WE ARE MEETING in the capital of an industrial country, in an industrial continent, but in fact we members of an industrial society are a small minority in an agricultural world. In Britain only 3 per cent of the working population are engaged in agriculture. In Switzerland it is 8 per cent, in France 16 per cent, in Jugo-Slavia 50 per cent. But in most countries of Asia and Africa it is 75 to 90 per cent.

The recently published report of the Lester Pearson Commission, entitled *Partners in Development*, speaks of "a new and fundamental aspect of the modern age"—namely "the awareness that we live in a village world". It is worth grasping. Dr Bunting, Dean of Agriculture at Reading University, says, "The people who experience world food shortage and the people who produce the food are to a very large extent the same people." It seems clear that the heart of the question is: How can those hungry farming families in the developing countries feed themselves and produce that bit extra to feed the rest of the population?

What are the prospects? From the point of view of world food technology the news is excellent. Scientists have evolved new strains of rice and wheat which have been coming into use in the latter part of the 1960s and they give a yield of four or five times an acre as much as before. My brother, who manages our home farm, was visited last summer by a farmer from India who has produced a wheat crop of 3 tons 7 cwt to the acre. This is more than twice the national average in Britain. Look at the movement of India's total production of grain. In 1952 it was 56,000,000 tons; by 1968 it was 95,000,000. Her imports of grain are shrinking to nearly nothing. Among economists there is an appreciable school of thought which

thinks that, the way things are going, feeding the world in terms of producing enough food will soon cease to be a problem.

Others, it is true, are less optimistic. It was a sound observation made in an article in a recent issue of an agricultural journal which stated, "Pessimists and optimists can both marshall facts in support of their attitudes. It is not surprising that the optimists can be found mainly in the ranks of scientists dealing with natural resources and technology, while those more inclined to pessimism deal with the human and institutional aspects of the problem."

Well, what about the human and institutional aspects? What are the prospects there? We must take a look at those big international organisations which are already at work on this. First, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, known as F.A.O. With their World Food Plan they have pioneered the concept that food aid should be given only where it can be shown that it will increase productivity and economic growth in the receiving country. They have moved the whole idea of aid beyond charity. Second, The International Federation of Agricultural Producers, or I.F.A.P. This is the farmers' own international body, with the Farmers' Unions of forty–one countries as members. It owes its existence to the leadership of a group of men in the immediate post-war years who felt that farmers should be responsible for feeding the world. One of the foremost of them was Lord Netherthorpe, then, as James Turner, President of the British National Farmers' Union. Third, there are the big international voluntary agencies like Oxfam. Mention must also be made of the Churches, who have done much practical work. Between them the voluntary organisations spend more money on development than does the United Nations (F.A.O.). Finally, we must think of the World Bank, who have made a fresh world survey with the thought of investing in agriculture a higher proportion of their funds than ever before. The result of their survey is the Pearson Report, which I have already referred to and which one can take as probably the most authoritative available document on development aid.

What then do the responsible people in these organisations

think about the prospects of feeding the hungry? Here are two statements from two of the weightier sources. They agree with one another, and what they have to say ought to shock us. The Pearson Report says, "Our travels and studies have convinced us that we have come to a turning point. . . . On all sides we sense a weariness and a search for new directions." And the other is taken from the Plan, just published, of the Second World Food Congress of the United Nations (FAO) at The Hague in June, 1970. It says, "One sector of the problem will be of special importance – the mobilisation of human resources. Not only are these resources ill used and badly organised, but, more serious still, there has been little attempt so far to involve people in the process of development of which they are to be the beneficiaries."

The 1970s can see a wholly new way of doing things. It is this that we are exploring and beginning to discover at our agricultural conferences at Caux, the MRA Conference Centre in Switzerland.

