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REFLECTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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BY

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PREFACE

So many friends, new and old, have helped me in so many ways while writing this book that, were I to mention all by name, I should seem tedious, some only ungracious. I shall therefore mention none, but express my most sincere thanks to all collectively, especially to those who have so kindly let me have the benefit of their comments on one draft chapter or another. Nothing has impressed me more during my travels than the readiness and the courtesy with which busy officials in all the countries I have visited have sacrificed their time to answering my questions, to discussing problems often somewhat remote from their immediate preoccupations and even to reading typescripts; I am most grateful.

Two exceptions to the rule of anonymity I will make in order to acknowledge a long standing debt of gratitude to the Rockefeller Foundation for many acts of beneficence and in order to thank the United Nations Library in Geneva for their unremitting service. No library could have been more helpful or better contrived to save the reader's time.

A. L.

Geneva,
March 1956

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ABBREVIATIONS

In accordance with normal practice in international circles I have employed the following abbreviations and, in deference to the general desire among international officials to replace when possible lengthy titles by brief words, have given the abbreviations without fullstops.

ACC	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.
ECAFE	Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe.
ECLA	Economic Commission for Latin America.
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council.
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization.
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization.
ILO	International Labour Organisation.
ITO	International Trade Organization.
ITU	International Telecommunication Union.
TAB	Technical Assistance Board.
TAC	Technical Assistance Committee.
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Co-operation.
UN	United Nations.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
UPU	Universal Postal Union.
WHO	World Health Organization.
WMO	World Meteorological Organization.

In addition I use on occasion the following abbreviated forms: the Fund for the International Monetary Fund, the Bank for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the League for the League of Nations.

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE entitled this book 'Reflections on International Administration'. It is not more. I have no desire to add another textbook to the vast library on principles of administration that already exists. International administration, however, presents a number of special problems because it is international, and it is with these problems, or certain of them, that I am concerned. I say certain of them because, in fact, I confine myself to problems of administrative policy and do not attempt to deal with the details of administrative routine.

These reflections are naturally coloured by my own experience during twenty-five years as an international official. But great changes have occurred since the last world war at once in the atmosphere in which international work is conducted, in the constitutional procedures and machinery employed, and in the uses to which that machinery is put. I have accordingly spent a considerable amount of time in discussing with the officials of various international bodies the administrative problems that present themselves today and how those problems are being tackled and still more time in studying the records of post-war international organizations.

I mention certain of the changes in the nature of the work in Chapter II; but there are other changes in the structure and procedure of international institutions and in the political climate which affect profoundly the atmosphere in which the work is done, and the status of the international official as well as the scope of his activities.

The balance of power has shifted away from Europe, which was predominant in the League, to the United States of America and the U.S.S.R., and the balance of voting power to blocs of other states which derive their influence in Assemblies and Conferences rather from the constitutional fact of the majority vote and the historical accident of their existence than from the magnitude of their individual or collective contribution to the world's wealth or security. In the League, owing to the unanimity rule, the balance of voting power was of less importance. That rule frequently made it difficult to reach an agreement of substance. It was impossible to force a resolution through which ran counter to the weight of effective opinion in the world; it might prove impossible owing to the intransigence of one

state or another to secure the adoption of a resolution which did accurately express world opinion. Much was not done which might have been done with advantage to the vast majority of peoples. Resolutions were passed which lacked clarity because they had been pared to vanishing point to meet the preoccupations of states enjoying the right of *liberum veto*. The Assembly tended to meet the difficulty caused by the unanimity rule in the same manner as the Council of Trent 300 years ago.

> Perhaps he should hit upon the truth, [remarks Polano in his history of the Council] that should say, that, debating contrary opinions in framing the Decree, every party did refuse words contrary to his opinion, and all rested in those which he thought might be fitted to his own meaning: so that the expression of the matter became capable of divers interpretations. But this would not serve to resolve the doubt proposed, and to find what the Council was: because it is to give it a unity of words, and contrariety of meanings. But that which hath been related in this particular, and perhaps did happen in many matters, occurred not in condemning the Lutheran opinions, where all did agree, with an exquisite unity.[1]

So, too, the Assembly of the League gave birth to verbal chameleons, but if a resolution with substance was adopted there was a reasonable assurance that it reflected an effective opinion, an exquisite unity, and would lead to some result; and the rule of law was respected.

Today a vote adopted by a majority composed of some combination between the members of a couple of political blocs may ventilate an opinion of real importance; it may on the contrary have no practical significance because the only countries which could implement it have voted against it; it may be nothing more than a tactical move. While the resolutions of the League often lacked substance in their wording, those of the United Nations often lack substance in their backing. But whether a vote today is likely to lead to any immediate action or not it may with the stamp of the United Nations upon it exercise a certain influence over opinion. Consequently a great deal of the time of the General Assembly is devoted, not to seeking agreements among states to act or abstain from acting in a certain manner, not to instructing the administration to perform some useful task, but to moves in the game of politics taken by states whose power derives largely from the fact that they have a vote to cast. In this game they

[1] *The History of the Council of Trent.* Pietro Soave Polano. Translated by Sir Nathaniel Brent, 1676, pp. 215–16.

are not necessarily interested in the rule of law; they are interested in exercising the power that a paper ballot sheet gives them. They are interested in registering an opinion and through the majority rule giving it the stamp of the United Nations.

The influence of the majority rule on the transaction of business has naturally been greater in the United Nations than in the specialized agencies, though it makes itself felt also in the Conferences of these institutions. It has affected both the atmosphere in which the international official has to work and the work itself, especially at the New York headquarters. Apart from occupying much time on discussions not intended to result in any action its main effects have been greatly to increase the uncertainty of even the most carefully prepared proposal being adopted on its merits, as any point may become a bargaining point, and to subject what used to be considered technical questions rather outside the political market to power or voting power politics. In a wider setting its effect has been to shift power away from the United Nations in New York to the specialized agencies, regional commissions, and other regional and operative bodies. In the specialized agencies it has caused a dispersion of effort and a certain financial irresponsibility, both of which have been a cause of concern to the international administrator. Some specialized agencies have met this danger in part by substituting biennial for annual Conferences.

Another major change in the conditions under which the international official has to work has been caused by the growth of *étatism* throughout the world, an *étatism* which has rendered governments unwilling to seek an objective study of the problems they have to solve. Before the war it was the practice to appoint advisory bodies composed of individuals acting in a personal capacity entrusted with the task of examining questions dispassionately; today the political organs of international institutions compose such bodies as a rule only of persons who receive prior instructions from their governments and bargain rather than discuss. The best solution is rarely sought, only the easiest compromise. As a result the only body left whose duty it is to view questions objectively and with the purpose of the Charter and the supplementary constituent documents in mind is the Secretariat. In some institutions this solitary responsibility has increased the influence of the Secretariat; but national officials on whom so much power devolves in *étatistic* states are frequently and not unnaturally inclined to resist the development of a powerful international civil service and in New York the permanent delega-

tions constitute a formidable barrier between the Secretariat and the national administrations. On the other hand the shift in power from the legislature to the administration in national governments has greatly increased the scope for international co-operation at the administrative level and has as we shall see later in this book profoundly affected the nature and scope of the international official's activities.

The third factor affecting the atmosphere in which that work has to be done, and the work itself, is of course the cold war. In New York almost all undertakings and the effectiveness of all the organs of the United Nations have suffered from it. Agreement has not been reached because it has not been sought; almost every committee, however humble or technical its functions, has been used as a sounding-board for political propaganda, and the position of the international official working for governments which have persistently failed to act in accordance with their Charter obligations, for they must work for the governments of all Member States, has been rendered distressingly difficult.

In some ways, however, the political atmosphere is more favourable to international work than it ever was in the inter-war period and the international official has benefited. Though the machinery for international co-operation may be abused today, the need for such machinery is much more fully and generally recognized than in the past. Governments are much more willing to vote the necessary funds and no state of major importance stands aloof, though some states for no fault of their own have been excluded. Although the dispersion of effort among a large number of scattered organizations has caused serious administrative difficulties and will continue to do so, it has at the same time facilitated the voting of budgets, because the Conferences of the specialized agencies are manned by persons with a professional interest in the work.

This dispersion of effort, which I discuss in Chapter X, is the last of the post-war changes that I should mention here. It has complicated the transaction of international business and increased its costs; it has rendered it more difficult to formulate far-reaching policies; it has involved some risk of the specialized agencies becoming too specialized and narrow in outlook. But it has, in varying degrees, relieved these agencies of the incubus of an overcharged political atmosphere, thus lessening the difficulty of maintaining the morale of the staff, and at a time in history when the art of handling a large

international staff has certainly not been mastered it has made it possible to keep down the size of the various Secretariats to manageable proportions.

So many institutions have been set up to facilitate international co-operation that it would be impossible to deal with them all. Nor indeed would it be useful to attempt to do so when only broad principles are under consideration. My purpose is not to describe, still less to criticize, the administrative system as a whole of any organization, but to discuss principles. For the purposes of this discussion it has been necessary to give examples of procedures adopted by one institution or another. These examples are employed for illustrative purposes only; if more have been taken from one institution than from another, that fact has no critical implication—favourable or unfavourable. Such criticisms as are made refer always to particular procedures and never to the whole administration or organization of an office. It is well to remember also that administrative usages are in a state of constant flux and that procedures quoted by way of illustration may have been modified. In fact I have drawn my evidence mainly from the League of Nations, the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, and the International Civil Aviation Organization. I have, however, had the advantage of visiting other institutions in Washington, Paris, Geneva, and elsewhere and discussing certain of their problems with members of their staffs. With such operative bodies as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or the various relief organizations set up after the First and Second World Wars I do not deal, nor except occasionally to illustrate a point do I deal with regional bodies. They all in their different ways present a number of special problems which are not relevant to the central theme of this book.

The fundamental problems which are peculiar to an international administration and distinguish it from national services, are persistent and have changed little with changing times. The conditions determining their solution, however, are frequently substantially different today from those which existed in the inter-war period. It would be a mistake to assume that principles and methods of administration which had proved their worth prior to 1939 are necessarily valid today. Indeed the danger in writing this book of which I have been most constantly conscious is that of assuming that because

some procedure proved satisfactory in the past it is necessarily appropriate today. International administration, moreover, is still in an experimental stage and is likely to remain empirical for a long time to come. To be dogmatic is to be stupid.

There are, however, I believe, certain principles of administration which are valid in almost all circumstances and certain others which are applicable to the conditions which exist today and can with varying degrees of certitude be ascertained. None of these principles are rigid rules. They are not and can never be more than appropriate lines of thought or rough guides to conduct.

Naturally the principles least affected by current events or opinion or objectives are those relating to personnel policy, for human nature is more constant than human politics. I begin, therefore, with personnel questions and move from them to problems of the mechanics of international co-operation within the framework of existing institutions. That framework is taken for granted and not discussed. Were it changed by the amendment of the Charter or of the Conventions under which specialized agencies have been established the conditions that present themselves to the administrator might be different and new problems present themselves. Such theoretical issues fall outside the scope of this book.

The book is divided into two parts. Five questions are considered in *Part I*:

1. What are the peculiarities in the life or the work of an international official that should be taken into consideration by any person responsible for determining the administrative policies and practices appropriate for an institution employing a staff of mixed nationality?
2. What are the special qualities required of an international official?
3. What means should be employed to find and recruit an efficient staff from the wide-flung area covered by the states members of an inter-continental organization?
4. What administrative principles should be applied in order to constitute and maintain a harmonious, loyal, and efficient working group out of a miscellany of individuals who differ in education, language, experience, and beliefs?
5. What administrative rules should be applied in order to protect this group against the risk of a failure on the part of any member of it, or of the head of the administration, or of one of the

political organs of the institution employing it, or of a single Member State to act in the interests of that institution?

There are probably no definitive answers, true in all circumstances, to any of these questions. Indeed I am inclined to the view that to the last three questions the most important answer is indirect and is to be found in the answer to another, supplementary, question, namely: In what attitude of mind should these questions be approached? Nearly all the great errors in international personnel policy that have come to my notice, and there have been serious and tragic errors in the past, spring either from a meanness of mind or owing to lack of imagination from the automatic application of administrative principles that have been tested on some national scene to the international arena. I shall have done all I seek to do if I convince some senior international officials, who are not already convinced of that fact, that in the quite difficult art of international administration what is required above all is leadership and an almost blind trust in one's staff.

Though the questions put in Part I may not be subject to specific answers of universal validity, it is relatively easy to formulate certain principles which should prove of value as a guide when some problem of personnel policy presents itself in an unfamiliar form. Part II involves more serious difficulties.

In this second part, I discuss the functions of the administration in relation to the political organs of an international institution, the administrative implications of the dispersion of effort caused by the creation of a number of independent international organizations and certain problems of research, budgeting and financial control peculiar to such organizations.

A major purpose of all the constitutions of international organizations is to provide machinery to facilitate agreement in the various fields of policy and endeavour with which they deal. This machinery always includes a council and almost always an Assembly or Conference. The administration is created to help to operate this machinery and not to modify it. That is why I do not discuss the efficiency of the constitutional mechanism or the wisdom of the various constitutions. All the councils, however, build up an ancillary structure of commissions and committees; and to advise regarding the form of this ancillary structure does fall within the competence of the head of any international administration. The form of that structure is therefore among the subjects treated in this book.

The agreements that states may conclude through the political organs of an international institution relate either (1) to their mutual behaviour—for instance the preservation of peace or the conclusion of a convention on the treatment of foreign enterprises—or (2) to promises of parallel behaviour in domestic matters—for instance the conclusion of a convention regarding the regulation of hours of work —or (3) to the action that the organization itself, or some specially established organization, should take in the interest of all or the interest of one or more Member States—for instance technical assistance or the establishment of an epidemiological service or the reconstruction of a devastated area.

Whatever the form of the agreement it is the duty of the administration to do all in its power to ensure:

1. that machinery exists through which the political organs may be able to anticipate needs before they become so acute as to cause serious international friction or widespread discomfort;

2. that machinery exists for the objective analysis and discussion of the problems that present themselves so that the solutions reached are something more than and better than might be expected to result from the application of bargaining or power politics to their solution;

3. that the solution ultimately found, the agreement reached, is such in substance and in form as to afford reasonable grounds for assuming that it will be carried out by a government when action lies with governments and can be effectively carried out by the organization when action lies with it;

4. that that solution is compatible with the purposes for which the institution the administration serves was founded.

The role of the administration in connexion with the design of the ancillary machinery or with these general objectives of policy, a role in part advisory, in part executive and in part simply secretarial, is the subject matter of Chapters VII, VIII, IX, and XI. These chapters, however, are confined to councils, executive boards, and their committees; they do not deal with the highest political instances, Assemblies and Conferences. I should indeed have little to add to the extensive literature on the handling of Conferences that exists,[1] and have preferred to concentrate my attention on the preparatory and executive work falling within the competence of councils and the administrative officers.

