Increase wheat production 25 percent... boost the price support to farmers—25 percent! What about these proposals made by GTA General Manager M. W. Thatcher?

If acted on they would give farmers an opportunity to use their acres and their equipment more efficiently. They would provide a more fair return to wheat growers. And, especially if the increases are spread to other crops, as new farm programs develop, the benefits would multiply for everyone.

In addition, if the government does act on official recommendations to set up a defense reserve of 630 million bushels of wheat, there won’t be much wheat left over. If there is any one thing we can’t gamble on it is food, enough food to feed our people no matter what happens.

These moves are about as close to necessity as you can get. They are absolutely necessary if we are going to roll back the curtains and give farm people, and other rural people, a look at the Great Society we’ve been hearing about.

Yes, we’d be wise to keep our own cupboard well stocked, but the need for more food goes far beyond our shores. This United States of ours is a great nation, the leader in the world, and we’ve got some friends that look to us for help in their troubles.

Just for example, let’s look at the relatively new nation of India. It is in a critical area of the world today. It is our friend. But India has 450 million people. It can’t feed them all. We couldn’t even if we shipped them all our wheat and put the plow to all our productive acres. But, we can help, and we are.

The conditions in India are tragic. News reports tell us that food distress calls are pouring into the government headquarters from the towns and villages. The government has a rationing system. It has fixed the prices of rice and wheat, even set up “fair price shops,” but long lines of people wait daily before these shops to buy their rationed pittance. If they go out into the open market food is almost impossible to find, and the price is at least double the official price.

In areas of India where the situation is at its worst, so far, people are reported to be panicky in their search for something to put into their stomachs and the stomachs of their children.

True, this is happening many thousands of miles away, but in the touchy fields of international relationships it is right in your back yard.

We are rushing wheat and soybean products to India as fast as we can. Two shiploads a day, 22 million bushels a month. It helps. This food from America, Food For Peace, is preventing outright disaster. These shipments may have to continue for a long, long time. And India is only one of the nations less fortunate than our own that we are helping with food.

Now, stack up this fact against the fact that our so-called surpluses are dwindling rapidly. As knowledgeable a man as Republican Senator George Aiken of Vermont says we will run out in two years.

Increase wheat production 25 percent? Increase the price for our farmers? Yes, by all means. Food For Peace is the cheapest defense we have in this unsettled world.

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