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## BIOLOGY AND AGRICULTURE IN THE POSTWAR WORLD<sup>1</sup>

By Dr. ROBERT F. GRIGGS

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

BIOLOGISTS have not measured up either to their opportunities or to their responsibilities in contributions to the war effort. It is highly important for the public welfare and for the welfare of biologists that this situation be improved. There are many clear signs that the biological arts and sciences are going to assume a much more important role in public service than they ever have before. It is important that we biologists be able to perform this increased service that we should be rendering.

For the first time in history food is being used as an instrument in national and international policy. Food policy as it is now being formulated by the Interim Commission of Food and Agriculture set up by the Hot Springs Conference of the United Nations is

<sup>1</sup> Invitation paper before a joint session of Section G and the Botanical Society of America in Cleveland, September 13, 1944 (somewhat revised).

the best device yet brought forward for preventing future wars.

How far the recommendations of the Interim Commission will be put into practice it is not now possible to say. But I believe it certain that some sort of food policy will be adopted by the civilized nations. Some policy will in fact have to be adopted. Food production in the United States has increased much more than in the first World War. It is up about one third over 1939. It has increased even more in Britain. There is good reason to suppose that further increases rather than recessions will occur. We shall have food surpluses—if we are to consider them surpluses—much greater than during the depression. In the face of the situation that is surely coming only two courses are possible: (1) we may either restrict production and put surplus producers on some sort of a

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