[1] See in particular: *A Guide to the Practice of International Conferences*. V. D. Pastuhov. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

In Chapter X I discuss the machinery for co-ordinating the work of the various members of the United Nations family and the inter-office and intra-office implications of the need for co-ordination. The second part of this chapter dealing with the internal office administration is designed to complement the chapter in Part I dealing with morale. Though the angles of approach in the two chapters are quite different, the same general conclusion is reached, namely that what is required for the successful administration of an international office is not an elaborate system of controls and counter controls, but the overt application of principles of administrative liberalism. That liberalism would, I believe, be facilitated and promoted by the more general adoption of the processes of financial supervision and the concentration of financial responsibility advocated in the last chapter.

PART I

PERSONNEL POLICY

I

CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LIFE OF INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS

1. *Aspects of Life Considered*

ADMINISTRATION is an art, not a science. Its purpose is always to achieve a desired result with a minimum expenditure of human and financial resources. With this purpose in mind the administrator must select and maintain an efficient, willing, and loyal staff. A staff will not be at once efficient, willing, and loyal unless its morale is high. The morale of a staff is affected both by the conditions under which it works and by the life its members lead outside the office. Both the work and the life of an international official differ widely from those of national officials, and those differences raise problems that must be understood and solved by the head of an international administration. I propose in this and the following chapter therefore to consider certain of the special characteristics of the life and work of international officials.

I shall not attempt to give even a thumbnail sketch of life in an international service, but shall select only certain characteristics of that life which raise administrative problems rather different from those that normally arise in national service, and, in doing so, shall confine my attention to officials who intend to make their career in international work. When an international organization recruits or borrows officials for short-time service quite different problems present themselves, most of which relate to the work done rather than to the life led.

There has been a very rapid development of international inter-

course during the last thirty to forty years and many different forms of international organization have been created. I shall devote my attention mainly to intergovernmental organizations the membership of which includes states of widely different culture and the staff of which reflects its membership; for it is in these organizations that the problems peculiar to international, as distinguished from national, administration present themselves with the greatest clarity—and prove the most intractable. The administration of such regional bodies as the Organization for European Economic Co-operation or such supra-national institutions as the European Coal and Steel Community presents fewer and less profound difficulties than does that of the United Nations or its specialized agencies. I shall draw my illustrations in this chapter largely from the interwar period, first because I am most familiar with it and secondly because certain of the most serious psychological problems do not make themselves apparent in the early years of the life of an international organization and are in fact not yet fully appreciated in post-war organizations.

2. *Social Isolation*

The life of officials employed by an international organization will be largely determined by the locality in which that organization is situated; but it is likely to have certain distinctive features in all cases. Of these the most important is that apart from those who have been recruited locally the great majority of the staff have been uprooted and are compelled to live away from what is familiar to them. They will find themselves in varying degrees isolated. In their daily intercourse with their colleagues and their friends most of them will have to employ some language other than their mother tongue. Both their physical and their social environment will be disconnected from all those childhood influences that go to shape character, habit of thought, tastes, and outlook. This break in the normal sequence of experience, coupled with linguistic restrictions, gives rise not infrequently to a certain feeling of inferiority and in almost all cases creates certain inhibitions.

At first the strangeness of the scene may prove interesting and stimulating, but gradually, as the need for self expression replaces the passive interest of acquiring a knowledge and understanding of that scene, the limitations imposed to some extent by language but more enduringly by education and cultural background will make themselves felt. The international official very rarely becomes com-

pletely integrated in the local society in which he lives and the international society of which he forms a part never affords full scope for the natural development of the individual personality from its own cultural roots. It is a society based originally on certain tacitly accepted restrictions on self expression and gradually developing from the common experience of its members, a common experience, however, which is in each case divorced from childhood and educational background. The individual, therefore, dumped, as it were, in a community of which he can never form an integral part and limited in self expression, must find either in his work or in some other way an outlet for whatever part of his personality is thus suppressed. If he fails to do so, he gradually shrivels up. The risks of desiccation are greatest among the members of the clerical staff and those more senior officials—translators, precis writers, &c.—who are engaged on repetitive work. As we shall see later, it is essential to give the latter class adequate opportunity for creative work outside the office.

The degree of isolation felt will depend largely on the contacts that are established with the local society. But a miscellaneous group of foreigners engaged upon work of little direct local interest is unlikely in any country to establish very close links with that society. The smaller the international group the better are its chances of being accepted as a constituent part of, rather than an extraneous element in, the community in which it is placed. It fell to my lot to spend twenty years in Geneva as a member of a large organization and six years in Princeton as a member of a very small group of international officials, and although I view Geneva, the place where my children were born and brought up, almost as my home town, there was a striking contrast in neighbourly relations. This contrast was no doubt in part due to the fact that my department were guests of the various learned bodies in Princeton and no hosts are so full of spontaneous kindness as the Americans. I refer of course to private hosts, not host governments. It was due in part also to the pervasive friendliness of the American people. But it would be unjust at once to the Genevese and to the Parisians, the Romans and the citizens of any other towns in which international organizations are situated to overlook the essential fact that when a mixed foreign group is small it is, and when it is large it is not, possible to ingest it.

In Geneva a limited number of persons on either side saw a great deal of each other; there were a few common meeting places such as the golf course, the tennis club, the ski-ing grounds; there were a few

mixed marriages, and there gradually developed I believe a mutual respect. Certainly there was a widespread respect among my colleagues for the Swiss. But there was little intimacy, and as a result the society in which the officials moved outside the office tended to be composed of the same people as met each other in the course of the day's work—colleagues, government representatives stationed in Geneva, committee members, delegates.

The experience of international officials living in Geneva today and of those whose headquarters are in New York, Paris, or Rome is not dissimilar, though conditions vary from one country to another. I discuss certain of these local differences in a later section. Whatever the country, however, the international official must remain external to the society in which he lives. He is not a working partner; he can play no part in either municipal or national politics. He must accept the social organization for better or worse as he finds it. He is always in the final analysis a guest. As a guest he must act and speak with circumspection. He must abstain from any endeavour to change the conditions under which he lives; he must abstain from criticism and odious comparison. He may legitimately devote his energies to endeavouring to improve the world, but he must not endeavour to improve, save by example, his immediate neighbourhood.

The international official finds himself therefore with his home, school, and college roots cut and prevented from striking new tap roots. At best he may live as a houseleek lives. He is in consequence forced to join with his colleagues in forming a distinct social group—a quasi-independent and quite artificial community. But each member of this community is separated in varying degrees from the majority of other members by differences of race, education, language, and frequently religion.

In spite of these natural barriers an international community with a real corporate sense did develop in Geneva after the First World War with remarkable rapidity—or rather two communities, for the social links between the League and the International Labour Office were never very close. They developed because both the League and the ILO were at core European rather than world institutions and the international society reflected the unity of European culture. It reflected, however, more than a regional civilization, namely ancient and traditional rather than modern culture. I found, for instance, at first to my surprise, that the children at our international school fell automatically into two groups, 'us' and 'the others'. Those groups

were not linguistic, though the school was bilingual. The one embraced all the Europeans including the British and also the Chinese, who were numerous; the other was composed of the Americans, also numerous, the Australians, and the Latin Americans with the Canadians playing their accustomed role as a hyphen. This fact was and is important. It is a mistake to assume that persons of a different colour or coming from afar are necessarily those to whom life in an international community in which they form a small minority presents the greatest immediate difficulties. It is a mistake to assume that the cleavage between European and Eastern civilization is at all points wider than the cleavage within what we call Western Civilization. The difficulties that have to be overcome in forming an international community are subtle and obscure and they vary with the composition of that community and with the site of its headquarters. Today they are greater in the UN and its specialized agencies than they were in the League, because no single culture is as dominant as was the European culture before the war, because new cleavages have occurred or old cleavages widened and because regional groups have become more self-conscious. Even for those who come from countries not openly hostile to one another a longer process of mutual education is necessary.

This increased separatism has affected the international organizations that exist today in varying degree and manner. Mutual understanding is most readily achieved by persons of a wide culture who do not suffer from provincial prejudice and by persons with common intellectual interests. The former can most readily understand and appreciate the interests and attitudes of colleagues from other countries and are the least inhibited in giving expression to their own thoughts. The latter, whatever their origin, will have a common meeting ground. In specialized agencies, such as ICAO, WMO, and FAO therefore, whose field of activity is well defined, common professional and scientific interests which cut across national and cultural frontiers help to unite the whole international group. Where the organization has many facets professional interests tend rather to divide the whole society into separate groups than to unite it. Unity, in such circumstances, can only be achieved by the existence or development of interests that transcend both national and professional frontiers. This is one of many reasons for viewing with misgiving the modern tendency in international organizations to define jobs with precision and select narrow specialists. The success of an office will depend more on

its morale than on its specialized knowledge, and morale will depend in its turn on the nature of the society in which the official lives.

Valuable as a common well-defined purpose and a single major professional interest may be as a unifying force, failure to constitute a cohesive international community with wide interests presents two special dangers in addition to its more general effect of leaving natural social needs unsatisfied. The first is that the staff will divide into national groups and the second that, lacking any other common ground, it will at once weary and narrow itself by discussing outside the same topics as it is compelled to discuss inside the office. Where the staff is divided socially into national groups its members will fail to acquire that breadth of vision that is indispensable for efficient international work. When conversation tends to rotate round the same subject all the hours of the day there is no real relaxation and the risk of tension from which international officials are always prone to suffer will be increased. This risk is greatest in an organization, such as the League or the UN, concerned primarily with the maintenance of peace. Those in whose thoughts the world's more serious troubles are always uppermost are liable to lose judgement and balance and too often become, not peacemakers, but emotional scaremongers.

The head of an international administration cannot afford to neglect these facts. To maintain an efficient staff he must endeavour to promote an international community with a real sense of unity, with wide interests and diverse activities. It is on this diversity of interest that a genuine unity of purpose can be most solidly built.

However successful a group of international officials may be in constituting a self-contained society, that society necessarily tends to be hierarchical. In Geneva as I knew it the class distinctions of the various national societies from which the personnel was drawn were largely, though not wholly, obliterated. The directorate formed to a large extent a distinct group, much taken in its spare time in entertaining members of delegations and committees visiting Geneva for League meetings. Below this group others formed, more loosely connected by status in the service, by similarity of occupation, or by national or linguistic ties. A tendency towards a hierarchical structure is inevitable in any international official community; but a rigid structure is so damaging to working relations within the office and to the morale of the staff that every effort should be made to prevent it. In recent years the adoption of the five-day working week has helped

to counteract the tendency by allowing the senior members of the staff more time free from official duties and the entertainment of delegates and experts, and all grades of the staff more time to plan their corporate social activities. On the other hand there has been a striking failure to understand the importance of the effect of physical conditions of work on the social atmosphere, and the community spirit has suffered in consequence. The most striking and the most important example of this failure is the UN building in New York. With its seventeen floors on the top of which are perched the higher directorate, who, it is currently believed, 'speak only to God', it minimizes the chances of the members of any one department casually meeting those of others; it divides when the purpose of an international headquarters should be to unite. Indeed the only members of the staff likely to meet others frequently are the elevator operators selected apparently for their coloured pulchritude. It is fortunate that the Parisian authorities refused to allow UNESCO to repeat the United Nations' error. The flat roof with its view over the hills and monuments of Rome, on which all grades of the staff can and do meet after lunch, is as great an asset to FAO as the stratification of the United Nations building is a liability to those who work in New York.

The major risk in this international life, in spite of its apparent hubbub, is the risk of isolation, an isolation which the local society cannot be expected to prevent. If the international community is lacking in cohesion it will be replaced at best by national groups or hierarchical strata, both a liability to the administration, or by nothing at all. The United Nations in New York has lost competent officials through resignation on account of loneliness.

3. *The Influence of the Site*

The importance of choosing the most suitable site for an international organization is generally underestimated and the choice actually made is liable to be determined by political and not administrative considerations.

The United Nations, it is true, appointed a special commission to study from every point of view the question of the most appropriate site for its projected headquarters. Finally, however, the site was chosen on political and financial considerations with little if any reference to administrative convenience.

Geneva was chosen as the site of the League almost by accident—mainly because President Wilson was a Calvinist,

In fact, as headquarters for an international administration it presents a combination of advantages, which it would be difficult to find anywhere else in the world. It is well governed; the people are honest, orderly, and civilized; political outbursts, large-scale strikes, and all other interruptions to the normal course of business are rare; meetings can be held there with a minimum risk of interruption resulting from local social pressure. There is a high degree of security for life and property; there is a marked absence of xenophobia, though naturally some friction was caused at first by the injection of so large a foreign element into a small society. The people are extraordinarily efficient and this efficiency adds greatly to the amenities of life. The houses are well built, the streets are clean, the quality of the goods for sale in the shops is uniformly high; there are no slums, there would seem to be no poor; there is respect for property, for almost all Swiss are property owners; every child whose birth is registered receives a savings bank book from the commune with one Swiss franc to his credit; these books are rarely lost or neglected; the credit balances wax.

In a word the standard of living, of decency, and of self-respect of the Genevese is exceptionally high and that high standard makes residence for the international official and briefer sojourns for the delegate and committee member smooth and agreeable.

In a world and period of critical events action must be prompt. For the official, communication with his colleagues at any time in the twenty-four hours should be easy and rapid. It cannot be when the headquarters are in a great city to which the staff is drawn from points which may be 60 miles or more apart. Work in such conditions must be confined largely to the office hours. In Geneva no small proportion of the most important decisions used to be reached, and are today reached, over the dinner table.

This readiness of access to one's colleagues and to delegates renders it possible for the staff to constitute a community independent of the local society and lessens the risk therefore of the staff acquiring the prejudices of the local society. Any Member State of an international organization must benefit in the ordinary course of international discussion and negotiation from having that organization situated within its frontiers. But the advantage and the risk it implies are greatly lessened when the place chosen is small and the staff can constitute its own society. When the staff is scattered throughout a dozen suburban areas it must become integrated into that suburban society, or

remain completely isolated. The more fully it is integrated the greater the risk of its sharing the outlook of the country in which it lives, of absorbing its civilization and specific culture, of failing to view the daily problems that arise without national prejudice, or failing to develop that first essential of an international official, impartiality in judgement.

Geneva presents the special advantage of being situated in a country which is traditionally neutral and is itself racially mixed. Moreover, Switzerland with its tradition of neutrality and its spirit of compromise has proved an admirable host and its government has shown at all times a lively sense both of its duties as a host and of general decorum.

