

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS: GLOBAL FOOD POLICY

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Because of the importance of world food policy to issues of peace, commerce, and international development, it is desirable to analyze more carefully the values, policies, and premises which determine attitudes in this area. Usually disagreements on food policy are classified in two ways: (1) *Values*, particularly the competing "food values" of efficiency, security, and equity, and "non-food values" of such things as profit, ideology, and diplomatic leverage; and (2) *policies* emphasizing production, supply mechanisms (e.g., trade, market stability), and nutrition.

But in addition there seem to be recurring underlying themes, or "macro-political premises," which guide much of the thinking on world food policy. The first dichotomy is between (1) the presumption that food/nutrition deficiencies are due to exploitation of the weak by the strong, and (2) the belief that natural conditions (geography, economic supply and demand, etc.) are more to blame for these deficiencies. The second dichotomy is between those who hail improved technology in agriculture, as opposed to those who feel such capital intensive innovations can exacerbate existing economic and sociological inequality.

A Q sample was taken from a concourse generated by selecting the important points made in the overview by Hopkins, Paarlberg, and Wallerstein (1982), and each statement was encoded according to the structure on the next page, where the respective cell combinations for this sample are also shown.

In a preliminary study,  $n = 15$  Q sorts were obtained from a set of both sophisticated and naive respondents. Two factors resulted. The first was characterized by concerns about *exploitation and equity* ("Exploitation of the weak by the strong...is a conspicuous reason why the food system is less than

## Q SAMPLE STRUCTURE

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<i>Values</i>	<i>Premises</i>	<i>Policies</i>
0 none or many	A problems due to	1 production
I efficiency	exploitation	2 supply
II security	B problems due to	3 nutrition
III equity	natural condi-	0 none, many
IV non-food	tions	
	C pro-technology	
	D anti-technology	
	0 none or many	

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*Combinations:*

003: 1 2	II02: 18 19	IIIB3: 31
I00: 3	IIA2: 20 21	IIID1: 32
I01: 4 5	IIA3: 22	IIID2: 33
I02: 6 7	IIB3: 23	IIID3: 34
I03: 8	III03: 24	IV00: 35 36
IA1: 9	IIIA0: 25	IV02: 37 38
IB2: 10	III00: 26	IVA0: 39 40
IC0: 11	III01: 27	IVA1: 41
IC1: 12 13	IIIA1: 28	IVA2: 42 43
II00: 14 15	IIIA2: 29	IVB0: 44
II01: 16 17	IIIB0: 30	

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ideal," and "The problem facing the developing world is...how to reduce the poverty which is the root cause of malnutrition"). The second emphasized *efficiency and supply* ("There should be no wasted opportunity to produce, distribute, or efficiently consume food," and "A perfectly efficient global food system would be much more interconnected through trade..."). Of special interest in the main study will be a comparison of the role of macro-political premises when controlled for level of knowledge about global food policy.

*Selected Bibliography*

Hopkins, R.F., R.L. Paarlberg & M.B. Wallerstein.

*Food in the global arena.* Global Issues Series (J.E. Harf & B.T. Trout, eds.) New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.

Krebs, A.H. *Agriculture in our lives.* 2nd ed. Danville, IL: The Interstate Printers & Publishers, 1965.

Lappe, F.M. & J. Collins. *Food first: Beyond the myth of scarcity.* New York: Ballantine, 1978.

WORLD FOOD POLICY Q SAMPLE (N = 44)

(1) The poor nutrition from "junk foods" is a matter of concern. (2) For progress to occur in fighting malnutrition, the problem must somehow achieve increased political salience and visibility. (3) There should be no wasted opportunity to produce, distribute, or efficiently consume food. (4) Too many nations seek to produce at home all the food that their people will need, even though it would be less wasteful of global resources to import food from efficient producers abroad. (5) Over 50% of the world's currently productive acreage is now being used to feed livestock and poultry, despite the fact that this is a much less efficient use of grain than is direct human consumption. (6) A perfectly efficient global food system would be much more interconnected through trade and much more interdependent as a result. (7) Reducing agricultural trade barriers would do much in the short term to help assure less developed countries access to affordable quantities of imported commodities. (8) Improved nutrition can lead to a general increase in societal productivity by reducing the number of workers lost to the labor force through sickness or death. (9) The government of the Soviet Union implemented a series of agricultural policies--including forced collectivization and the confiscation of farm produce--that actually damaged the efficiency of food production. (10) Food aid may serve as a disincentive to agricultural production by depressing prices in the recipient country.

