

IV SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

Introduction

In 1945 when the Charter of the United Nations was signed, one of the commitments which the signing nations assumed 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"¹. In the eleven years since the United Nations was established, the Specialized Agencies have been the chief instruments through which member states have pooled their efforts and resources in seeking to attain these aims.

Ten Specialized Agencies are now in existence, and some details of their work are given later in this chapter. But 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 Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), and the International Trade Organization (ITO). The former (IMCO)², was 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. 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)³. 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. The Contracting Parties, in 1954, negotiated an agreement for a new Organization for Trade Co-operation (OTC)⁴ to administer GATT, but this agreement has not yet been ratified by governments.

Canada is a member of all the Specialized Agencies and has tried to encourage and develop their programmes. The Canadian Government has consistently taken the position that the Specialized Agencies should plan their work so as to achieve maximum effectiveness within a system of priorities; that they should not allow their activities to grow beyond the extent of available resources; that they should co-ordinate their programmes

¹Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nations.

²See *Canada and the United Nations 1948*, pp. 124-5 and also "Transport and Communications Commission" above, p. 38.

³See "International Trade and International Commodity Problems" above, pp. 48-50.

⁴*Ibid.*