Caux is a very beautiful place, high up above Lake Geneva, and people from all over the world have come to conferences there. Among them were two of the main architects of modern European unity, the late Chancellor Adenauer of Germany and the former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of France, Robert Schuman. Robert Schuman said of his experience at Caux, "I am accustomed to conferences, but they are very different from this. Normally they end with great disappointment. Here we find nothing but satisfaction and hope." Today Caux is a growing-point of unity for European countries with each other. M Jean Rey, President of the Common Market Commission, has been and plans to come again this year. His view is that the Common Market must ensure that Europe takes more and not less responsibility for the developing world. Certainly the key to the unity which is growing among us farmers is that, as Europeans, we together learn to take responsibility for Asia and Africa. This unity has been found, and can go on growing, irrespective of whether or not the EFTA countries enter the Common Market. It is not a matter of politics. It is a matter of change in the character of men.

It means an entirely new attitude on the part of us Europeans and Westerners to the developing world. A South American landowner was with us for one week-end last summer. She said, "I have never before met Europeans who seem genuinely to care what happens in developing countries."

It would mean, for instance, a new concentration on the right price to the producer of developing countries' agricultural products which we import. A price for Jute aimed to give Jute Growers and workers in Pakistan and India a proper standard of living, was agreed through the sustained initiative of a man with the ideas of Caux, Robert Carmichael of France, then President of the European Jute industry. We have an international Coffee Agreement and a Sugar Agreement. If the European housewife paid 1d. a lb. more for tea and that penny went to producers in, say, Ceylon, it would do more to answer the problem than would thousands of subscriptions by housewives to a relief agency.

It would mean, again, a new approach to exports. For instance by co-operation between Indonesia and Australia, a milk processing plant has just been opened in Indonesia. It turns out 250 cans of liquid milk a minute – as much milk as the whole of the home-produced milk drunk by Indonesians (1 pint per head per year). But Australia did not manufacture the cans of milk and export them to Indonesia; she exported to Indonesia, at much lower return, the powdered milk and butterfat which was the raw material of the factory built and manned by Indonesians in their own country. This project was carried through by the Australian Executive Director, Mr Stanley Barnes, who says that he owes his conviction to the training received at conferences like Caux. He it was who secured agreement that the whole of the building work should be carried through on a basis of "no bribery"; and only fourteen months after work commenced on the foundations the factory was in production.

Behind such results lies the basic appreciation at Caux that the cause of all poverty in the modern world is selfishness somewhere, and therefore that the answer must be a moral answer. Of course, the moral answer begins with the way we

run our own businesses at home. It means on my estate, for instance, that as landlord I aim to agree a rent on which an efficient tenant farmer can make a living, rather than to get the highest rent I can from some wealthy person. Naturally, it also means that I often consult my wife, especially on decisions affecting other families.

I believe that finding this wholly new attitude will be the answer to the "weariness" referred to in the Pearson Report, the weariness of those who persevere in doing good, who feel that they know the answers but cannot get others to do what they think they ought to. I believe it can bring an explosive reversal of the situation whereby the rich get richer and the poor get poorer; it can start to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor countries. When this happens, those who are supposed to be the "beneficiaries of a process of development" will be themselves the developers, and we in the affluent countries will be the ones that learn.

We can learn now. We can learn from what His Majesty the Shah has been able to accomplish in Iran. At the start of his reign Iran was a country of poor peasant farmers living as serfs to absentee landlords who took three-fifths of their produce. In 1951 the Shah made over his Crown Lands to the peasant farmers. In 1958 the Public Domain Lands were similarly made over. And in 1962 the big private landlords were required by law to transfer their land to the peasants, retaining not more than one village each. By 1968 three million new landowners (small farmers) had come into existence. The story is told of one who, on receiving the title deeds of his land, said, "Today is the first day of my life. It is like being born again". His and his neighbours' income very soon doubled. He was able to buy a kerosene lamp so that the family could stay up late, and reading became possible. Then he got a transistor radio which he would take to work with him tied to the horn of one of his oxen. His son wants to be a tractor-driver. To help forward the social and educational development of the villages the Shah instituted the now famous Literacy Corps whereby thousands of High School graduates have opted for teaching and other work in the villages instead of orthodox military

service, in spite of the fact that they cannot thus reach higher than the rank of sergeant.

