

ENCLOSURE 1 TO APPENDIX VIII

THE INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGICAL PROGRAM

B. E. Bykhovskiy, Academician
L. E. Rodin, Doctor of Biological Sciences

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Not only is the population of our planet growing continually, but it is doing so at an ever increasing rate. During the 1920's and 1930's the population grew 11%, but from 1951 to 1960 this rate had already gone up to 19%. The number of inhabitants of the earth is now over 3 billion. By 1975 it will reach, according to the calculations of UN experts, almost 4 billion, and by the year 2000, around 6 billion human beings.

At that time, if the present rate of food consumption is taken as our point of departure, we will need about 2 times more food than now. At present, however, about every third inhabitant of our earth is not getting enough to eat, and about 500 million people are chronically and acutely suffering from hunger. Thus, to satisfy the whole world's need for food, it is necessary to increase food production more than twofold.

Since present production of all types of grain amounts to 900-950 million tons, it will be necessary by the year 2000 to raise the production of cereals to 2.5 billion tons, which is a 2.5 increase in 35 years.

The estimates of UN, FAO and UNESCO experts, based on the study of all aspects of the food problem allow us to hope that humanity will manage to feed itself, although this task will be very difficult. We have not by far made use of all the possibilities presented by science for increasing crops. In particular, much can be expected of genetics in developing much more productive types of plants and animals. Tremendous reserves of food lie hidden in the oceans and seas. Actually, humanity already has at its disposal such a number of ways of getting food that zealous use of them would make it possible to feed a population considerably larger than the one at present. For instance, the mere loss of grain and other agricultural products which is caused by vermin, rodents and disease amounts to almost one third of the world's gross agricultural production.

Besides food products, however, clothing, shelter and a thousand different objects are required to satisfy the material needs of man.