

## SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

The constitution of FAO is in considerable detail, but its main objectives may be summarized as follows :—

- (1) To establish, by surveys, research, and collection of statistical data and other information, the proper dietary needs of the people of the world, and to provide all member nations at all times with a true and complete picture of the food situation in every land.
- (2) To endeavour to have the production of food in all countries correlated to the nutritional needs of the world's population to the end that eventually there shall be enough of the right kind of food for every one everywhere.
- (3) To promote in all possible ways the scientific development of agricultural production and to disseminate information and provide technical services to the Governments to that end.
- (4) To assist in organizing the world's marketing and distribution machinery for the handling of food and other agricultural products on a world basis in such a way as to ensure the delivery of these products to the people who need them in the most equitable manner, in the quickest and most effective way, and at the lowest price economically possible—that is, a price which will ensure the producer of these products a return commensurate with the costs of production, the maintenance of his production unit, and the enjoyment of a proper standard of living for himself, his family, and his workers.

The scope of FAO is much wider than the words of its title indicate, and includes fisheries, because of the food and fertilizing value of fish and other sea products, and forests, because of their importance in providing shelter and fulfilling the multitude of other purposes for which timber is essential.

## HOW FAO OPERATES

The general policy of FAO is laid down in its constitution, but the particular programme of work to be followed in any given year is determined by the annual conference of all member nations. Before 1947 the conference appointed an Executive Committee to which it delegated powers enabling it to carry out the recommendations made in conference. The third session of the conference, held in Geneva in 1947, replaced the Executive Committee by a Council of FAO composed of representatives of eighteen nations.

The set-up of the Organization bears many points of resemblance to that of New Zealand's Department of Agriculture. The permanent head is the Director-General, who has been assisted by a Counsellor and a Special Advisor. Technical work is carried out by five Divisions—Agriculture, Nutrition, Forestry, Fisheries, and Economics and Statistics. A Rural Welfare Division is in process of formation. Each Division is led by a Director, and there are also Directors of Administration and of Information.

Each Division is assisted by a standing committee of world experts, and considerable assistance is given by *ad hoc* committees on special subjects such as fertilizers, waste by infection, and industrial fibres.

To some extent the work of FAO has been dictated by expediency, but the basis of all operations lies in the collection of information from member countries. Only by the accumulation and analysis of detailed information on the production, prospective production, and utilization of foodstuffs and raw materials can FAO make recommendations and disseminate information to member Governments.

Under the constitution it is obligatory on all member countries to make periodic reports (in practice these have been annual) outlining prospects of production, imports and exports of food, raw materials, nutrition programmes, and any other steps being taken to improve rural welfare, together with the difficulties being encountered in achieving these objects.