On the other hand, Geneva cannot claim to be a cultural centre comparable with, for instance, Paris or Rome. A town which is the centre of a great national civilization and tradition offers to an international organization the advantage that that civilization and the cultural life of the community act as a common focus of interest and help to bring the staff into closer relationship with each other and in a lesser degree with the local inhabitants. When the city is large, however, and the staff in consequence widely scattered this advantage may prove nugatory and when the state is a Great Power the risk of the staff becoming subconsciously prejudiced more than counterbalances it. Thus Rome with its remarkable compactness presents advantages over Paris which are reflected in the spirit of the staff, while in the United Nations it is quite impossible to create a real community of the staff living in the wide periphery of New York. The official of the United Nations is forced to become as fully a member of his own suburban community as he can or to confine his social relations to such of his colleagues as happen to live near him. When the local community shows a typical American warmheartedness the danger of the official becoming too much influenced by the atmosphere and the outlook of one Great Power presents itself glaringly; when, as sometimes occurs, it is narrowly plutocratic the official may find himself written off as an employee and condemned to isolation or to a social status very different from that he would enjoy in his own country. For the head of an international administration and his relations with his staff and for the efficiency of that staff New York indeed presents the most serious drawbacks. It will always be easier to create and maintain an efficient Secretariat in Geneva or Rome or even Paris than in New York.

The head of an international administration cannot change his headquarters. But he can consider the special advantages and disadvantages the site chosen offers to himself and his staff. When owing to local circumstances the risk of isolation is great, the danger inherent in a hierarchical stratification within or without the office is increased, and measures to prevent such stratification become all the more necessary. When owing to those same circumstances the international group lacks a social cohesion favourable to the development of a general ethic, there is an imperative need to create conditions under which all classes of the staff may co-operate in the development of collective standards.

4. *Security and Insecurity*

In Geneva the Secretariat of the League, as I knew it, was extraordinarily successful in forming an international society which was friendly, stimulating, cohesive, and happy. But it was nevertheless pervaded by a feeling of insecurity which had nothing to do with either the tenure of contracts or the scale of salaries. That feeling sprang from conditions beyond the control of the administration. In the case of the unmarried women it was due to the gradual realization that chances of marriage, and even more of suitable marriage, in this artificial international society were distinctly poorer than they would have been at home and to worry about family obligations when their parents retired or one of them was left widowed.

To the married men the major difficulties related, not to themselves while actively employed, but to their children and to themselves after retirement. The children born in Geneva were born *dépaysés*. They acquired a profound attachment to the place and, being children, made ties with the local inhabitants and with each other irrespective of nationality much more easily than their parents. To learn two or more languages presented no difficulties and involved few disadvantages of which they were themselves at all deeply conscious. But Switzerland much more readily offers homes than careers to foreigners and as they grew older they were inevitably strained by divided loyalties—especially if they had been sent to school in their home country —and, whatever their loyalties, were likely to be faced sooner or later with the necessity of earning their living in their home country, which to them was not quite a real home, which they often failed fully to understand, and for which they might have a half-hearted affection. This problem of the children tended to impose a strain on the parents

at the very time when they themselves had become fully accustomed to their small international social group.

At the same time it became a forewarning to the parents of their own final problem—that of returning after retirement to their own country and reintegrating themselves in a society to which they had become alien. Relatively few settled down to retirement in Geneva. A larger number have chosen some country other than that in which they were born or spent their active years of life, and with varying success. It would be interesting to make an inquiry into the extent to which international officials after returning home on retirement have been able to re-establish themselves into their native society and find satisfaction. Such evidence as I have regarding my own countrymen would suggest that almost all of those who have served a long period abroad, say fifteen to twenty-five years, find themselves to a large extent strangers in their own land, feel the absence of long-time friendships, find their neighbours cold and narrow.

I have been interested to observe that typical international officials today, appointed since 1945, are only just becoming conscious of these problems. As their period of service lengthens and as their children grow up, it is inevitable that they will become increasingly aware of them and that the administration will be compelled to give serious thought to them.

In the United States these problems take a form rather different from that in which they present themselves in Geneva, Paris, or Rome, for the American civilization is extraordinarily absorptive and the whole educational system is designed in part, and most skilfully, to convert aliens into good Americans. In consequence the risk there is not so much that the children will be left with divided loyalties, as that they will lose their national attachments completely and become American citizens. To some parents this will be welcome; to some a cause of concern. To all it implies after retirement either the cutting of family ties or the permanent abandonment of their home country.

These problems of the family and of old age affect members of an international staff very unequally. They are most serious for Asiatics working in America or Europe. The more successful they have been in adapting themselves to an international society the more alien and isolated they find themselves when they return to their home country and nearly all feel compelled to return, for even in Geneva the international society of retired officials is minuscule. The more fully their children have absorbed a foreign culture the more isolated they will

ultimately find themselves. In fact relatively few Asiatics are willing to make international service outside Asia a life career, a fact which creates a certain inequality in the roles that different nationalities can play in international affairs. Asiatics are today the most unfavourably placed, though with the development of regional offices their situation has improved; but amongst other nationalities geographical situation and national characteristics create widely different conditions. To the French—living in Geneva on the frontier of their home country—no serious problems arose before the last war. League officials coming from small countries always enjoyed much greater recognition and status at home than did for instance their British colleagues. Most of them could be sure of finding some position at home which assured them status, if not riches. Nothing was more natural than for the more competent and more highly placed of them to enter the diplomatic service of their countries. The Englishman, to take perhaps the worst placed in this respect, unless he wrote in his spare time or had had a distinguished career prior to entering the service, was likely to be not only unrecognized but wholly unknown at home. His chances of finding a suitable job should he wish to return home were poor, of maintaining status, unless his status in international work had been quite low, negligible.

It may be thought that this problem of ultimate retirement has little relevance to that of recruitment of staff or morale. In fact it is important, and has important implications. It tends to unsettle the official, to influence at a fairly early age his attitude towards his work and career, and to induce him to consider whether he should not attempt to obviate some of the difficulties foreseen by giving up international work before retirement age is reached. By and large, officials who are constantly thinking about the wisdom or otherwise of quitting the service are less efficient in their work than those for whom that service is clearly their life's career. The loyalty of officials who are actively looking for alternative jobs may be threatened; the loyalty of officials who are looking for jobs in their own diplomatic service is inevitably strained.

International officials can, however, never be wholly free of preoccupations about their fitness for other jobs, because they can never be certain that the organization in which they work will be maintained. One of the best characteristics of the League Secretariat (and no doubt also of that of the ILO) in the early days was that no one joined it with an eye to security. Both the League and the ILO were

experiments—probably wild experiments; and we joined either because we thought the experiment worth while or because the work and life seemed to hold prospects of proving interesting. Although what has already been achieved must render the sense of adventure less lively, many officials of WHO and FAO and other specialized agencies are inspired by the same spirit and in the United Nations the hopes of some for a time soared high above thoughts of personal security.

But, however excellent may be the spirit that animates a new enterprise, sooner or later the problem of security will assume administrative importance, and in all international work, because it is still in large measure experimental and because it is dependent not simply on the maintenance of peace, but on the preservation of certain established, political relations, there is a basic insecurity. There are no good grounds for assuming that any international organization will continue to function indefinitely. The League has lived and died; the Bank for International Settlements was very nearly slain by ignorant prejudice at the Bretton Woods Conference; the Permanent Court of International Justice was slain by less ignorant jealousy a little later. All international bodies are the sport of politics. National governments may change, may be violently overthrown; but, so long as a nation exists, there will always be some national government. No such certainty exists regarding inter-governmental organizations.

This fact led, even before the last war, when there had been no casualties among international bodies, to a certain sense of insecurity, a sense of insecurity that directed the individual's thought not so much perhaps to his own position or prospects as to the whole climate of his life. What is important for morale is not the degree of insecurity that any form of life involves, but the influence of this sense of insecurity on people's minds. All the major political ills of the world tend to present themselves in magnified focus at the headquarters of the League or today the United Nations. Rumours fill the air; the dissensions that strain the world are acted daily in the microcosm of committees or Assembly; words seem to represent reality. The officials are saturated in this atmosphere day by day. They become conscious of, some hypersensitive to, every change in the electric forces with which that atmosphere is charged. To the great majority of them the world in which they live is seemingly more unstable and insecure than is the world of, for instance, a farmer or even a business man or a factory hand, and the world—not the state of the weather or of the markets—is what immediately affects their life and work.

Unlike the farmer and the business man, moreover, the international official cannot find comfort in the thought that so long as no cataclysmic event occurs, he may with some assurance expect to achieve success and status through his own efforts and ability. He may achieve them; but he must always face the risk that his advancement may be affected in a good administration by the need for a proper geographical distribution of posts and in a bad administration by external political pressures and internal national rivalries.

5. *Age Distribution*

The most effective of all antidotes to insecurity is opportunity. As we have just seen, opportunity is and must be restricted in an international organization by the fact that not merit alone but political considerations determine the appointments to the highest posts. In the League and the ILO opportunity was further seriously affected by the age composition of the staffs. Both institutions were created at a moment of time and, though both grew and developed, in fact the number of new administrative posts created after the first five years was very restricted. Naturally at the start both institutions were anxious to appoint young, energetic, and adaptable officials to the majority of posts, and there were available at the end of the war a large number of able young men who had had more administrative experience and greater responsibility at home during the war than they would have had in times of peace. Conditions were exceptionally favourable for selecting a staff young enough to be adaptable and experienced enough to be of immediate value. In consequence the initial staff was composed mainly of young men (and women) between the ages of twenty-seven and thirty-five. I think there can be little doubt that the League benefited from this at first; but these young men all grew to years of seniority together, so that the chances of any one of them receiving the promotion that his merit would have justified were poor. This paucity of opportunity had two quite distinct administrative disadvantages. The official became frustrated, with the result that his work suffered; it was not possible to adapt work suitably to qualifications and competence. In any administration there must be a large amount of work which is repetitive and in repetition becomes dull. Much of it constitutes excellent training for the staff in their early years. At first it is less dull, if only because less often repeated. It becomes benumbing and desiccating if repeated too often. A certain percentage of any staff adapts itself readily to be-

numbing and desiccating influences, dislikes responsibility, carries out happily year by year tasks that it has mastered long ago, is content to avoid the risk of having to learn or fail to learn something new. But unless preference has been given to dullness in the selection of the staff there will not be enough of this class of persons in their early forties if ten years earlier a large proportion of the staff had been appointed and preference had been given to persons under thirty-five.

Similar conditions, though less extreme in form, present themselves today. The age distribution of the staff in the UN and most of the specialized agencies is better than that in the League and ILO in the twenties, in part because these new institutions have been conscious of the danger; but it is nevertheless atypical.

One means for meeting the risk of frustration is to give the staff no security of tenure and to dismiss officials when they have reached an age justifying a promotion it is difficult to afford, and, in fact, the administration of the UN was for a considerable period reluctant to grant security of tenure and the administrations of certain of the specialized agencies are still reluctant. Insecurity is, however, a poor substitute for frustration and an unattractive postulate for a career, and gradually it is becoming recognized that competent staff cannot be recruited when no security is offered. When that fact is fully recognized age distribution will present itself as what it is, a major problem affecting morale.

6. *International Life in Times of Tension*

I have been considering up to this point mainly problems which derive from the life of an international official whatever the political climate in which he works, because I want to bring out the fact that even in the most favourable conditions serious psychological problems do arise and must be faced. They are all the more important because with forethought and goodwill they can in large measure be solved.

In an international institution, however, such as the League or the UN, concerned primarily with the promotion and preservation of peace, all changes in the political climate will be felt and when pressures accumulate its officials may be very directly affected. Pressures or tensions may take many forms, of which the three most important have very different effects on the efficiency of an international staff.

The first and simplest serious case is when a Member State threatens or commits an act of aggression against another. The mem-

bers of the staff, nationals of the aggressor state, are then immediately faced by a problem of divided loyalties. If they recognize the fact that their country is in the wrong and remain faithful to the principles of the organization they serve, their relations with their compatriots at home may become violently strained, so strained in some cases that they may contemplate with dread the prospect of ever returning home. If they lend moral support to their own government, they are likely to be ostracized in the international society and will be accused justly of having failed in their international obligations. The simplest working relations with their colleagues who are nationals of the state suffering from the aggression will become almost impossible to maintain. The Japanese members of the League staff were placed in exactly this predicament in 1931 and suffered acutely from it. In fact they were opposed to the military régime and in secretariat circles their fidelity to the League was recognized and appreciated. The morale of the staff as a whole was unaffected; but this peculiar professional risk of the international civil servant became starkly apparent. Similar cases occurred during the life of the League and will always occur in an international organization concerned with the preservation of peace. So long as the international staff and the society it forms are not divided themselves, however, they can be relied on to behave with consideration and helpfulness to those of their colleagues who are most directly affected by threats to peace or the outbreak of hostilities. I can think of no single example of that society in Geneva turning against an official simply because he was a national of a country which disturbed the peace or failed in one way or another to live up to its international obligations. The atmosphere was unfavourable to any form of jingoism. The attitude of the individual official and not that of his government was always the criterion determining the attitude of the international society towards him. But, though the professional risk may in a united staff be rendered less intolerable, it remains a very real cause of possible tension which no official, no senior official in any case, can ignore.

More serious in their permanent effects are political tensions arising, not from a specific governmental act, but from long-standing national rivalries or antipathies due to past acts. Thus in the United Nations today the unity of the staff would be adversely affected by the mutual animosity of the Arabs and the Jews even had both parties always respected the Charter. Thus too in the League after the admission of Germany the relations between the French and the Germans were

at best correct, never cordial; they always weakened rather than strengthened the unity of the group. It was not, however, until the Nazi movement became a threat to peace and a proselyting campaign that the general morale of the staff was directly affected. When that happened this second form of tension was replaced by the third, which is always much more serious in its effects, and in its extreme form renders a united staff impossible and indeed unthinkable.

The third form occurs when the international organization includes among its members states whose governments preach a doctrine and pursue a policy in direct opposition to the basic principles on which that organization is founded. It divides the staff and threatens its morale immediately any members of that staff become intoxicated by the virus of the propaganda their government spreads. Much has been written, a good deal of it exaggerated, about the decay in the morale of the Secretariat of the League as the Nazi and Fascist governments grew in power and insolence. There was in fact a weakening in morale, which varied greatly from one department to another and was due in part to this cause and in part to a change in leadership. What struck me most, however, were two facts which taken together are of great importance today. The first was that even when wars threatened there was never an anti-German or anti-Italian reaction in the staff affecting all Germans and all Italians irrespective of their attitudes and reputations; the second was that those Italians and those Germans who had been appointed without any reference to their governments remained with rare exceptions faithful to their service and immune to propaganda. The situation may be rendered profoundly different when a Member State is allowed to insist that certain posts be reserved for its nationals and refuses for its part to allow the head of the international administration to select them freely. Then there can be no assurance of unity of purpose among the staff.

