

RESTRUCTURING AGRICULTURE IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION:
IPC CONFERENCE, BUDAPEST: 21-23 OCTOBER 1990

SESSIONS SUMMARY

GENERAL

1. The Conference proceedings will be edited by the IPC Secretariat and published as a book at the end of November. The price is \$35.00 and a copy can be obtained.

2. The IPC produced extremely useful country papers as background, outlining the development of agriculture and food production; policies; and structures since the end of the First World War (or earlier for some countries). These are attached. They should be retained for background briefing/speech material/country papers for the trade.

FIRST SESSION

3. Sir Michael Franklin, former Permanent Secretary of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (U.K.) got the formal agenda off to a good start with some penetrating questions to be addressed and good control over his speakers and time. Mr. Bylinski's (Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Economy (Poland)) speech was read over by Jerzy Ruzskowski. It contained no new information (text available if required) although clearly drew heavily on the World Bank/Government of Poland/EC Commission Agricultural Strategy Report.

4. Dr. Nicholeae Stefan (ex Minister of Agriculture (Romania)) spoke authoritatively about the agricultural policies being adopted in Romania, particularly in relation to foreign investment which seems to attract very generous tax and repatriation terms. A copy of his speech is attached. I consider this would be a very suitable document to make available to the trade. The Americans are pouring commercial effort into Romania if the Company representatives I met in Budapest were to be believed.

5. Federal Vice Minister Adamec gave an equally detailed speech (attached) about Czechoslovakian reform. This also could be disseminated to our trade. However, the Czechs are clearly still proceeding very cautiously and will keep subsidies in operation. He explained some very interesting policies on establishment of a market based economy in land.

6. John Mitchell (ICI) responded by warning that consumer demand might not emerge as quickly as hoped from its present depressed state. He made his usual points about the even greater need to demonopolise distribution systems than production systems. Bill Mason (also reacting) made clear that Western food processors' initial interest in Eastern and Central European countries would