

# CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

## 14th Session of the Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council held its 14th Session at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from May 20 to August 1. The Council normally holds two regular sessions a year, but it had decided that for the year 1952 its work should be carried out in a single session. This session of over ten weeks was therefore an unusually long one.

The Council elected as its officers for 1952: President — Syed Amjad Ali of Pakistan, First Vice-president — Jiri Nosek of Czechoslovakia, Second Vice-president — Raymond Scheyven of Belgium.

The Council dealt with a heavy agenda. A number of important economic questions which are before the Council as a result of earlier decisions of the General Assembly and of the Council were discussed, including the following: the world economic situation, full employment and economic stability, the economic development of under-developed countries, increasing world productivity, and programme of technical assistance. On the social side the most important subjects dealt with were the report on the world social situation, developments of the efforts in the social field of the United Nations and specialized agencies, freedom of information, prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities, and matters arising from the reports of the Commission on Human Rights, the Social Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Amongst other work of the Council was the examination of the work of various Specialized Agencies on the basis of reports they submitted and the review of their programmes and plans. In all some 65 items and sub-items were dealt with.

### World Economic Situation

The Council's first major item of business was its annual review of the world economic situation. The Council considered and discussed the *World Economic Report 1950-51* prepared by the Secretary-General, which contains an analytical account of economic developments in the years 1950-1951. Accompanying the report were three supplements, *Recent Changes in Production*, *Summary of Recent Economic Developments in Africa*, and *Summary of Recent Economic Developments in the Middle East*. Separate but related debates were held on the reports of the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the Economic Commission for Latin America, and of the International Monetary Fund. In these debates attention was drawn to some unusual features in the world economic situation: balance of payments difficulties continue notwithstanding a high level of activity; inflationary and deflationary tendencies exist side by side: in certain consumer goods industries demand has declined and some unemployment has appeared despite a general rise in industrial output. Attention was also directed to the violent fluctuations in foreign exchange earnings which followed the wide fluctuations in the prices of primary product exports, and the effect of such fluctuations on plans for economic development. The need for developing under-developed economies in the interest of both under-developed countries and world stability was emphasized. Reference was made to the coming readjustment which would require to be made to a lower level of defence expenditure. The importance of expanding and liberalizing world trade was particularly stressed, as well as the need for effective measures to bring about a stable growth in the volume and value of international trade as an essential counterpart to the measures for increasing the international flow of capital to the under-developed countries.

The Canadian representative made a statement which drew attention to the importance of the control of inflation in all countries to the achievement of stability.