II

SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE WORK

1. *Scope of Chapter*

AS in the last chapter I attempted to describe, not the life of the international official, but only certain peculiar characteristics of that life, so in this chapter I propose to consider only those special characteristics of work in an international organization that inevitably render it different from work in a national administration and thereby involve special administrative problems.

In selecting these characteristics I shall ignore those which owe their existence to the administrative practice of any international institution, for they can be changed by the head of the administration. I shall ignore also those that owe their existence to defects in the practice of an international Assembly, council, or executive board, for if that practice is unsound the head of the administration should endeavour to persuade those responsible to modify it.

My purpose is to confine attention to characteristics inherent in the work that persons employed by an inter-governmental organization have to perform. These characteristics, however, are rarely stable. They change with changing times. They have been gradually modified by alterations in the attitudes of governments towards international co-operation and in the scope of normal government activity. They have been modified more abruptly by recent international constitutional developments.

2. *The Influence of Government Policies and Constitutional Changes on the Nature of the Work*

The major purpose of the League was to promote—'prescribe' the Covenant says—open, just, and honourable relations among nations, and to maintain the treaty obligations by which certain of those relations had received a definite form. The League was, therefore, primarily concerned with states in so far as the action of their governments or inhabitants affected other states, and its duty was to ensure that that action was just. That certain principles of equity were

generally recognized throughout the world and could be applied by common consent to meet whatever issue might arise was postulated. The League machinery was designed with the purpose of obtaining that common consent.

Though the major emphasis of the Covenant was on inter-state relations and especially on the preservation of peace, it was recognized that peace could only be preserved if these principles of equity were generally applied by governments to individuals and by individuals to each other. Hence trade must be equitable, traffic free, conditions of labour fair and humane, the treatment of natives just. The rule of law was sought and it was natural that almost immediately after its creation the League should endeavour to extend that rule over one field of activity after another by the conclusion of international conventions. Such conventions had indeed been foreseen in the Treaty of Versailles as an obvious means for ensuring humane labour relations; they were accepted as the obvious means for promoting equity in commercial and, later, fiscal relations and the freedom of traffic; they were believed to be the most appropriate means for reinforcing the Covenant and arranging for mutual assistance and general disarmament.

Although the League was thus mainly concerned with inter-state relations and the codification of principles of equity by means of protocols, treaties, and conventions, from the narrow basis of the Covenant there developed with surprising rapidity the idea of using the machinery of the League to aid governments in the solution of domestic problems of common interest whether by the formulation of general principles of policy or by mutual education and the exchange of experience. Thus as early as 1920 the Financial Conference of Brussels put forward recommendations on currency and fiscal policies; and what is known today as technical assistance was initiated in Austria, Hungary, and elsewhere in the early twenties with the appointment of financial and central banking experts.

It was not, however, until the worsening of political and economic relations after the depression of 1931 rendered the conclusion of international agreements impossible that the centre of attention shifted from inter-state relations and the codification of principles of equity to mutual education and the exchange of experience on subjects of both international and domestic interest—anti-depression policies, nutrition, rural hygiene, physical education, standards of living, and a long list of narrower problems such as clearing agree-

ments or road-traffic accidents. Simultaneously, during this last pre-war decade there was a rapid expansion of technical assistance in China, Latin America, and elsewhere.

Since the war international work and co-operation has advanced with giant strides in this new direction, stimulated at once by the development of scientific methods in the solution of social problems, by the increase of state intervention in social affairs, and by that deliberate extension of generosity and state assistance across national frontiers which has constituted so striking a feature of American post-war policy.

In the Charter of the United Nations, although the major objectives of policy—the maintenance of peace and respect for justice and treaty obligations—remain unchanged, there is a shift in emphasis from the regulation of inter-state relations to the deliberate promotion by collective measures of economic and social progress. To facilitate that progress new specialized agencies have been set up and this decentralization has had important effects on the work of international officials. What is sought today is not simply to create a situation favourable to economic development by, for instance, the removal of barriers to trade or traffic, but rather to spread the lessons of past experience and on occasion distribute resources in order to facilitate in each country the adoption of positive, largely administrative, measures for social and economic advancement. That maid-of-all-work, the League Council, composed mainly of foreign ministers, has been replaced by one council composed of permanent delegates, two other councils, and half a dozen executive boards composed mainly of national officials. Formal conventions covering wide fields of activity and requiring parliamentary ratification have been replaced by a multiplicity of agreements on narrowly defined issues leading in most cases to administrative and not legislative action. Many of these agreements are confined to a single government on the one hand and an international organization on the other. Certain organizations, the International Bank, the Monetary Fund, the Organization for European Economic Co-operation, for instance, have in limited fields powers never possessed by the League and can take decisions binding on governments without subsequent parliamentary ratification.

On the national scene state intervention—government planning and control—has led not only to a monstrous growth in the numbers of both national and local officials but also to a parallel increase in their powers. Legislatures have wittingly or unwittingly changed the

balance of power between themselves and the executive branch of government in favour of the latter. This change has affected in the international scene both the methods and the instruments by which international and consequential national action is taken.

Power within states and the sovereign power of states have become more diffused and society, both national and international, is more affected today than in the past by a large number of minor decisions taken by a vast number of persons of minor importance. This diffusion of power through diffused international organizations has incidentally affected those peculiar features of international work to which it is the purpose of this chapter to draw attention.

3. *Discrepant Groups*

We have seen that a fact of major importance in the life of international officials is their lack of common experience and common cultural background. A similar lack of common experience and background among delegates and experts and a lack of mutual understanding and sympathy among the countries from which they come determine in large measure the nature of the international officials' work. International administration is conducted on behalf of groups —Member States—whose experience of life has been widely variant, whose group loyalties are likely to be much stronger than their sense of collective purpose, whose knowledge of each other is at best superficial, at worst distorted by prejudice or animosity. The larger the membership of an international organization the more superficial and distorted will be its members' knowledge of each other. The individuals who attend international meetings for the first time suffer from all the shortcomings of the new official, ignorance of the habits of thought, of the experience and of the manners of others, and furthermore represent countries which not only suffer from an ignorance at least as profound as that of their representatives, but also from conflicts of interest and from historic rivalries and antipathies.

The international official therefore must be much more than a civil servant carrying out instructions received from a minister or a parliament. His most important task is to promote understanding among the very persons from whom he may later receive instructions. The Secretariat of an international organization, moreover, is the only permanent body whose sole function and whose only instructions are to further the purposes for which that organization was constituted.

All the delegates and all the members of almost all councils and boards represent sectional interests and receive instructions to further not only the general but also special interests.

If lack of mutual understanding is all that divides members attending an international meeting, the task of the international official, granted experience and tact, is relatively simple. He will himself have suffered from the same ignorance, from lack of sympathy with others due to lack of points of contact. But the art of promoting a real understanding among persons coming together for the first time from many different countries is not one which can be mastered immediately. The official new to international work, however wide his experience may have been at home, will prove of little value.

When in addition to ignorance diversity of interests divides and delegates come to conferences at once armed with and trammelled by instructions with the intention of striking a bargain, to the task of promoting understanding is added the more difficult and delicate task of facilitating an accord.

When animosity divides and delegates come to a meeting not to reach an agreement, but, on the contrary, deliberately to create or widen a rift, the international official must still remember that, however far any government may seem to stray from its obligations at a given moment, he is the servant of all Member States in their collective capacity and is there not to take sides in a dispute, but to further the purpose of the organization that employs him.

The inherent weakness in the work of any international organization, mutual ignorance, the narrowness of group loyalties, long-standing rivalries and antipathies can only be offset by the gradual development of a sense of common purpose. This sense is as a rule strong among the members both of the Conferences and of the executive boards of the specialized agencies and this fact, coupled with the change in the nature of international co-operation described in the preceding section of this chapter, has greatly facilitated the task of the official employed by these agencies. Moreover, there is likely to be a greater continuity of membership when government representatives are officials rather than politicians, so that mutual ignorance gradually becomes a less serious limiting factor even in purely political organizations with a wide-flung membership. In these circumstances the task of the international officials, as we shall see, is less one of promoting understanding or facilitating an accord and more one of providing what is most likely to prove lacking, creative ima-

gination. But owing to the constitutional form of most international organizations diplomatic functions always remain important.

4. *Lack of a Legislature*

The second fact of major importance that differentiates the work of the international from that of the national official is that there is as a rule no legislature and little or no law to administer. An Assembly or a conference may, and does from time to time, conclude a convention, and these conventions may in certain cases impose on an international organization the duty of setting up machinery for their administration. Thus, under the opium conventions a system of almost world-wide administrative control of dangerous drugs has been established. But the total amount of international administrative control is extremely limited. In consequence the international official is more concerned with promoting agreements, which, if carried out by Member States, may involve national administrative work, than in doing such work himself. He has little to administer except his own small office. His major task is diplomatic and, particularly in specialized agencies, promotive.

A number of international organizations are entrusted with the task of settling disputes. This was a major function of the League and is the major function of the UN. In addition boards of several specialized agencies, those of ICAO, WHO, UPU for instance, have the right to settle disputes in certain well-defined administrative fields. This work of these boards is largely of a diplomatic nature. Their purpose is not to impose a sanction but to reach an amicable arrangement.

Essentially diplomatic also is the work leading up to the conclusion of an international agreement. When members of an Assembly or a conference endeavour to reach a binding agreement relating to their own mutual behaviour, unanimity among all those who are to become parties to the agreement is indispensable. A majority vote may suffice for decisions regarding action to be taken by some organ of an international institution; but draft conventions must be negotiated, and agreed by all, if they are to be ratified and brought into force. Indeed, at each stage in the work, from the preparation of a preliminary draft by an expert committee to the final signing of an agreement prior to its submission for parliamentary approval, every effort must be made to obtain the assent of all, or at least of all to whose participation importance is attached. The value of a Secretariat can be largely

measured by the contribution it is able to make to mutual understanding and the development of a common opinion.

To make this contribution the international official must dismiss his own prejudices and learn to understand the special preoccupations of the countries with which he has to deal. Only after acquiring such an understanding himself, and indeed a certain measure of sympathy, can he hope to explain to others. Only when this understanding is shared by the representatives of the states concerned can a *terrain d'accord* be sought.

In one way it is more difficult to learn the diplomacy required of an international official than that required of a diplomat accredited to a foreign government, for a diplomat has to interpret the policies and hopes of a country in which he is resident. He lives in and breathes its atmosphere. An international official may at best hope to make occasional brief visits to the countries he has to understand; he must learn as best he can, and he must, in carrying out his daily duty of trying to promote understanding, appreciate the limitations, and at the highest political level they are real limitations, to his own competence.

A national official has to deal with his own countrymen whose national characteristics he shares and knows so well as to be almost unconscious of them. He must understand individual, not national, idiosyncrasies. The international official must also understand individual idiosyncrasies and, to do so, penetrate below an unfamiliar veneer. But the veneer itself is important and must be treated with all respect and care. The manners that an international staff employ to each other are better than those of national colleagues, just as the manners that American telephone girls employ to each other are incomparably better than those of most other countries. In both cases this mutual politeness has developed or been demanded, not primarily to promote good relations among the members of the staff, but because good manners towards the public the international official and the American telephone girl serve are, or are considered to be, of vital importance and must be learnt and become as it were instinctive by systematic and unbroken use.

Only by respecting differences in national manners, forms of address, and common courtesies can the international official hope to penetrate beneath the veneer and understand and interpret the man.

Understanding and courtesy do not, however, suffice alone. They are indeed of little value if unaccompanied by powers of persuasion.

The official, moreover, must not only himself understand but aid others to do so. To promote mutual understanding among representatives from diverse states demands in all cases power of persuasion as well as tact. A capacity to put a case convincingly is a necessary qualification for any senior administrative post. International administration differs from other forms in this respect only in that greater resourcefulness and a greater sensibility to the feelings of others is required when the persons on whom the art of persuasion is exercised are drawn from different parts of the globe.

The good manners required of an international official, however, are not simply varying modes of address. They should reflect an attitude of mind which is at once stable and sincere. The international official has to overcome completely any inclination resulting from his upbringing to believe that the particular group to which he belongs, his native country or his class, is superior to those of his colleagues or the delegates with whom he comes in contact. He has to eradicate from his mind the presupposition that the citizen of a small country, or an Asiatic or an African, is on account of his citizenship or colour in any way an inferior or a less significant person than a citizen of a great Western Power. And, if he is an Asiatic, he must similarly eradicate his contempt for the youth and crudity of Western civilization. He must learn to accept all, whatever the land from which they come, as individuals, whose claim to respect derives from their personality and nothing else. He must, moreover, be constantly aware that very great skill and above all very great patience are required to assess the real person that lies behind an exterior widely different from what has been familiar to him in his youth and behind an epidermis of culture of which he is ignorant. The good manners I am trying to describe, therefore, should reflect an attitude of mind in which a fundamental and reasoned humility is mingled with an assumption of equality.

In the early years of the inter-war period, as we have seen, a large proportion of the time of the League, and a still larger proportion of the time of the ILO, was occupied by attempts to elaborate international conventions. The shift from this work to such general debates, often without any formal result, as occupy so much of the time of the UN Assembly and ECOSOC, and to the discussions at the Conferences of the specialized agencies leading to specific instructions to the executive boards or the Secretariat, has modified the nature of the work of international officials.

The administration is concerned with parliamentary debates which are not intended to lead to any formal result only in a purely secretarial capacity. When no agreement binding on governments is sought and no instructions are given and the whole debate is a mere reflection of national attitudes, the officials' role, apart from secretarial duties, is inevitably passive.

The emphasis laid today on the planning of programmes of work in specific fields, on agreements at the administrative rather than political level, on the collation of information and exchange of experience or knowledge, on attempts to induce governments acting severally to accept and apply the lessons of one scientific fact or assumption or another, has rendered the work of the international official in some respects more similar to that of the national official. It continues to differ, however, in a number of ways, two of which should be mentioned here. First, although the international official is more concerned today with the elaboration of a definite plan of work and less with international negotiations, his functions remain very largely diplomatic. It is frequently stated, and no less frequently assumed when appointments are made, that the work of the post-war specialized agencies is profoundly different from that of the League of Nations or the United Nations, and that for them expert knowledge is required of their officials and little more. This view arises because the field of activity is confused with the activity to be applied in that field. No doubt an agreement may be more easily reached among governments concerning the application by each one of them of certain scientific principles than concerning their behaviour to each other. But much of the work which falls to the international official remains fundamentally unchanged. Agreement must be reached regarding not only the formulation of common principles but also their application. The fact that the work is easier does not affect its nature. The real change that has taken place is that there is today somewhat more scope for international administrative control and co-ordination—and thus for the simple administrator rather than the expert. There is more scope because governments are more willing to make a genuine joint effort to check ills of natural origin than ills caused by human action. They are also more ready to co-ordinate technical or administrative services—radio, postal, meteorological, aviation—than they are to co-ordinate their commercial, fiscal, or power politics. Thus, WHO can plan a large-scale anti-malaria campaign, FAO a campaign against locusts or rinderpest; ICAO can undertake the

administration of the financial arrangements for maintaining ocean weather stations. This change has, as I have said, tended to diminish to some extent the difference between the functions of certain classes of international officials and those of national civil servants. But it is easy to exaggerate its importance. In fact, quite special qualities are required for the organization of an operation covering a number of different countries and those qualities are essentially diplomatic. For such an operation to be planned or executed with success the official must exercise the skills I have attempted to describe above. He must use many of these same skills when organizing the work of technical assistance in a single country.

