

IV SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

Introduction

One of the commitments which states assumed when signing the Charter of the United Nations in 1945 was to work for "the conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations". Members of the United Nations undertook to promote "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development; solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems; and international cultural and educational co-operation". In the ten years since the United Nations was established, ten Specialized Agencies have been the chief instruments through which member states have pooled their efforts and resources in seeking to attain these aims.

While ten Specialized Agencies are now in existence, and some details of the scope and variety of their work are given later in this section, it was envisaged, when the Charter was signed, that there would be 12 Specialized Agencies. The two which have not come into existence are the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), and the International Trade Organization (ITO). The former (IMCO)¹, was designed to promote co-operation among governments in international shipping problems and it has not been established because its Convention has not been ratified by the required 21 nations, of which seven shall each have a total tonnage of not less than one million gross tons; Canada ratified the Convention on October 30, 1948, becoming the first country to do so; since then, 17 other countries have ratified—Argentina, France, Greece, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, Belgium, Burma, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Israel, Mexico and Switzerland—but three more ratifications are still required. The proposed charter of the International Trade Organization (ITO) has also not been ratified by the required number of countries; however, a somewhat less comprehensive set of rules for international trade has been applied since 1947 on a provisional basis by the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)². While the Contracting Parties to GATT do not operate as part of the United Nations, they use the services of the Secretariat of the Interim Commission for the International Trade Organization.

Canada has joined all ten of the Specialized Agencies now in existence and has tried to encourage and develop their programmes. In general, the position of the Canadian Government has been that the Specialized Agencies should plan their work according to priority of urgency and effectiveness; that they should not allow these programmes to grow beyond the extent of available resources; that they should co-ordinate their activities amongst themselves and with the United Nations; and that they should demonstrate techniques, give guidance and generally stimulate national efforts rather than engage themselves in direct operations.

By 1955, the Specialized Agencies had passed through the formative stage and were setting out on long-range programmes, each in its own field

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1948*, pp. 124-5, and also "Transport and Communications Commission" above, p. 57.

²See "International Machinery for Trade Co-operation" above, p. 41 and also *Canada and the United Nations 1951-52*, p. 108.