

At recent meetings, particularly at the thirteenth session, the Council has given serious thought to the need for and the effectiveness of the operations of its functional commissions and sub-commissions. As a result, certain of these bodies have been eliminated and the number of meetings reduced. A proportion of the work previously done by the functional commissions has been passed to the Council itself, the United Nations Secretariat and the Specialized Agencies. This action has been taken with the aim of increasing efficiency and reducing expense.

The Council at the thirteenth session gave the question of its own organization much attention. An *ad hoc* committee, set up to study this matter and report to the Council, recommended that instead of two annual sessions the Council should hold three, each of which would consider questions of a related nature. The first would begin early in February and discuss social and humanitarian questions; the second would meet early in April to discuss economic questions; the third session would begin as late in the year as possible but before the session of the General Assembly and would be primarily concerned with problems of co-ordination and priorities and the consideration of reports of the Specialized Agencies. A good deal of opposition developed in the Council to this suggestion for a rather drastic change in the Council's method of operation. The Council eventually decided to continue to hold two regular sessions annually but that the second session would be adjourned until during or after the General Assembly session, at which time the Council would take up matters arising from the decisions of the Assembly. This resumed session would also plan the Council's basic annual work programme. It was also decided that, without any rigid allocation of items, an effort would be made to group subjects of a similar nature. As far as possible major economic items would be considered at the first session of the year and all others would be taken up at the second session.

Technical Assistance

One of the most significant developments in international affairs since the Second World War has been the emergence of the idea of technical assistance to under-developed countries. The technical assistance activities of the United Nations, the United States "Point Four Programme", and the Colombo Plan have all grown from the concept that the under-developed countries of the world should be helped to help themselves, that they should be able to call on the more economically advanced countries for the technical knowledge and skills which would enable them to make the best use of their own resources.

The United Nations and most of the Specialized Agencies, from their inception, gave technical assistance as part of their regular activities, financed out of their ordinary budgets. These activities were so successful that a more ambitious programme was called for. The United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, drawn up by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), was