

- (b) *Provision of Machinery.*—Rapid progress has been made over recent years in the mechanisation of United Kingdom agriculture, and it is now one of the most highly mechanised in the world. The number of tractors of all kinds in use has risen from some 50,000 in 1939 to over 250,000 to-day and big developments have taken place in the employment of other implements. Over the next four years farms will require replacements and new machinery at the rate of \$200 million a year. The total tractor strength will be maintained at about 275,000 to 300,000, the increase over mid-1948 being mainly in the number of heavy types, including crawlers; the number of combine harvesters will rise from 6,500 to at least 11,000, which is the figure planned for 1950, and grass driers from 400 to at least 1,500. The United Kingdom already supplies most of her own requirements of agricultural machinery and has developed a substantial and expanding export trade which is of increasing assistance to other participating countries and to world food production generally. Research workers are examining the problems of agricultural mechanisation, including the standardisation of machinery.
- (c) *Fertilisers.*—The quantity used in 1947-48 was more than double that used before the war, but consumption will need to be further increased by at least one-fifth if the expansion programme is to be carried out. Despite the fact that this year more fertilisers have been produced in the United Kingdom than ever before, the country is still dependent upon imports. For example, all supplies of potash and phosphate rock have to be imported.
- (d) *Maintenance and Improvement of Land Drainage and Water Supplies.*—By 1952-53 \$60 million will have been spent on improving main arterial water courses. About 2½ million acres of land will be improved by the clearance of farm ditches and field drainage during the next four years at a cost of \$36 million. About \$32 million will be spent on providing piped water supplies to farms. Between 1 and 1½ million acres will benefit.
- (e) *Feedingstuffs.*—Imports of feedingstuffs included in the programme for 1952-53 though more than at present, will still be below the pre-war level. The increased production of feedingstuffs at home is therefore vital to the expansion in livestock. Subject to the maximum practicable production of bread grains, farmers are at present allowed to grow fodder crops, e.g., oats, mixed corn, and to retain these crops for feeding to their own stock; they may also retain strictly limited quantities of wheat, rye and barley. There is strict control of distribution and methods of utilisation both of bread grains and of animal feedingstuffs, and virtually all the feedingstuffs imported, manufactured within the country, or sold off farms are distributed through the feedingstuffs rationing scheme. Quantities of grain of their own growing retained by farmers are taken into account in the allocation of feedingstuffs rations to them. As stated in paragraphs 47-51, controls must be continued for some considerable time, but may need to be modified to conform with the increased home production of fodder crops and with the changes in imports of feedingstuffs so that the best use is made of all available resources for achieving the desired expansion of livestock production.
- (f) *Finance.*—The total fixed investment required in the industry in four years up to the end of 1952 is estimated at approximately \$1,800 million, about half of which will be spent on machinery. Prices of farm products have been raised to help the farmer to finance this investment and to increase his livestock. *Ad hoc* grants or subsidies are also given to encourage desirable developments such as the ploughing up of grassland of three years or over. The Government has undertaken to reimburse Artificial Insemination Centres for any losses they may incur in the early years of their activity. Under the price-fixing mechanism of the Agriculture Act 1947, the farmer is assured that the prices of crops will be fixed eighteen months ahead and, in the case of livestock and livestock products, minimum prices are made known two to four years ahead.
75. The fulfilment of the programme depends ultimately on the skill and initiative of the farming community. Each county has an Agricultural Executive

Committee, consisting of representatives of farmers, landworkers and landowners to ensure by propaganda and persuasion that the crop targets are achieved and to assist farmers by the hire of machinery and supplementary labour, by contract services and by the provision of short-term credit facilities. Working with these committees is the National Agricultural Advisory Service of about 1,300 qualified technical officers, available to advise farmers on all questions of technical improvement and efficient production. Special attention is being given to grassland improvement. Where advisory methods fail to secure greater efficiency, the Agriculture Act 1947 gives the County Agricultural Executive Committee powers to enforce standards of good husbandry, even to the point of dispossessing inefficient farmers. The Act also enables the Minister of Agriculture, subject to Parliamentary approval, and for one year at a time, to authorise the committees to issue directions to farmers in order to maintain the national food supply. These powers have been invoked, where necessary, in order to ensure the essential expansion of the tillage area in 1949. Corresponding powers and machinery exist in Scotland.

76. Agricultural research will play an important part in raising efficiency. The Research Institutes guided by the Agricultural Research Council are very active, and an Agricultural Improvement Council sees that the results of research are made known and used. A series of experimental husbandry farms and horticultural stations has been set up to enable research workers to test the results of their research work under practical farming conditions.

77. The expansion programme will require about 75,000 more civilian agricultural workers than in 1946. The provision of more rural housing to enable the recruitment of more British workers and their families is an important part of the campaign. Farm workers are not called up for military service. 32,000 Poles and European Volunteer Workers had been recruited for permanent settlement by June 1948. Most of these workers are being accommodated for the time being in hostels. In addition 23,000 German prisoners of war have been allowed to stay as civilians at their own request.

78. The programme will still leave the United Kingdom the world's greatest food importer, and it would certainly be the Government's hope that, if the means of payment could be found, a still larger volume of food and feedingstuffs imports than is shown in the 1952-53 estimates could be acquired.

79. *Fishing.*—By 1952, about eighty new trawlers will be in commission with an average capacity of up to 700,000 lbs. of fish. As a result it is hoped by then to expand output by about \$32 million a year. Landings will then be well above pre-war. New factories planned by the herring industry for the production of herring oil and meal will also be in operation. Regard is being paid to the necessity of preventing over-fishing in the North Sea and the majority of the new vessels now being built will be fishing in other areas.

(2) COAL

80. The United Kingdom is almost completely dependent upon coal for industry, trade and domestic purposes since indigenous supplies of other fuels are insignificant. Coal has also been a traditional export, valuable both for itself and because it has provided an outward freight for the shipping industry and thus reduced the transport cost of imported food and raw materials.

81. The importance of coal exports is now greater than ever before since it can directly reduce the dollar expenditure of other European countries. In 1947 shipments of United States coal to the participating countries amounted to 36 million tons, at a cost (excluding freight) of about \$337 million. The estimated figures for 1948 are 25 million tons and \$275 million respectively. The substitution of this quantity of American coal by British or other European coal is clearly essential to the restoration of Europe's balance of payments. Furthermore, coal exports to Canada and Argentina can be useful earners of hard currencies.

82. For these reasons a large increase in British coal output is planned for the four-year period. Output has already recovered a good deal of ground since 1945, when it amounted to only 186 million metric tons, rising to 193 million tons (184 million deep-mined) in 1946 and 201 million tons (190 million deep-mined) in 1947. During the first 35 weeks of 1948 output has been 9 million