The second of the two differences between the work of the international and the national official to which I referred above is that the former has to assume more responsibility and that there is a greater demand on his creative imagination. These facts are due not to any inherent characteristics of the work itself but to the absence of ministers in international organizations.

5. *Lack of Ministers*

Not only is there no international legislature; apart from the Security Council, with its vital but restricted functions, there is no cabinet permanently resident at headquarters; there are no international ministers in charge of departments with whom the departmental director can discuss any political issues that may arise or the formulation of policies. At the best a council or board may appoint a *rapporteur* to take a general responsibility for a specific problem or a fatherly interest in a general field. The *rapporteur*, however, is likely to live in some distant capital. He may visit headquarters for prearranged negotiations; he may be consulted by post; a director may visit him from time to time; but he is not readily available for day-to-day discussions and never, to the best of my knowledge, does he assume the creative responsibility that might be expected of a minister. Consequently in all questions, save, today, security, a director as a rule has a much more immediate responsibility for formulating policies than national officials normally enjoy. He will naturally obtain the prior agreement of the head of the international administration before submitting policies for political approval and will logically look to him for protection in the event of criticism in somewhat the same way as a national civil servant would look to his minister. But to the whole service the absence of ministerial respon-

sibility regarding both the general administration of the departments and the initial formulation of policies makes a profound difference, and the head of an international organization may suffer from the inadequacy of protective political mechanism when dealing with an Assembly, council, or executive board. As C. W. Jenks has said, 'The highest posts in world organizations involve responsibilities which go far beyond those of an ordinary administrative office.'[1]

The Charter has added to the responsibilities which are borne by all senior international officials by Article 99 under which the Secretary General 'may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security'. This is a right, not an obligation: a right, however, which implies that he is not only an administrative officer, but a political agent. For security purposes, however, the United Nations is endowed with what is equivalent to a permanent council of ministers, for the Security Council functions continuously and each of its members must be 'represented at all times at the seat of the Organization'.

In almost all other cases[2] the collective functions of ministers are assumed, in part at any rate, by councils or executive boards which meet only from time to time. For the individual functions of ministers no provision is ever made. All councils and boards are responsible at once for carrying out instructions and recommendations received from the Assemblies and for submitting policy recommendations to them and to governments. It is with the members of these councils and boards, therefore, in their collective capacity that the head of an international organization (or his directors) has to deal. He can submit proposals to them when they meet, but he cannot elaborate them day by day with any one of them, unless a member has been formally appointed as *rapporteur*. He cannot do so, not only because no one of them is the political head of a department, but also because each of them is likely to receive instructions from his government before attending a meeting, which may be in opposition to instructions received by other members. The head of an international administration, therefore, may conduct private conversations with individual members who he believes to be particularly concerned with a question on which he desires to formulate a proposal, but for the proposal

[1] 'Some Problems of an International Civil Service', *Public Administration Review*, vol. iii, no. 2, 1943.

[2] The ICAO Council sits with exceptional persistence.

when submitted he must expect to be solely responsible; he cannot share that responsibility until all the members have had an opportunity to consider it.

In most national democratic governments the broad lines of policy are determined by the council of ministers and worked out in detail by each minister with the officials in his department. In an international organization policy may derive from the proposal of a single government or some small group of governments working in concert or may emerge as the result of discussions in an Assembly or council. When the policy finally agreed results from discussions which take the form of negotiations in which mutual concessions are made by governments on points to which they attach real importance, the role of the Secretariat will be limited to that of promoting understanding. The Secretariat has a more positive role to play, however, when policy formulation relates to the next step to be taken by the organization itself in order to implement a prior decision or to further the general purposes for which the organization was set up, and that role is of growing importance because, as we have seen, more of international work takes the form of day-to-day collective effort and less that of inter-state negotiation.

From time to time criticism is raised on the grounds that a director (or the Secretariat as a whole) is exceeding his functions and tending to dictate policy. Within limits this criticism is salutary, first, because policy cannot be so dictated but only submitted for discussion, and, secondly, because the criticism may stimulate governments to think more constructively themselves. But the criticism is likely to be much more severe and much more justified if a director fails to think constructively and confines his activity to carrying out the instructions he receives from whatever may be his governing body.

The lack of ministers responsible for departments affects even the collective responsibility of councils and boards, for, although a council or board assumes collective responsibility for its recommendations to a Conference, its members do not necessarily take the lead at the Conference as would a member of a council of ministers in most national parliaments. Indeed, whether they attend the Conference at which their proposals are to be considered depends on the individual will of the several governments, though provision may be made for a board's chairman and possibly one or more members to represent it. Moreover, whether they are present or not, they never take the same responsibility for the administration of any department that a

minister does for his. International administration is so specialized an art that this fact, though it imposes unusual responsibilities on the international official, is on balance an advantage. Difficulties do arise, however, from time to time in connexion with finance. The head of an international administration in the absence of a finance minister may find himself forced to assume many of the functions of such a minister before a parliament in which the majority of members are to be found sitting on the opposition benches.

The fact that there are no ministers in charge of departments has therefore the effect of giving to the head of any international administration, which may be compared to a ministry in a national government, semi-political powers. For this reason the office of Secretary or Director General is always tenable for a limited period only. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination composed of the heads of specialized agencies sitting under the Chairmanship of the Secretary General of the UN constitutes, in fact, a form of embryo council of ministers. National governments, however, are not prepared to take the next logical step towards parliamentary government and replace ECOSOC by this body, for to do so would imply delegating a part of their individual powers of initiating policies. The absence of ministers in charge of departments reflects therefore the present stage in the development of international co-operation. The lack of a permanent council of ministers, however, is more accidental. The International Institute of Agriculture before the war was controlled by a permanent committee; the Council of ICAO is in almost permanent session. When the function of a council or board is to deal mainly with administrative co-ordination circumstances may arise rendering long, almost uninterrupted, sessions inevitable. But if a board is concerned with policy and its members lose touch with their governments by devoting the whole of their time to its meetings, they will prove ineffective, as was indeed the permanent committee of the Institute of Agriculture. Though the present system of occasional meetings is not constitutionally inevitable it is therefore in practice a sound system and it is reasonable to consider it as one of the factors determining the nature of the work of the international official.

6. *Other Characteristics*

There are other special characteristics of international work which, though of great importance, are so obvious as to demand only brief note here. The first, which will be discussed at some length in

Chapter V, is that not only is it concerned with international affairs but is conducted by an international staff. So long as that staff is actuated by a common purpose and common ethical beliefs, that fact gives rise to no insuperable difficulties. But it does very largely determine the principles on which the whole system of administration must be based. When the staff contains any considerable group of persons who pursue some object other than that of the institution that employs them or believes that the end justifies the means, then very serious difficulties do present themselves, and the head of the administration has to consider to what extent he is compelled to sacrifice principles which would be appropriate in a cohesive staff to minimize the special risks that such a group presents.

The second obvious characteristic is closely allied to the first and lies in the fact that international work requires of the official a loyalty during his period of service that may on occasion strain loyalties more deeply embedded in his system. Some reference has been made to this fact in Chapter I.

The third obvious characteristic is that the majority of the staff are compelled to work in a language they have not acquired in infancy and which, therefore, does not give automatic expression to their thoughts and personality.

III

QUALITIES REQUIRED

1. *Introductory*

I HAVE discussed certain of the qualities required of an international official in the last chapter; this chapter will therefore be brief. These qualities do not differ widely from those that go to make up a good national official, but their order of importance and relative values are somewhat different. It is not, however, possible to attempt to set them out in any logical order of priority, for the order will vary with the official's rank and functions. There are, nevertheless, one or two qualities which are indispensable in all cases.

2. *Understanding and Consequential Loyalty*

Most writers would put loyalty to the institution for which the official is working first in their general scale of values. This is probably right; but a blind loyalty is not enough. The loyalty must spring from an understanding of and a belief in the ultimate value of the work and purposes of the institution. It will prove stronger if buttressed by a sense of history.

The loyalty required, moreover, must extend not only to the institution in which the official works, but, as we shall see in Chapter X, on the one hand to allied international institutions and on the other hand to the groups of persons who constitute the Secretariats of these institutions. What is essential is that the international official should be able to slough his national prejudices, make himself an integral part of a group composed of elements at first quite unfamiliar to him and work faithfully for it. In order to do this he must be capable of understanding persons with cultural backgrounds different from his own and of sympathizing with them. He must be able to realize that there are world interests and a world point of view more important than those of his own country and to accept the fact that his employment in an international institution implies that he will work for those interests and for them alone in all circumstances.

This loyalty, composed as it should be of understanding and sympathy, as well as fidelity, constancy, and honesty, may be subjected

to great strains. It will be subjected to such strains whenever a Member State, especially the country of which he is a citizen, acts in a way which runs counter to the purposes for which the organization was created. When there is war or threat of war or more insidiously when national unitary parties bring pressure to bear on officials because of the behaviour of any political party, loyalty may be subjected to a severe test. It can only stand that test if the official has a firm and enlightened belief in the value of the organization for which he works. The officials of political organizations such as the League and the United Nations are the most likely to be subjected to these strains. But as recent events have proved even those working in technical specialized agencies are not immune. These agencies cannot afford to select their staff on grounds of technical competence only.

There are, however, at all times in all international administrations limitations to the loyalty which can in practice be expected. In the event of the outbreak of war, for instance, it can hardly be expected that even the most faithful international officials will be willing to give priority to their international loyalties. If they believe that their home country needs them, they will in all probability surrender their international to what they believe to be their national obligations.

When amongst the members of any international organization are included states, whether Nazi, Fascist, or Communist, whose citizens are likely to be members of some unitary party the behests of which they must obey, those limitations become much more serious.

3. *Diplomatic Capacity*

The second major quality, as I see it, is that diplomatic faculty discussed in the last chapter. This faculty, of which discretion forms an essential element, is very closely allied to loyalty for both are based on the absence of prejudice, on the power of sympathy and the capacity to become fully, honestly, and unreservedly a member of an international group, and, as a member of that group, to work for the whole community of states and not in the interest of one alone. Without this singleness of purpose the greatest diplomatic tact is likely to ring untrue and sooner or later lose its value. But owing to the nature of the work and the strangeness of the scene to many who take part in that work year by year, the official should combine an ample endowment of courtesy and tact with his singlemindedness. Only through this combination can he hope to be able to overcome suspicion, or to act as a conciliator.

As I have suggested on an earlier page, the need for good manners is twofold. They are necessary in order to enable the members of the staff to deal effectively with the delegates and experts coming from all parts of the world and they are necessary for the harmonious working of the staff itself.

4. *Constructive Imagination*

Attention has already been drawn to the fact that owing to the absence of any permanent policy-making body at the ministerial level an exceptional degree of constructive imagination and practical judgement are required by the higher officials in an international organization. These qualities, which must be given a high place in the whole scale of qualifications to be sought, are particularly necessary in the higher directorate. But, if the whole service is to maintain its vitality, they should constitute a criterion for recruitment for all classes of executive officers and for at least that proportion of research and scientific and other workers that is likely to be transferred sooner or later to executive tasks.

International work must be conducted mainly through the agency of committees, and in the conduct of committees, whatever the subject with which they deal, the two indispensable qualities are tact and resourcefulness; and the resourcefulness must be constructive and not simply verbal. What is wanted is a capacity to penetrate through the haze of words in which a group of persons expressing themselves inadequately in a foreign tongue obscure their meaning down into their underlying thought, grasp the points of real difference of opinion, and suggest an acceptable solution which is more than a disembowelled compromise. The resourcefulness and creative imagination must therefore as always be coupled with an analytical power—and that analytical power must be rapid in action.

The need for this constructive imagination is perhaps most apparent in specialized agencies planning programmes of work which take the form either of international co-operative efforts or of national administrative undertakings. The execution of these programmes will as a rule fall to national governments probably with the help and advice of international experts, and in ensuring that they are executed and in giving that advice the need for diplomatic skill is scarcely less than in servicing the inter-state political negotiations. But for the original design the essential quality required is constructive imagination.

5. *Capacity for Leadership*

Closely allied to the quality of constructive imagination is a capacity for leadership. Obviously this capacity is not required of all administrative officials, though it is of quite primary importance for some. I deal with this capacity elsewhere and will only remark here that because the turnover of staff in an international administration is always relatively high and owing to the limited opportunities offered is likely to be especially high among those possessing this capacity, it is well to recruit as many persons as possible who hold out promise of developing it. A wise United Nations director once remarked to me that he would never select a candidate for the lowest administrative grade whom he did not think capable of ultimately rising to the highest. Though only a few will be given much scope for leadership, the understanding and interest in others which constitutes so large an element in it is a quality which all should possess in some degree if a cohesive working group is to be formed.

6. *Convivencia*

A Latin American delegate to an Assembly of the United Nations once suggested that in international relations for the word co-existence should be substituted the Spanish word *convivencia.* There is no English equivalent. A capacity for *convivencia,* however, is one of the essential qualities of an international official. Those who lack it necessarily exercise a disintegrating influence in an international Secretariat and, moreover, are unlikely to be effective in dealing with representatives of countries other than their own. Loyalty will be weak in a Secretariat in which a large proportion of the staff lack this quality because group consciousness will be weak.

7. *Intellectual Capacity*

Most, though not all, national services tend to select their permanent civil servants by means of a written examination designed to gauge their intellectual abilities. A high standard of intellectual ability is also required of the international official. But uncombined with the other qualities mentioned it cannot make more than a research worker confined to his desk.

Research workers who must be kept so confined are no doubt of great value; but they cannot constitute an administration. Moreover, the man of exceptional brains who on account of other defects of

character is unsuitable for promotion is almost certain to become discontented and to have for that reason a bad effect on morale. In consequence, no appointment to an international organization should ever be made on grounds of intellectual attainment alone. A high standard of intellectual ability is a requisite; it is not a measuring rod.

There are some posts, however, for which intellectual ability must take a very high position in the scale of values, especially posts which do not involve important administrative functions, are satisfying in themselves, and carry adequate status. The legal advisers for instance should be relieved of administrative functions and should be men of outstanding intellectual powers; in technical organizations certain scientific posts should be earmarked as such and given the status that the high competence required justifies.

