

TEXT OF THE INVITATION EXTENDED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND

The Government of the United States of America is of the opinion that it is desirable now for the United Nations and those nations which are associated with them in this war to begin joint consideration of the basic economic problems with which they and the world will be confronted after complete military victory shall have been attained. Accordingly, and as a first step in this direction, the Government of the United States proposes to convene, on 27th April, at some suitable place in the United States, a Conference on food and other essential agricultural products, and hereby invites the Government of New Zealand to send to that conference a small number of appropriate technical and expert representatives.

The purpose of the Conference is to provide an opportunity for an exchange of views and information with respect to the following topics and for exploring and seeking agreement in principle as to the most desirable and practicable means and methods of dealing with the following problems:—

Plans and prospects of various countries for the post-war period regarding production, import requirements or exportable surpluses of foodstuffs and other essential agricultural products, with a view to improving progressively in each country the levels of consumption within the framework of the opportunities and possibilities of an expansion of its general economic activity. Such consideration will be entirely divorced from the question of the provision of relief:

Possibilities of co-ordinating and stimulating by international action national policies looking to the improvement of nutrition and the enhancement of consumption in general:

Possibilities of setting up international agreements, arrangements, and institutions designed to promote efficient production of foodstuffs and other essential agricultural products and to ensure for the world adequate supplies of such products, with due consideration to the attainment of equitable prices from the viewpoint of both producers and consumers:

Commercial, financial, and other arrangements which will be necessary in order to enable the countries of the world to obtain the foodstuffs and other essential agricultural products which they will need and to maintain adequate markets for their own surplus production.

TEXT OF MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE DELEGATES OF THE CONFERENCE

The White House, Washington, May 14, 1943.

MY DEAR MARVIN,—

In your capacity as Chairman of the United States delegation, and as temporary Chairman of the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture, will you convey to the delegates assembled my heartfelt regret that I cannot be present in person to welcome them upon this historic occasion. Urgent matters in the prosecution of the war make it impossible for me to attend; and until we have won the unconditional surrender of our enemies, the achievement of victory must be pressed above all else.

Nevertheless, I hope that later I shall be able to meet the delegates and express to them personally my profound conviction of the importance of the task on which they are about to embark.

This is the first United Nations Conference. Together, we are fighting a common enemy. Together, also, we are working to build a world in which men shall be free to live out their lives in peace, prosperity, and security.

The broad objectives for which we work have been stated in the Atlantic Charter, the Declaration of United Nations, and at the meeting of the twenty-one American Republics at Rio de Janeiro in January, 1942. It is the purpose of this Conference to consider how best to further these policies in so far as they concern the consumption, production and distribution of food and other agricultural products in the post-war period.

We know that in the world for which we are fighting and working, the Four Freedoms must be won for all men. We know, too, that each freedom is dependent upon the others; that freedom from fear, for example, cannot be secured without freedom from want. If we are to succeed, each nation individually, and all nations collectively, must undertake these responsibilities: They must take all necessary steps to develop world food production so that it will be adequate to meet the essential nutritional needs of the world population. And they must see to it that no hindrances, whether of international trade, of transportation or of internal distribution, be allowed to prevent any nation or group of citizens within a nation from obtaining the food necessary for health. Society must meet in full its obligation to make available to all its members at least the minimum adequate nutrition. The problems with which this Conference will concern itself are the most fundamental of all human problems—for without food and clothing life itself is impossible.

In this and other United Nations conferences we shall be extending our collaboration from war problems into important new fields. Only by working together can we learn to work together, and work together we must and will.

Very sincerely yours,
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

The Honorable Marvin Jones,
The White House.