

for a period of four years. The remaining functional commissions have a three-year term although the Narcotic Drugs Commission provides for 10 of its 15 members to serve for an indefinite period and Canada has been appointed as one of the countries serving for this indefinite term¹.

Transport and Communications Commission

The Transport and Communications Commission meets every second year; it held its eighth session at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from January 7-18, 1957. At this session it reviewed progress made in the general field of transport and communications, with special reference to the unification of maritime tonnage measurement, the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic, the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring (and the additional protocol thereto), the adoption of minimum uniform regulations for the licensing of motor vehicle drivers, international travel questions, passport and frontier formalities, and the transport of dangerous goods.

The main recommendations adopted by the Commission at its eighth session dealt with the establishment of two committees of experts: the first to study and report on the differences between the main rules governing maritime tonnage measurement at present in force and their apparent shortcomings; and the second committee of experts to revise the list of dangerous goods, allotting to each substance a number for ready identification and studying the problem of packing and related matters with the assistance of a consultant to make a comparative study of the present system of packing regulations. The Commission requested ECOSOC to invite eligible governments which have not already ratified the 1949 Road Traffic Convention and the Customs Conventions, to do so at an early date. Other Committee recommendations dealt with the international recognition of valid domestic driving permits and with the development of tourism by assisting international travel, particularly by easing passport and frontier formalities.

The Commission also reviewed a number of other questions such as a uniform system of road signs and signals, the pollution of sea water by oil, the Convention on the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), transport statistics, and discrimination in transport insurance. However, no formal recommendations were made on these subjects.

Although Canada has never served on the Transport and Communications Commission, the fact that Canada has ratified the following international instruments which concern transport and communications matters is indicative of Canada's interest in the Committee's work: the Convention for the Prevention of the Pollution of the Sea by Oil, the Convention on the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (a few ratifications are still required to bring the latter organization into being)², the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, and the Convention Concerning Customs Facilities for Touring.

¹An indefinite term on this Commission is allotted to states which are important drug producing or drug manufacturing countries, or countries in which illicit traffic in narcotic drugs constitutes a serious problem.

²See below p. 74.