8. *Administrative Ability*

A great deal of the work of an international organization is or should be carried out under high pressure. Delegates and committee members, if they are men of ability and authority, can only sacrifice a limited amount of their time to international work. They are anxious to complete their deliberations and approve their report as quickly as possible. The work of the Secretariat must therefore be organized to meet a series of more or less violent strains and the officials responsible for planning that work should possess the capacity to create and maintain a smooth-running machine. This administrative capacity in the narrow sense of that term is perhaps the one quality required of an international official—apart from linguistic ability—which seems to be commoner amongst the nationals of some states than amongst those of others.

9. *Nervous Energy*

The sudden though repeated rushes of work, which in most international institutions are unavoidable, impose on a considerable proportion of the staff a serious nervous and intellectual strain. To meet this strain an abundant reserve of nervous energy and power of resistance is required and both the physically weak and the slow witted are unsuitable for international work, even for that which appears to be of a routine character.

The strain of the work, moreover, is not due only to long hours or a pace set by the desire of delegates to return to their home countries and resume their normal functions. Feelings are liable to run high,

especially on political issues, and most problems have a political background. In an air charged with emotion and overcharged with tobacco smoke a small error may assume large proportions, and quite apart from any question of the risk of involvement in error the absence of harmony is exhausting. The nervous official becomes a definite liability to the organization.

10. *Determination*

Solid nerves are required and behind them a solid courage and determination. In no walk of life can the yes-man be more useless. Important decisions may be taken on quite inadequate information if the official is too timid to intervene and furnish information which, as often occurs, he alone is in a position to give. Those delegates who are new to the institution may at first resent such interventions; others may query the facts; it is the duty of the official, not as a rule to argue the pros and cons of a case, but to insist on the final decision being taken in the light of the relevant facts.

There is another reason why the yes-man is a menace. One of the main difficulties, as we have seen, in the relations both among officials and between officials and delegates is that of communication. The meaning of a remark is liable to be misunderstood because the associated ideas behind it are unfamiliar to the person addressed. The real meaning and intention must be ascertained and they will never be ascertained in a conversation between a man of dominant personality and a person afraid to probe them. Furthermore, this difficulty of communication always tends to create an atmosphere in which suspicion may be born. There must therefore be mutual trust, and the yes-man can never be trusted.

11. *Specialized Knowledge*

Professor Giraud in his lectures[1] on the Secretariat of international institutions gives as the first and second of the qualities required of an international official 'a perfect knowledge of the questions treated' and 'a knowledge of national psychologies'. These are not natural qualities but acquired qualifications, which can only be fully acquired after a fairly long period of international service. Whatever their most appropriate place in any order of priority, they are without doubt of major importance and it is for that reason amongst others that I insist in the next chapter on the need for a career service.

[1] *Le Secrétariat des Institutions Internationales.*

In technical institutions or departments, in addition to the specialized knowledge of world conditions or national idiosyncrasies, senior officials must have a good working knowledge of the science on which the work is based.

In the League this need was not always met and the authority and usefulness of the whole department when there was a failure to meet it was adversely affected. Without this capacity the director will fail to derive full benefit from the experts he may employ; he will be limited in his power to think out lines of policy to submit to his controlling committees and he will be less capable than his better-trained colleagues to prevent time and public money being wasted on wildcat schemes. This last danger is a real one, for in the give and take of political life, and even the most technical work in an international organization always has a political background, there is a constant risk that the majority in a committee may be unwilling to reject some proposal they know to be absurd, though they would give ardent support to an objective and scientific argument for its rejection submitted by a third party. Furthermore, a director who is incompetent in his own science is ill equipped to play the role he should in suggesting the names of persons to compose his expert committees and equally ill equipped to select his staff.

A further necessary qualification is a working knowledge of at least a second language. With this question of linguistic attainments, however, I shall deal not here but in the two next chapters.

The other qualities required are those essential to success in any walk of life, industry, a sense of humour, judgement, justice, and kindheartedness.

IV

RECRUITMENT

1. *Introductory*

Two of the primary conditions of sound administration are the selection of suitable staff and the maintenance of morale. Granted the qualities required are those discussed in the last chapter, how should one set about finding persons possessing those qualities from all the various states members of an international organization?

The first obvious step is to decide what type of person is wanted and at the same time what prospects are to be offered. This raises at once the whole question of long-term versus short-term recruitment policy. The long-term policy is based on the assumptions that to obtain and maintain an efficient international staff it is necessary to offer a career at any rate to the majority of the recruits, and that in pursuing that career they will learn the profession of an international civil servant. The short-term policy is based on the assumptions that there is at a particular moment a specific job to be done, and that efficiency will be promoted if the job is defined as closely as possible and the candidate is selected according to his fitness for that specific job without reference to his other powers and potentialities. I shall discuss this vitally important question in the next chapter when dealing with morale.

A system of narrow job specification and the division of the staff into a large number of salary grades was introduced by the United Nations in 1946, and spread under pressure to most of the specialized agencies. This system was subjected to persistent criticism by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and roundly condemned by the Committee of Experts on Salary Allowances and Leave Systems. It renders transfers from one job to another almost impossible; it reduces chances of promotion to a minimum; it creates a hierarchical stratification in a staff already divided by nationality, culture, and language; it seems specially designed to give candidates and recruits from less-developed countries the least possible opportunity. It implies, if gross extravagance is to be avoided, short-term contracts and the absence of security, for the work in any office that is not moribund changes constantly. The

Committee of Experts on Salaries drew attention to the 'tendency for numbers to increase whenever additional tasks arise, even when the original workload has declined' and adds that 'this is the inevitable result of a theory which encourages the recruitment of staff for specific and limited posts and makes it correspondingly difficult to assign them new duties outside the scope of their original appointment'.[1] In fact it must always prove costly; first because a new official has to learn his job and at the beginning is relatively unproductive; secondly because jobs peter out gradually, so that there will always be some specialized officials not able or not allowed to assume new functions who are doing less and less.

The system that the UN initiated at the outset was the extreme expression of a philosophy about staff matters which has become popular in recent years, namely that the staff of an international organization should be composed of a number of persons pursuing their acquired and independent professions alongside each other, but in compartments kept carefully watertight and open to no one who lacks the professional badge. It is a philosophy of trade unionism, which reflects at once the infiltration of the trade union spirit among the professional classes and the tendency almost throughout the world for higher education to degenerate into technical training. I have little doubt that most of the new organizations which adhere to this philosophy will be forced either to abandon it or to abandon the attempt to offer a career to their officials.

The obverse of this philosophy is that there is one profession in an international Secretariat which is of primordial importance, and that is the profession of being an international civil servant. Some experts on short-term contracts will always be required; other officials may be and may have to be more versed in certain branches of knowledge than others; but their capacity to learn something new does not cease when they enter the portals of an international office.

However, the needs of the various international organizations are not uniform. The UPU has been efficiently administered for many years by a small staff of Swiss officials. Some specialized agencies require a considerable proportion of officials with a scientific or technical training and prior experience. In some technical agencies where there is a strong professional camaraderie cutting across national frontiers there is less need for a career service than there is, for instance, in the UN. The more an organization is concerned with inter-

[1] Para. 16 (a) A/C. 5/331, 1949.

national relations or with abstract ideas, the greater as a general rule will be its need for career officials with a world outlook; the more it is concerned with scientific questions or with a single industry or profession, the greater as a general rule will be its need for officials with prior experience, and the greater also the proportion of staff on short-term contracts. While admitting this, I am tempted to add in parenthesis that the greater will be also the probability of it exaggerating its need for experienced people.

Here I shall discuss mainly the more difficult problems of the first of these two classes of activity—the problems which present themselves most acutely to organizations dealing with political issues or with ideas which have clear political implications. I propose therefore to discuss recruitment for a real international civil service and to consider organizations embracing a large number of states, not regional bodies. An organization limited to a few countries of like culture may be able to maintain a staff with a real *esprit de corps* composed of officials borrowed from national administrations and, if it is an operative body, may even benefit from the fact that the staff moves in and out from one service to another. Such a system is not inappropriate to OEEC for instance. The problems of a world organization composed of states of widely different cultures and educational levels are much more complex. The Secretariat of such an organization, unless it were linked by a narrow scientific interest, would lack a sense of unity of purpose were it composed of borrowed officials. In such circumstances that sense can only be ensured if a career service is offered.

When a world organization seeks to establish a career service, any vacancy to be filled at the administrative level will have to be considered in connexion with the whole structure of the department concerned, with its probable development, with its present and, in so far as possible, future relationship to other departments. Since the official appointed will almost certainly change his activities during the course of his career, a candidate will have to be found adaptable enough to do so. The job therefore will have to be viewed dynamically and not statically. All these considerations will affect the advertisement. Prior to recruitment, therefore, there must be a recruitment policy, which will affect the interdepartmental division of functions, the internal structure of departments, and *inter alia* the geographical distribution of the staff. Whose duty should it be to formulate such a policy?

2. *The Responsibility for Pre-recruitment Policies*

This question involves delicate problems of hierarchical responsibilities. When the appointment to be made is not that of the head of a department, the immediate responsibility must, I think, lie with the departmental director. He alone knows how the day-to-day work of his department is organized, what are the strong and weak points of the existing staff, what problems of personal relations the appointee will have to face. He, in other words, is the only person who can form a perfectly clear picture of the shape of the hole he has to fill, and it is his duty to do so and to convey that picture as best he can to the other persons jointly responsible for making a selection. But it would be dangerous to assume that his general picture of what is required will always be right.

The director of a technical department, for instance, anxious to avoid increasing the immediate workload of the existing staff, may wish to appoint someone with specific technical experience when long-term policy suggests that preference should be given to a young man with a suitable university degree who will gain his experience in the office. Failure to take the long-term view is the commonest error likely to be made by directors—especially in new specialized agencies. If a director has himself only had national experience, he is loath to believe that, granted he has organized his department efficiently, it should be the best training ground for the type of experience required even of a technical official; and not infrequently personnel officers who have only had national experience are even more blind to both the needs and the potentialities of an international service. Indeed, new agencies would be much better advised to appoint as personnel officers individuals who have had international but no personnel experience than individuals who have only had personnel experience at home and no international experience. The only official to whom national personnel experience may be of major importance is the secretary of the personnel office dealing with its mechanics.

On the other hand, it sometimes happens that the director of a technical department is lacking in scientific knowledge and unable to appreciate the need for a scientific approach to the problems with which he has to deal, or is too narrowly restricted in his scientific outlook. A director concerned with the development of backward areas, for instance, may from ignorance or lack of imagination wish to recruit only persons competent in economic or financial problems,

and totally ignore the equally important sociological problems. In such circumstances again, responsibility for determining the proper scope and structure of the department in question clearly lies with the director's superiors.

The duty then of determining exactly what type of official should be sought lies in the first instance with the director, but is a duty which he should only be asked to carry out after reference to his superiors; and the duty of his superiors is to consider not so much an individual appointment by itself as the department's functions and structure as a whole, and the influence of the individual appointment on that whole both at once and later.

In an international organization appointments can rarely be made with the nature of the work to be carried out immediately alone in mind. It is necessary to consider at the same time not only the work of greater responsibility which the official may be required to do some years later, but other facets of the whole secretariat picture which are peculiar to international institutions. Of these the most important is the need to maintain a geographical distribution of the staff which will give satisfaction to the governing Assembly.

3. *Geographical Distribution*

It is important to be clear at the outset about what the criterion of distribution should be. Should it be citizenship or something more subtle and obscure? Would an international organization be well advised, for instance, were it to appoint as a Brazilian a recent German immigrant who had received his Brazilian papers, or as an Australian a recent Italian immigrant similarly naturalized, or as an American a Polish Jew from New York? Not infrequently persons who have dual attachments and a certain consequential detachment make excellent international officials. But it is probably wise, nevertheless, to take into consideration when occasion arises not only a candidate's legal citizenship but also his original nationality or other group allegiance. All group dominance is inimical to the smooth working of an international organization, and what is important in a group is not the legal status of its members but its cohesion.

The practice in the League was for the director to ask the Secretary General for his permission to fill a post and for his ruling with regard to nationality. Only when that ruling had been obtained could steps to find candidates be taken. The ruling might give complete freedom regarding nationality, or might be a request to seek first in one or

another group of countries. As a rule selection was made from the candidates from the country or countries indicated. But, if after an exhaustive and genuine search no suitable candidate could be found, the permitted area might be extended. Thus two principles were recognized: first the principle that special opportunities should be given to those whose chances of competing successfully were, on account of their national educational system or their language or their distance from headquarters, relatively poor; secondly the principle that a certain standard of efficiency must be maintained. Between these two principles there always is and always will be a struggle. The representatives of certain countries whose nationals find a difficulty in securing posts will always insist on more and more monopolistic opportunities being offered, will always attempt to depress the standard, if not of ability at least of experience required for admission. The average director will be disposed to resist. Resistance alone, however, will not produce the required efficiency, for an international staff can only be efficient if it is mixed and in a vague way representative. Compromise is therefore necessary. The experienced director will probably insist on recruiting for what he considers the key positions in his department, which are not necessarily the most senior posts, with a minimum of restriction on account of nationality. He will aim at completely open competition or as unrestricted selection as the composition of his department and the whole staff permits. At the same time he will recognize that to obtain suitable candidates from certain countries a special effort will be required. The International Civil Service Advisory Board in its report on recruitment methods expressed the opinion that 'there is no country in which young persons with all educational and intellectual qualifications which make for career international officials of outstanding quality cannot be found'.[1]

This may be an unduly optimistic view, but of the great majority of countries it is no doubt true. The solution of the geographical problem appropriate in most cases lies in recruiting young, looking for brains and character rather than experience, and teaching the recruits their job in the office. This cannot be done when the system of narrow job specification prevails. That is why I stated above that such a system was specially detrimental to the interests of the less-developed countries. The first job that should be specified for many candidates is to learn; the first qualification, after character and integrity, intelli-

[1] Op. cit., para. 10 (f), 1950.

gence. Very wisely the Advisory Board recommended that the normal age of recruitment should be between twenty-one and thirty-one. UNESCO, which believes in education as a continuing process, has formally accepted the principle long since applied more generally by the ILO, of recruiting from the less-advanced countries 'for junior professional posts young persons with good academic qualifications with a view to giving them within the Secretariat the training in languages and civil service methods which they lack'.[1] This is clearly the right policy; but, although it should as a rule be possible to find suitable candidates from most countries, if youth and brains rather than age and experience are sought, it remains true first that there are a considerable number of posts requiring practical experience which cannot be filled in this way, and secondly that recruits from certain countries where the level of education is low are unlikely to make the grade even when no experience is demanded. The director is compelled therefore to accept the fact that he must carry a certain proportion of relatively incompetent officials. He should accept this fact with resignation and raise no complaint so long as a predetermined percentage is not exceeded. He should furthermore, in order to give satisfaction to as many claimants as possible in the course of time, allocate these officials to temporary posts. About two years is in my experience the right period. Twenty-four months is as a rule long enough for anyone to establish his incompetence on a firm basis of evidence; it is long enough in most cases to satisfy the ambitions of the person in question. Misfits are rarely happy or satisfied. At the end of the two-year period they will as a rule, if sensibly handled, contentedly return to their mother country with the glow and glory of foreign travel and experience, in a better position than when they left to obtain a job in their home town. The place can then be filled by a candidate from another country.

