

The inability of deficit countries to purchase increasing quantities of food from high-cost countries having exportable surpluses is likely to react detrimentally on production unless steps are taken at an international level. The Conference has stressed the importance of stability in prices and distribution, and the study of this phase of the food problem is to be given special consideration.

In order that this might be ensured, the Conference instructed the Council of FAO to make a special study of agreements, in being or contemplated, and to prepare tentative plans suited to all major commodities which are in short supply or which might become surplus to demand under normal trading conditions. The Council was asked to submit a preliminary report of its analysis immediately following the first meeting of the Council, which is scheduled to be held in Paris on 13th June.

The Council immediately established a working group consisting of representatives of Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The commodities coming under review are wheat (including flour), sugar, coarse grains, rice, cotton, fats and oils (limited to edible oils, plus linseed-oil), coffee, rubber, wool, dairy products entering into world trade (chiefly butter, cheese, and processed milk), cocoa, and tea.

In pursuing its studies, the working party will consider the role of FAO in relation to commodity studies and problems; will analyse the supply—demand position, current and prospective, for each commodity included in its review; will review past international action on each commodity and the nature of problems arising in developing suitable international action; and, finally, will draw up recommendations for consideration of the Council. The Council will then report to member Governments.

ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

The technical activities of FAO are organized under eight Divisions—namely, Agriculture; Distribution; Economics and Statistics; Fisheries; Forestry and Forest Products; Information; Nutrition and Rural Welfare.

The Divisions are staffed with specialists in their various spheres, and are administered by men of wide experience. They are responsible for detailed analysis of the world situation in these particular fields, and supply or arrange for expert advice to member Governments on all phases of production and distribution of food and forest products. The Distribution Division has but recently been formed to exercise the functions previously carried out by IEFC. As the commodity committees of IEFC are disbanded, the Distribution Division assumes