

without the consent of all the parties concerned. We do not look upon 'self-determination' as a new idea because, as we see it, many countries, including our own, owe their existence to the practical application over a period of time of this very idea. That is why we can have no objection to its application in the future—under generally approved safeguards."

## Functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council

At the end of December 1955 there were eight functional commissions of ECOSOC; these were the Transport and Communications, Statistical, Population, Social, Status of Women, Human Rights, Narcotic Drugs, and International Commodity Trade<sup>1</sup> Commissions. ECOSOC, at its eighteenth session in 1954, decided to discontinue the Fiscal Commission, and the new International Commodity Trade Commission began its work in January 1955. Of the eight functional commissions, Canada was a member of the following four: Statistical (until December 31, 1959); Population (until December 31, 1956); Narcotic Drugs (indefinite term); and International Commodity Trade (until December 31, 1956). Canada was represented at meetings of the commissions of which it is a member, but the Statistical Commission held no sessions during the period under review (its sessions are held in the spring of even-numbered years<sup>2</sup>).

### Transport and Communications Commission

The Transport and Communications Commission held its seventh session from February 7-15, 1955 and reviewed a number of questions of importance. It received the report of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods which included detailed recommendations about the classification, listing and labelling of dangerous goods, the shipping documents for these goods, and procedures to be followed in working out uniform regulations concerning their packing. The report was then referred to the Economic and Social Council and circulated to member states by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a request for comments; when a sufficient number of replies have been received the Committee of Experts will be reconvened and asked to make final recommendations for the eighth session of the Commission which will meet early in 1957.

The Commission was informed by the Secretariat of developments since its sixth session on subjects which it had previously considered including regional improvement of inland transport, the unification of maritime tonnage measurement, co-ordination of the activities of the Specialized Agencies in the field of transport and communications and the collection of transport statistics. It went on to deal with two matters pertaining to road transport,—the draft Protocol on a Uniform System of Road Signs and Signals, and the report of a Committee of Experts on the establishment of minimum uniform regulations for the licensing of motor vehicle drivers. ECOSOC was asked to recommend to governments that they consider the provisions of the draft Protocol as recommended practices when revising their systems of road signs and signals while the recommendations on licensing of drivers were referred to member governments for comment. There was also discussion of the question of passports and frontier formalities and of discrimination in transport insurance.

<sup>1</sup>See "International Commodity Trade" above, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup>For the pattern of meetings of these functional commissions which was adopted experimentally by ECOSOC, see *Canada and the United Nations 1953-54*, pp. 61-62.