(11) In food policy we need to avoid unnecessary and wasteful duplication of effort. (12) Less devel-

oped nations, to increase their food production, should emphasize high technology, such as improved seed, fertilizer, pesticides, and techniques such as multiple cropping and mechanization. (13) Most developing countries will always be dependent to some extent on exports for staple foods. What is most important is for the developing country to maximize its comparative advantage--to produce the most of whatever commodity it is best equipped to produce. (14) Food production should be sufficiently disbursed to ensure that bad weather in one producer nation or a shift in the political or diplomatic climate would not threaten the food supplies of large numbers of consumers. (15) The ultimate goal of every country should be to be food self-sufficient. (16) For security's sake, it makes sense to sacrifice complete efficiency, to spread the risk, to put world food production eggs in more than one national basket. (17) We should make sure that farmers earn a decent living. (18) We should establish a price stabilization reserve, whereby commodities would be purchased and withheld from the market when prices are low and would be released when prices increased. (19) Surplus stocks should be provided for emergency food relief. (20) Some countries have used food aid periodically as a means of "dumping" surplus commodities in the Third World well below prevailing market prices. This practice is damaging to less developed countries which cannot compete with heavily subsidized food exports.

(21) The government of the United States is in a unique position to promote world food security but has, at times, sacrificed this for export earnings. (22) Meaningful action on global food security would require a degree of sacrifice that few food-secure nations appear ready to make. The result is the needless continuation of human suffering caused by hunger and malnutrition. (23) Most countries suffering from hunger and malnutrition have very high population growth rates. Thus, they are fortunate if expanded agricultural output permits them to maintain the status quo. (24) Most often, food exists but at prices beyond the reach of those at most direct nutritional

risk. Those policies to subsidize food for the poor, or increase the resources available to them for food purchases, are vitally important. (25) Exploitation of the weak by the strong is a common feature in today's world, and is a conspicuous reason why the food system is less than ideal. (26) Consider the ramifications of having nearly one-quarter of a nation's population suffering from the effects of malnutrition! (27) Green Revolution technologies have not been responsible for creating political, economic, and social inequalities, but they have exacerbated those which exist. (28) Landlords are directly responsible for food inequality, because of their unearned power positions in some societies. (29) Food aid has been used by repressive regimes to postpone agrarian reform. (30) In some regions food is more bountiful, and we can do little about it.

(31) The problem facing the developing world is not simply obtaining food, but how to reduce the poverty which is the root cause of malnutrition. (32) Agribusiness is damaging to small farmers, who often lack the capital to compete. (33) Developing countries should emphasize production of staple foods, not exports. (34) Some developing countries have invested in food production, but ignored equity. (35) Our global food system falls short of the ideal because so many powerful actors pursue objectives that have little to do with food system values. (36) National governments devote much energy to political, military, and ideological objectives at the expense of food system security and equity. (37) Food trade policies should serve foreign policy goals. We should deny food exports to our diplomatic adversaries. (38) We should protect our farmers from cheap foreign food imports. (39) Everyone tries to gain his own advantage instead of solving global food issues. (40) Efforts to establish a global food policy have been hampered by squabbling between the rich nations of the North and the poor countries of the South.

(41) Hired farm workers are denied the benefits of other American workers. (42) During the period of the 1972-1975 "world food crisis" the government pur-

sued food policies that brought a great deal of money into the United States, while contributing little to the security of the world food system as a whole.

(43) Less developed countries should have preferential access to world markets as a part of the New International Economic Order. (44) Higher farm wages in the United States would only result in a smaller market for United States products, or more rapid mechanization, or both. The result would be a loss of jobs for farm workers in either case.

#### NEWS, NOTES & COMMENT (continued from page 56)

##### *Q Methodology in Korea*

The following articles appeared in Korean periodicals during the past year and are written in Korean, but contain more extensive abstracts in English. Inquiries concerning all three can be directed to Dr. Kwang-iel Kim, Department of Neuropsychiatry, Hanyang University Hospital, Hanyang University, Seoul 133-00, Korea. Xeroxed copies can also be obtained from the editor of *OS*. In toto, the results show the diversity and imbalance existing in a traditional country undergoing rapid modernization.

Yong-Chon Park and Kwang-iel Kim, "[Community Leaders' Attitudes Toward Mental Illness]," *Neuropsychiatry*, 1983, 22, 218-232. A sample of  $n = 50$  community leaders (herb doctors, nurses, shamans, village leaders, teachers, pharmacists, pastors, and physicians) sorted  $N = 50$  statements relating to various aspects of mental illness in Korea (e.g., causes of illness, attitudes toward psychotics, treatment modalities, world views, etc.), yielding three factors: The *psychological humanists* deny supernaturalism and, instead, explain mental illness in terms of psychological-environmental stress, and favor psychotherapy and faith healing over more primitive methods; the *hostile rejectors*, a factor defined by three shamans, regard mental illness as incurable, believe that psychotics should be institutionally isolated, and understand mental illness in terms of primitive concepts; and the *traditional humanists* are accepting and op-