The International Civil Service Advisory Board in its report on recruitment methods suggests that one means for securing the necessary geographical distribution would be the secondment of officials 'for whom an international career is not likely, from countries which would otherwise be under-represented'.[2] This method of securing a rapid turnover of the less efficient is to be recommended only when there is good reason to believe that at the end of the period of secondment there will not be political pressure to retain the official.

[1] 8. C/Adm. II, 6 Oct. 1954.
[2] Op. cit., para. 10 (h).

At the risk of occupying too much space on this question, I should perhaps add a word about the reason why certain countries are unlikely to produce efficient members of an international staff. The causes are numerous. Quite frequently the cause lies in the fact that persons of the competence required are able to earn very much more at home than the international organization can offer. This was one important reason why the League of Nations always had a serious difficulty in recruiting Latin Americans. In these rapidly developing countries there were too many opportunities at home for the class of man required, who could be so easily found in, for instance, France, Germany, or Italy. Elsewhere the educational system was so backward that only persons who had benefited from some exceptional opportunity could hope to compete. Liberians and Abyssinians, for instance, were and are at a clear disadvantage. The UN has had a very similar experience regarding salary rates in rapidly developing and some less-developed countries. Showing greater enterprise than did the League, it has from time to time recruited young graduates from such countries and put them through a carefully elaborated training course; but it has found it extremely difficult to retain these trainees as most of them find that they can earn substantially more at home or in their own foreign service.

There is a further fact with reference to these semi-diplomatic appointments which should be borne in mind from the outset. There is no reason for assuming that persons who have proved quite useless in an international organization will not prove successful in their own countries. Very often they are successful and are able to render valuable service to the organization from time to time later in life. It is important therefore when making appointments of this class to consider not the immediate but the ultimate potentialities of the recruit. To arrange to have a number of persons scattered throughout the world who have acquired some knowledge of the work of an international organization, who are well disposed, and who have established friendly personal relations is no negligible part of the work of the international administrator.

4. *Age of Recruitment*

The director when formulating his requirements will have to decide also the age he prefers, the past experience he demands, and the linguistic attainments he considers necessary. We have seen that, to obtain recruits from less-advanced countries, the recruitment of

young persons straight from the universities constitutes the most satisfactory solution. For an international organization dealing primarily with inter-state relations, though experienced persons may be required for some senior posts, young recruits present distinct advantages. The national official who has served for a long period in his own country is likely to view all problems from a national angle from which it is difficult for him to shift. Even if he is not prejudiced, and he often is, he will tend to believe that the ways to which he is accustomed are necessarily the best. National and personal prejudices are less likely to affect adversely the work of a scientist or a technician than that of an official dealing with international relations or ideas. A specialized agency of a strictly scientific character therefore, such as WMO or WHO, will in all probability not only require a larger proportion of experienced recruits, but will run less risk from a relatively advanced average recruitment age than an international organization of a political character. Even in narrowly technical specialized agencies, however, there is a clear advantage in giving preference to youth and energy whenever possible once the office has been firmly established.

In practice, directors often neglect the psychological aspects of the problem and consider only the experience and expert knowledge they deem necessary. As a rule they are in a hurry and endeavour to obtain a maximum of expert knowledge and prior experience at once. In consequence while a national administration seeks ability among the young, too often an international administration seeks only experience among the mature. This is, I believe, partly due to necessity and partly to lack of vision. For certain posts experience is essential. There must be a sprinkling of diplomats in a political staff; there must be public health officers in a health agency, specialized scientists in an agricultural or meteorological agency; but once an international agency has become a competent and experienced administration, it should itself be the best training ground for many of the jobs it offers, even though it cannot be for all.

5. *Linguistic Requirements*

A knowledge of languages is a useful tool to possess; but it is an attainment the value of which is greatly enhanced if the languages have been acquired when young in foreign countries, and represent a knowledge not simply of how to string a set of words into a sentence but of the national psychology to which those words give expression.

It is important therefore when recruiting staff to ascertain not so much what language has been learnt, but how and at what age it has been learnt.

For certain classes of official a knowledge of languages is of course indispensable. Translators and précis writers and multilingual stenographers must be selected primarily on account of their command of languages, including their mother tongue. But for reasons with which I shall deal more fully in the next chapter, they should not be chosen wholly on this account, but also with a view to their ultimate transfer to other activities. Certain classes of research workers require also a reading knowledge of a wide range of languages, and the director concerned with an appointment will have to determine what relative importance he should attach to language coverage on the one hand and scientific attainments on the other.

In every case the director has to decide in advance what linguistic attainments and what experience he requires, and having done so, he should always be prepared to modify his decision if need be in the light of the applications received.

The first step, therefore, in the selection of staff is for the director after referring to his superiors to define as clearly as possible what qualifications he requires, but in terms sufficiently general to avoid the risk of tying his own hands, or of restricting the applicants to narrow specialists.

6. *Testing the Market*

Once the requirements have been clearly formulated, how can suitable candidates be found? Persons who might be able and willing to fill the bill are scattered over perhaps fifty countries. What are the means of approach? In the answer to this question the experience of the League has, I believe, been confirmed by more recent experience. Two negative lessons and one positive lesson seem to emerge.

Of the negative lessons, I think the clearest is that an international organization should never allow itself to become dependent on recommendations received from departments of external affairs. Such a department is as likely as not to recommend one of three types of persons: the trained official or diplomat who can be relied upon to defend the interests of his country; the son or nephew of some important personage; a misfit. None of these is likely to strengthen the international Secretariat. There is somewhat less risk in recommen-

dations received from technical departments, especially when there is a strong international sense of professional unity.

The second negative lesson is that reliance should never be placed on one source. There must be a large element of luck in extracting a prize from a bran pie of world dimensions, and the right policy therefore is to make use of all possible media of information.

The one positive lesson is that the most successful appointments are generally of persons about whose work some member or members of the existing staff has a personal knowledge. That is one reason why it is a sound administrative practice always to have a certain number of temporary posts. It is, moreover, sound administrative practice rather to understaff than overstaff a department, and to engage supplementary staff from time to time to relieve pressure or conduct special inquiries.

The initial search for suitable candidates is better conducted whenever possible by the director with the aid of the personnel branch than by the latter with the aid of the director, for the director is responsible for the work of the man recruited and he should be in closer touch with people throughout the world working in his field than the personnel branch can be. Only when an appointment is to be made by examination and a routine mechanism can be put into play can he safely place his responsibilities in other hands. In the long run the efficiency of a department is likely to depend as much on the energy and acumen of its director in looking for staff as on any one single factor.

Procedure with a view to finding candidates will vary from case to case. It may involve any of the following: (i) exploratory recruitment missions; (ii) the announcement of the vacancy on the office notice-boards and on those of the various other international organizations; (iii) advertisement in some of the leading papers of the countries from which candidates are to be selected in the first instance; (iv) inquiries at university appointments boards and similar institutions; (v) personal inquiries by members of the staff among friends and committee members competent in the field of work to be covered; (vi) informing national governments or official delegates or national committees connected with a specialized agency; (vii) a study of the files of persons who have held temporary appointments; (viii) a study of the files of persons who have applied in the past for some vacancy.

The most suitable candidate may, and very likely will, be already on the staff. In this case his transfer will in all probability create a new

vacancy, and the whole procedure will have to be started anew. In consequence, it is frequently wiser to consider internal applications before proceeding to open competition. But on this point there should be no fixed rule. In one case the obvious candidate is known and the post may be offered directly to him by the head of the institution with the approval of the director or directors concerned. In another, it may be known that no suitable person can be found among the members of the staff; but it does not at all follow that there will be no internal applicants. To wait for those applications before advertising more widely would be a useless waste of time.

As I have already indicated, sources (v) and (vii) are likely to prove the most and (vi) the least fruitful. Not that there will not be fruit from (vi); there may be a large crop, but this fruit will not as a rule be good to keep. Indeed I have only included (vi) as a possible course which no organization should feel obliged to pursue and which certain organizations, WHO for instance, specifically state in their administrative regulations they are under no obligation to adopt. It is interesting to note that the International Civil Service Advisory Board 'believe strongly that any rule requiring notification of vacancies to governments is undesirable and should be avoided'.[1]

In spite of the views of the Board, UNESCO habitually notifies governments or national committees of the vacancies that arise, and relies largely on the suggestions received. It goes farther, and before confirming a contract submits the name of the selected candidate to his government for comment. This practice is tantamount to demanding *inter alia* political clearance and substituting for the judgement of the organization on a candidate's probable competence as an international official the judgement of a national government or a political party or an individual minister, which may be based on wholly irrelevant considerations. In many cases, perhaps most cases, it may prove harmless, in a few useful. But against any occasional advantage must be set the fact that it opens the administration to political pressure from Member States. I discuss this question of political pressure in Chapter VI.

Reference to national administrations is likely to be most useful when the post to be filled is technical and short term. A government which would be wholly unwilling to lose its best men for a career job, may be willing to release them for a spell in the belief that the international experience will add to their value.

[1] Op. cit., para. 41.

The UN has shown great enterprise in sending recruitment officers about the world both to survey the markets and get in touch with possible candidates and to interview candidates who have been short listed. Some means for establishing contacts with possible candidates, which can frequently be best done by the director of a department, are indispensable. The League never spread its net wide enough. These contacts are of particular value when an organization is recruiting junior professional class officials direct from the universities. For others personal experience of work done by the candidates in the office or elsewhere constitutes by far the best criterion for judgement. Today, when international organizations are no longer predominantly European, such personal experience may be difficult to tap. In recent years, however, technical assistance activities all over the world have given many more officials an opportunity of framing an informed opinion and have also offered opportunities for training persons who may later be recruited. Moreover, all organizations with regional commissions may use these commissions as a funnel for recruiting staff.

Another reason distinct from the luck element why reliance should not be placed on any one system of search is that quite different methods will be required for different posts. As a rule, though there may be and have been notable exceptions, it is probably wise to look for an international lawyer from amongst persons with an established reputation. The field is a very narrow one and personal inquiry alone may suffice. In certain cases a political officer may have to be selected from a single country, or a very small group of countries; the same is true of certain scientific experts; again, personal inquiry or simple choice of a known individual without any pretence at an open competition is the wisest and most honest course. But the individual should be chosen; he should not be a nominee of his government. Some classes of junior official will be obtained by means of advertisement alone. In each case the appropriate procedure must be determined and it must be such that neither the Assembly nor a budgetary committee has grounds for objection or cavil.

7. *Machinery for Selection*

Once the list of candidates has been compiled, there remains the most difficult task—that of selection. What part should examinations play?

Members of the linguistic divisions, secretarial, and certain other

classes of staff may be most easily selected by written examinations. Such examinations may also help the selectors to some extent to ascertain whether candidates for administrative posts have an adequate all-round education. At best, however, they cannot do more than constitute one possible source of evidence. Owing to linguistic difficulties and to differences in educational systems and standards, this evidence will be inconclusive. It must be viewed with reserve and in the light of an extensive knowledge of national educational systems. The major justification for written examinations lies not in the fact that they afford greater equality of opportunity, but in the importance of a good all-round education in international life when so much depends on personal relations among people with widely variant cultural backgrounds. It seems to me important, therefore, that all examinations, even those for technical posts, should include at least one essay paper giving the candidates a wide choice of general subjects. It is desirable also to set such an essay paper for shorthand typists. Most international organizations recruit secretaries by promoting typists. This is good for morale and on balance administratively desirable. The best results will be obtained if the typists in the first instance are always selected partly on proof of general education as well as digital skill.

Examinations, however, may have quite a different use. When any post of administrative rank is advertised, it is almost certain that the director of the department concerned will receive visits from delegates urging the exceptional merits of their protégés. These visits must be treated seriously, for it is always possible that a valuable suggestion may be made. At the same time the director must resist political pressure and do so without giving offence. I personally found it a great help to be able to say that an examination would be held on a given date and that I sincerely hoped the person proposed would compete. As a rule he did not.

Owing to the limited value of examinations a special and very difficult responsibility is imposed on the officials who interview candidates and on those who make the final selection. In nearly all international organizations directors are considered political or semi-political appointments, and the immediate responsibility of the head of the administration. In the League appointments of other first division officials were made by a Committee on Appointments and Promotion nominated by the Secretary General and composed of persons of the rank of director or higher with the head of personnel acting as *rappor-*

teur and were subject to the confirmation by the Secretary General. It was provided that a selection board should make a first study of the qualifications of the candidates, and in practice interview those short listed. These Boards, which reported to the Committee on Appointments, were composed of the director concerned or his nominee, probably one person with a knowledge of the class of work to be done, and another with a reputation for sound judgement. The head of personnel might be a member of these Boards and had the right to be present in any case. In addition, he acted as *rapporteur* to the main committee and as chairman of its sub-committee, which dealt with all appointments below the first division.

The most serious defect of the League system was that there was inadequate machinery for deciding those broad-policy issues discussed above. Decisions were made by the Secretary General, who did consult with the director concerned and with the head of personnel; but there was no provision for an interchange of experience among the directors. Policy questions might be discussed by the Appointments Committee, but that was really too late and the staff assumed the form it did almost by accident. To meet this weakness the status of the officer in charge of personnel was raised; that was necessary, but more was required.

In the UN and the specialized agencies there is a wide variety of practice regarding the machinery of appointment and regarding the balance of influence among the different categories of officials though a two-tier system is widely adopted. I shall select three examples to illustrate different doctrines and later comment on one or two variants.

The machinery in the ILO is unusual inasmuch as it excludes the director under whom the new recruit will have to serve from the selection bodies, and gives wide powers to the staff association. It is clearly set out, as it should be, in the staff regulations. The Director General is the final judge regarding appointments. He receives advice from an Administrative Committee composed of the Deputy Director General or an Assistant Director General as chairman and six members and six substitute members, of whom half are appointed by the Director General and half by the Staff Union Committee. Direct selection as distinguished from competitive examination is only allowed in certain specified cases. When an examination is held, a Board of Examiners is set up composed of two members and one substitute selected by the Director General and a like number selected

by the Staff Representatives. 'Members of the Administrative Committee and officials of the Division or Service in which the vacancy exists shall not normally be appointed to a Board of Examiners.'[1]

The exact obverse of this system was employed by the second Director General of FAO, who in effect left appointments of officials of the administrative class to the individual directors subject to his final approval.

