, however, serve little useful purpose to adopt general recommendations on the subject, in view of the diversity of the problems presented by the agrarian

structures in different countries. The time had therefore come for Governments to take concrete action on the domestic level. International bodies should concentrate on certain practical questions instead of indulging merely in general declarations.

In the opinion of FAO, any action for improving a particular system of land tenure had to take the question of yield into account. It was only by increasing the yield from the land and the productivity of the cultivator that countries could build up the social, medical and educational services which the population so greatly needed. For that reason it was necessary to regard measures of land reform as a component part of the general economic development plans.

As far as studies and exchanges of information were concerned, FAO would pursue the task it had undertaken, within the limits of its financial resources. He was gratified to note that under Council resolution 370 (XIII) the Secretary-General was to present periodically, at least once every three years, a report on the progress achieved in land reform.

Moreover, FAO was in favour of regional conferences and seminars. One such seminar had already been organized under the auspices of FAO in Brazil and had published a report which merited consideration by Governments interested in the question of land reform. Similar seminars would shortly be organized in the Middle East and the Far East.

Despite the recommendations of the General Assembly, the FAO Conference and the Economic and Social Council, FAO had only received very few requests for technical assistance in the matter of land reform. Moreover, in view of the somewhat low priority which most of the Governments concerned had accorded to land reform, those requests were unlikely to be met. While such a lack of haste could be explained on political grounds, the Governments could nevertheless take other measures which would present no such difficulty. In particular, many under-developed countries would be well-advised to introduce a more accurate system of land registration. The records would be very useful not only for purposes of land reform, but also in ensuring a more equitable burden of taxation. The Committee might therefore consider the possibility of including in its resolution a recommendation concerning the question of technical assistance and land registration.

The report on rural progress through co-operatives (E/2524) revealed both the advantages and the limitations of free co-operative associations and adequately answered the purpose which the Council had set itself.

In 1953, the FAO Conference had recommended that FAO should intensify its work relating to co-operatives and give closer attention to co-operative action in the utilization of land, water and machinery. A progress report by FAO would appear soon.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.