I tell this story of Iran not to advocate political action or this or that system of land tenure, but to draw attention to what has been accomplished by one man of character in a position of leadership. Few would deny that the revolution in Iran has been due to the Shah's personal qualities, his courage and determination and his care for people. There are countries today where peasant farmers live in depression as they used to do in Iran and one feels that the effects of the Iranian revolution have yet to be fully felt elsewhere.

From Africa too we hear evidence of this kind of sacrificial care which brings results. One of the men with us at Caux was a Director of a farm mechanisation training scheme in Kenya. The background of this story was told to four of us Europeans by the owner of a one thousand acre farm in the Rift Valley, Kenya, when we visited him in 1966. He said that one day, shortly after the end of the Mau-Mau emergency, he was talking to a group of men, black and white, who had decided to end bitterness and try to plan a new future for the country. One of them, an African who had been a Mau-Mau messenger, put this question to him: "How much of Africa do you think God wants you to own?" A very personal question no doubt, but the African knew that he was a Christian and thought it only natural that he should decide things according to what God wanted. At any rate, he had the humility to take the point. And then he thought of his 1,000 acres and reflected that they were not fully developed because he had not got the capital to do it. So he made arrangements to subdivide the better half of his land, 500 acres, into nine parts, which he sold through the Government to nine of his employees, who then became landowners. The remaining 500 acres he kept and intensified, and all ten farms formed a Co-operative. Production and employment were soon up 30 to 50 per cent. And the farmers in the newly founded Co-operative had had their status and income advanced on their own home ground; they did not have to be transplanted into a settlement scheme somewhere else. As the Co-operative flourished, Africans who

had bought land in the neighbourhood started to come there for help. It was decided to start up a training scheme whereby the farmers could learn at low cost to themselves how to maintain and use their machinery. That was how the present Farm Training Scheme came into being.

Now 180 trainees have been through it. It has been granted aid by the Kenya Government, who have provided bursaries for students to be trained there. And they have even produced a ploughing champion of Kenya. A private scheme like this is considered to be unique. And one of the main reasons is that each member of the staff does his best to build into the students that change in motive and character which he has himself experienced, as well as the technical skills. And first class young men from Britain, Norway, Japan and elsewhere have joined them willingly, at sacrifice of their careers, because they could see that this is a professional job accurately geared to meet the needs of the students and of Kenya.

There might be a far greater use made of farmers and farm workers in training farmers in developing countries; the language of the hands can be a good bridge, in a farmers' world, between nations and races. Frank Garner, Principal of the Royal Agricultural College, said this at Caux last summer: "We must send an army of young people to developing countries who can pass on their know-how. It is important that they should stay a good time, not only one year but many, even a lifetime". Of course they would have to be invited. But perhaps, if it were known that the agricultural industry could recruit and finance them or second them from home employment, the invitations would be forthcoming.

However, know-how, important though it is, especially when practical, is not the main point. During one Agricultural Conference at Caux an invitation came from Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma, for European farmers to go and help at the Moral Re-Armament training centre at Panchgani near Poona. We asked him what European farmers could do for India. His reply, as a matter of fact, was nothing to do with asking us to impart our know-how. India has a first-class Government Advisory Service of her own. No, his reply

was, "Teach us Indians to care for one another, then we will feed one another". Look at it how you like, if you can remember that sentence it will live with you.

May I tell you about one of my colleagues who accepted this invitation? He is a Dane, and an experienced farmer with a grown-up family. He grows apples and is a leading member of all the Danish fruit growers associations. He found it difficult to leave his farm. He told us that he had never before thought much about anyone or anything further away than his own boundary hedge, let alone India. While he was away his wife looked after the farm and sixteen of the neighbours volunteered to prune the apple trees for him. On arrival at Panchgani he was taken to visit local farmers. Hoping to help, he began to describe his methods as a grower but soon found that their methods were so different that they could not accept what he said and it seemed as if there was nothing he could teach them. Disgusted, he went to Gandhi and said he wanted to pack his bags and go home. Gandhi said, "Could you just stay over tomorrow? We have two brothers who are farmers coming in as guests; I understand there has been a feud between them and I believe you might help." "Help?" said the Dane, "I have a brother-in-law myself whom I have quarrelled with and we have not spoken for eight years. How can I help them?" Well, he talked it over with a friend and that same day wrote a letter of apology to his brother-in-law and next day told the guests what he had done. That evening true and deep reconciliation took place between these two brothers who were leaders in their village. Their farm production went up. My friend stayed on. He became known and loved by the villagers as a man rather than as an expert. After that, farmers started to ask for his advice and to act on it.

