

SECTION II

ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS

The work of the Executive Committee and the Preparatory Commission was almost entirely organizational in character. The first part of the First Session of the General Assembly was also intended to be largely organizational, but as it happened, and as was foreseen by the Canadian representatives to the two preparatory bodies, it was found impossible, even had it been desirable, to exclude from consideration the more urgent problems of substance. In the event, the General Assembly spent almost as much time on questions of policy as on organizational problems.

The organizational phase in the establishment of the United Nations is of considerable interest since it was in a sense a review and a test of the principles embodied in the Charter. Discussions of details of application of these principles brought out in a few instances some inadequacies in the Charter. This was particularly so in the case of the Trusteeship Council, which could not be set up at the same time as the other Councils owing to a procedural gap in the Charter. In the great majority of cases, however, the terms of the Charter were found to provide a practicable basis for the creation of an effective organization.

In a number of instances discussions during the organizational phase confirmed the views on general principles which were expressed by the Canadian delegation at the San Francisco Conference. Two issues, in particular, provided the underlying themes of much of the discussion: (1) The problem of reconciling the criteria of personal competence with the representation of different geographical areas in the selection of chairmen of committees and members of the Secretariat. A similar issue arose in the election of states to the Councils. Here it was necessary also to consider the contribution which individual states could make to furthering the purposes of the Organization and at the same time to take into account the need to make the Councils as broadly representative as possible of different geographical areas. (2) The problem of reconciling divergent views of the powers of the General Assembly. Some delegations took a restrictive view of its competence in the field of international peace and security, while others emphasized the position of the Assembly as the principal organ of the United Nations, and maintained that no limitations should be placed upon any of the powers granted to it under the Charter.