At Panchgani an important part of the training centre is the 20-acre farm. It has been started from scratch on the poorest of soil without water. No poor farmer could say he had it worse. But now it makes a profit. With its deep-litter poultry-keeping methods, and just recently its demonstration of 100-bird units to encourage local farmers, it is becoming a centre of hope, agriculturally, for miles around. The Government

Agricultural Department takes a close interest in the farm's small herd of Jersey cows, which are a gift from Australia. They have bought one of the bulls and will shortly buy a second, to be used to improve local herds. They have asked the farm also to grow seed-potatoes for their use. What interests them particularly is the spread from Panchgani to the villages around of its spirit of hard work, high standards and team work, and the desire to produce for the country rather than merely for profit. That is one reason why they have asked for the use of the Centre's buildings for a seminar on potato growing for villages in the whole area.

And what about the villagers? One small farmer now feeds sixteen families where he used to feed one. He has done this by terracing five acres with his own hands and irrigating by pumping from his well. Another, an old man of 75, came to the Centre. He said, "I have learnt to listen to the Inner Voice and I had the thought, 'India needs food. You must use all your land'. So I took out my plough and have been working six hours a day since. If I can do that, younger men can work ten hours." And he described how he had also had the thought to go and ask advice from the young Government Agricultural Adviser, aged under 30, about what seed he should grow. He swallowed his pride and did it. The result – he was the first in the village to introduce the new hybrid seeds, and their use has spread so that in his village and neighbouring villages production has doubled. Then take the three brothers who inherited their father's farm. The normal practice would have been for them to fragment the farm and possibly take legal action against each other for their separate shares. This time the brothers again listened to the Inner Voice. The solution came to the eldest and it was this: "Don't divide the land. Let the middle brother keep on the job he has in town, and the youngest finish his college studies, and I will farm all the land on behalf of the whole family and they will all get their share of the proceeds." It was agreed and there was no fragmentation. These results are what agricultural officers dream of. But they have not happened merely through technical training; they have happened as a result of change in people.

It does seem that this is the heart of the matter. Perhaps in the '70s we in the West will finally shed our propensity for telling other nations what is good for them. It will be a great day when we stop trying to dictate to them how large their families ought to be. There is already eminent opinion to support us in this. Professor Colin Clark, Director of the Agricultural Economics Institute at Oxford, reckons that the cultivable surface of the world can feed and clothe at least ten times the present population. And M Michel Cepede, the recently elected "Independent President" of the Council of FAO, says, "Attempts to adjust the number of people to the means of subsistence do not merely insult human dignity; they constitute an evasion of the problem rather than a solution." It could be that providing and exporting the secret of purity and honesty is just as essential as providing protein and technical know-how.

What we are learning through India, and the Centre at Panchgani, presents, I think, far and away our greatest opportunity to turn the course of history. My Danish friend is not the only one. Many Europeans have been, including at least five British farmers. And we have sent money – £2,000 from British farmers alone. Rajmohan Gandhi has repeatedly issued an open invitation to European men and women to go there with this secret of changing people.

Do you not think that this change in the character of man is the thing to explore in the '70s? The late Dr Frank Buchman, initiator of Moral Re-Armament, said in one of his speeches, "Human nature can be changed. That is the root of the answer. National economies can be changed. That is the fruit of the answer." And he added, "World history can be changed.That is the destiny of our age." That is what I believe. That is the way not just farmers, but everyone, can have a part in feeding the hungry. And in that way, when the hungry are fed, they will find hope and purpose as well as bread.