In WHO the two highest levels of this class are selected by a Senior Staff Selection Committee composed of three Assistant Directors General, at which the Director of Administrative Management and Personnel acts as chairman without a vote; for the lower levels of this class, selection is made by *ad hoc* committees composed of a representative of the office having a vacancy to fill, another official, and a representative of the Personnel Division in the chair. The conclusions of the *ad hoc* committees are subject to review, not by the Director General nor by a senior committee, but by the Director of Administrative Management and Personnel.

The details of the various systems are less important than the underlying philosophies. We find three distinct doctrines: that of the ILO that the whole body of the existing staff should have a potent influence in selecting recruits; that of the FAO that selection should be left to the director; that of WHO that the director of personnel should be given every opportunity to exercise an influence on both policy and selection and indeed should in most cases have the final say.

The ILO system reflects at once a mistrust by the staff in the good faith and judgement of the senior officials, a pride in the service of itself, and a determination by the staff to prevent any lowering of standards through personal influence, prejudice, or lack of acumen. On paper at any rate it deprives the director of any power to decide who is best suited to help in the tasks for which he is ultimately responsible and allots this power to persons who do not share those responsibilities. It deprives the director of the possibility of open leadership. He has not even the right to refuse the appointment of a person whom he considers quite unsuitable. If in fact, as is often asserted, the candidate he favours is generally selected, that selection is made rather because the system can be circumvented than because it exists.

The system adopted by the FAO was based on the principle that, if

[1] *Staff Regulations*, Annex III, para. 13.

the Director General instructed a director to undertake certain work, he should allow him to choose his own tools. Were all appointments temporary this doctrine would have a certain force and logic; but once contracts are made permanent it loses both, for the second director will be forced to use the tools left by his predecessor. On the other hand, in an international organization where the personal factor becomes so important and careful consideration must be given to national and cultural factors, it is, I believe, difficult to resist the conclusion that in the final selection the director who has to make a working group out of very mixed material should have the predominant voice. That is why I attach importance to making a clear distinction between the formulation of personnel policy and the final selection. The departmental chief may well not be the best person in all cases to formulate policy; it may be necessary to control and direct him. This should be done before the post is advertised. Once the advertisement has been agreed and selection begins, although the opinions of others should be heard, the director should be allowed a wide latitude, and in no circumstances should an official be imposed on him either by the staff, a personnel officer, a committee, or the head of the administration. Indeed the head of an administration is particularly likely to be subjected to political pressure, which he may or may not be strong enough to resist.

The system in force in WHO allows the head of personnel to exercise great influence, the staff none, and the directors for the higher posts below the directorate level only an extraneous influence. It concentrates power in the hands of the Assistant Directors General and the head of personnel. It may be that in an organization with a strictly limited non-political field of action, selection can be concentrated in a few hands without serious risk of error. But whenever a director has a staff imposed on him, his task must be rendered more difficult and his sense of responsibility may be weakened. Moreover, the officials most likely to be subjected to external political pressure are the Assistant and Under Directors General. Certainly for such a body as the League or the UN a larger appointments committee for the administrative staff, with the director playing a leading role in the initial search and final selection, is greatly to be preferred.

UNESCO applies a system which is intermediate between those of the ILO and WHO. It is a two-tier system; the director of personnel is chairman both of the Selection Boards and the higher Establishment Committee to which they report. The staff is represented both on the

Boards and the Establishment Committee. The director of the department concerned or his nominee is always a member of the Board and may be of the Committee. This system thus admits the right of the staff to exercise an influence on recruitment without giving it the extraordinary powers it enjoys in the ILO; it admits the special interest and responsibility of the director concerned. Personally I am inclined to the view that the responsibility for recruitment, which is a matter of executive policy, not of administrative procedure, lies with and only with the administration. But, if this view is not accepted, the UNESCO system has obvious merits. It suffers, however, from two defects, one more or less peculiar to itself and one shared, so far as I know, by all international organizations past and present. The first is that the so-called Establishment Committee is not a continuing body; it is selected for each meeting from two panels, one drawn up by the Director General and one by the staff. The only regular elements are the director of personnel and possibly an immediate representative of the Director General. In such circumstances it is not easy to maintain continuity of policy. Logic and tradition in the personnel policy of an international organization are of quite vital importance and it should not fall to one or two officials only to maintain them. In all such organizations it is difficult for active directors to find the time for administrative committees and at any moment some will be absent. But if they fail to give their time the whole administration will tend to become a group of independent kingdoms and lack unity of purpose.

The second defect to which I referred above is rendered more acute by the panel system, but is in no way peculiar to UNESCO. It lies in the fact that there is nobody charged with the task of discussing the internal structure of departments and their interrelationship. All organizations seem to suffer from this deficiency and no doubt it is difficult to meet it without exacerbating inter-departmental rivalries and causing friction. OEEC would seem to have been exceptionally successful in maintaining good relations by tackling this question indirectly at directors' meetings of an informative character, held three times a week, at which the allocation of tasks and hence of personnel are decided. But the personnel implications of the conclusions reached are incidental, and administrative procedures successful in regional offices may well prove less efficacious in organizations of wider scope.

The UN is faced by more difficult recruitment problems than any

other international organization, past or present. Its staff is about six times as large as that of the League; the field of its activities is vastly wider than that of any specialized agency and the scene of more violent and passionate contests; it is situated in New York, relatively far distant from other capitals. A regional organization can tap local sources of information about candidates; it can as a rule, and always should when possible, call those who are short listed for an interview. A specialized agency with its relatively narrow field of activity is much better placed than the UN to obtain first-hand and reliable information about candidates, though this advantage is offset to some extent in certain cases by their wider membership; for reasons discussed in the next chapter most of them are able to maintain a good morale among the staff selected more easily than UN, and are accordingly somewhat less concerned with psychological factors.

The system of recruitment gradually developed as a result of UN's special difficulties is still in a state of evolution and is of less interest than the problem itself. For this reason I consider it last.

Both at headquarters and regionally the authority of the Personnel Division is paramount. This division even decides about geographical distribution of staff, which in the League would have been considered a political issue for determination by the Secretary General. The UN is, however, so much larger than was the League that this delegation of functions, except for the top-level staff, is almost inevitable. For a specialized agency it would be neither necessary nor desirable.

All candidates selected initially for permanent contracts, whether at headquarters or in a regional office, must be approved by an Appointment and Promotion Board composed of senior officials on which the staff association is not represented. There are in New York no selection boards. In regional offices, selection boards of three persons are chosen for each appointment from a panel. The director of the department concerned is not a member of these boards; but it is the practice of the Personnel Office to discuss each appointment with the director concerned before the selection board meets, and to draw up a short list in agreement with him.

The splendid isolation of New York renders it impossible to convoke short-listed candidates from overseas for an interview and, although candidates may have been interviewed individually by, for instance, a member of the personnel division or by a regional board, the whole situation creates a strong incentive for the Appointment

and Promotion Board to base its decisions rather on paper qualifications of candidates than on an assessment of their personalities.

Paper qualifications afford very inadequate evidence for selecting international officials. For this reason and because the initial selection is geared rather to the job than to the man, permanent contracts are only granted after an unusually long period of probation, namely two years. At the end of this period a Review Board under an outside chairman, on which the staff is represented, considers not only the work performed, but whether the recruits could undertake other work if need be and whether they possess the moral qualities and the personalities required of international officials.

The probationary period is always the best test of an official. But in spite of this fact the weakness of this rather elaborate system lies in the very real difficulty of applying it with sufficient rigour. Moreover, if reliance is placed mainly on it, selection is rendered expensive in both money and human effort. For such a system to work satisfactorily it would seem necessary to satisfy at least three conditions.

First the gap between the criteria applied for the first selection and the final confirmation of contracts should be as small as possible. This implies that the selection committee should do much more than endeavour to assess the relative value, for instance, of university degrees in different countries or how past experience coincides with paper requirements and should collect and weigh all possible evidence regarding the candidates' characters and personalities. The division of the functions of initial selection and final confirmation between two separate bodies does not render this first condition easy to satisfy.

Secondly, however costly, the probation period must be treated seriously and this *ex post facto* test applied rigorously.

Thirdly, I venture to think that the director of the section concerned should always, when physically possible, participate in the meetings both of the boards and of the superior bodies. Whatever the machinery of appointment, an efficient staff in an international organization can only be built up if the directors take and are allowed to take the most active part in searching for suitable candidates.

There remains the question of the degree of power and influence that should be exercised by the head of personnel. To judge character at sight, or after a brief interview, is partly an innate gift and partly an acquired art. To exercise that art successfully when the candidates come from all over the world much practice is required and a personnel officer has more opportunity to master it than any other official.

A good personnel officer should therefore be able to exercise a very great influence over his colleagues. If he is unable to exercise that influence as the automatic result of his greater experience, he is almost certainly a bad personnel officer. He lacks the first requisite, capacity to handle men. What is desirable is a system that gives him every opportunity to exercise his influence, but does not give him extraordinary powers. Naturally in a large organization such as the UN he will receive by delegation from the Secretary General greater powers than he would appropriately enjoy in a smaller office. In the League in the early days he had, I think, insufficient status. In any two-tier system under which the personnel officer is automatically a member of both the small selection committee and the appointments committee, ample opportunity is afforded to him to expound his views and allow others to benefit from his experience. Whether he has the right to vote or not is unimportant; to give him the right of veto is, I suggest, undesirable. It is undesirable because the head of the administration should reserve that right to himself and, more important, because if exercised by the head of personnel it is liable to render him unpopular and to reduce his positive influence. In any case his task is a delicate and ungrateful one. What is required in an international administration is a system under which the senior officers as a whole feel a direct responsibility for pursuing a sound recruitment policy and look to the personnel officer for wisdom.

International organizations differ so much that no single system is likely to be appropriate for all of them. A two-tier system with a small interviewing committee on which the director of the department concerned and the head of personnel or his nominee are members of right, reporting to an appointments committee composed of the head of personnel and officials of directorial rank or over, selected for their good sense by the head of the administration, presents the advantages of rendering the interviews intimate, ensuring that one interviewer at least has an expert knowledge of the work, confining the appointments to the officials most directly responsible for the all-round efficiency of the office, and allowing the personnel division to make its special contribution to the final judgement. For the junior staff the committee of three may suffice, and as this staff should be readily transferable, it is logical that the personnel office should play a predominant role. But for this system to be really satisfactory in the long run, the appointments committee should consider what class of person is to be sought to fill a vacancy before the active search for

candidates begins. If it fails to do so, there is a risk either that a general personnel policy will be lacking or that the head of personnel or finance will dictate policy.

When, as in New York, interviewing of candidates is impossible, as on occasion it may be elsewhere, the case for selection boards is no doubt weakened. But at least they would relieve the senior selection committee of some of the burden of work it has to bear and permit of a closer examination of each vacancy than a larger committee can give.

8. *Probation*

Because of the difficulty of selection and the consequential risk of mistakes being made a period of probation is indispensable and should always be treated seriously. The work actually done by a recruit in an office and his general bearing as an official are indeed the only reliable criteria for final judgement. The greatest weakness in the whole system of recruitment in the League lay in the reluctance of directors to take a firm line in doubtful cases, or, indeed, in some instances to treat the probation period seriously at all. There was a tendency to believe that having taken the responsibility of selecting someone provisionally, it was unfair to him if that selection was not confirmed. The interest of the individual was thus put above that of the service. Admirable as such kindheartedness may be, it is fatal to the major responsibility of securing the best possible staff. It is also misplaced, because an official who fails to make the grade will never lead a satisfying and contented existence. But, while no consideration other than the quality of the recruit's work and the suitability of his personality should be allowed to influence the final decision regarding his retention as a permanent member of the staff, certain principles regarding his treatment should be respected.

First, it is only fair to consider doubt rather a cause for prolonging his probationary period than for terminating his services.

Secondly, if the doubt relates rather to his abilities than to the way in which the work for which he was engaged is likely to develop, the additional period of trial should not be too long; six months should normally suffice.

Thirdly, whatever the length of the additional period and whatever the cause for it, if the contract is confirmed, pensionable rights should be dated back either to the date of entry into the service or to the end of the normal probationary period. The recruit should not be allowed

to suffer because his director has found it difficult to make up his mind. It is true that that difficulty may have been caused by some lack of merit or distinction in the recruit. But it may have been caused by linguistic difficulties, by the fact that the recruit came from a far-distant country and could not adapt himself rapidly, by basic differences in education or even by the absence at crucial times of the director from headquarters. In international life so many factors come into play that there is always a risk of injustice being done unless the interests of the staff finally selected are very carefully protected.

Finally, if at the end of the ordinary or a prolonged period of probation the recruit is not retained, it is both humane and sound administration to go to great pains to explain the reasons for the decision taken and to help the recruit to find a job elsewhere. It should be relatively rare, in any reasonably administered organization, for a person who has passed through the selection mesh to be quite destitute of merit. As a rule the misfits are misfits in international life, who may very well make a position and name for themselves at home. All international organizations are dependent on public opinion; none can afford gratuitously to make enemies. It is sound administration therefore, and not simply kindness, to part as the friend of the man you sack, and with a little energy and imagination it is not necessarily difficult.

For a probation period to be a genuine test, the work must be specially planned. It is quite useless to ask the recruit simply to devil for another official. The director who adopts that policy abrogates his own power to judge to someone else and at the same time fails to give the recruit a fair opportunity. At first for a month or two the recruit will have to learn about the work that is expected of him and about the relationship of his activities to the department as a whole. But sooner or later he must be asked to do some original work in which he can express his own ideas, work which can be seen by the director as well as by his immediate superior. This principle of demanding original work at some stage in the probationary period may with advantage be applied not only to staff of the administrative grade, but in so far as possible to lower grades also. In some cases it may be necessary to ask for a piece of work to be done which has little purpose other than that of testing the recruit. In the long run the time thus spent will not be wasted, because if adequate security of tenure is given, as it should be, mistakes in selection will involve a far greater loss of time later. The UN has gone much farther and has developed

an elaborate system of in-training for some recruits, moving them from one department to another in order to enable them to obtain an understanding of the whole organization.

In the UN, as we have seen, the normal period of probation is two years, not one year as was customary before the war, and is treated as the real test for character and general fitness. In a large staff recruited from a very extensive field and dealing with heterogeneous affairs a longer period may well be justified than would be appropriate for a small group of officials, and it is logical and right that specialized agencies have not followed this example. The OEEC confined to countries with a Western civilization finds six months' probation enough.

Both in the UN and in the specialized agencies an extension beyond the normal probationary period may be demanded in exceptional circumstances. The two years of the UN may seem a long enough test. But for a young recruit from a backward country who has to acquire control over a language radically different from his own, to adapt himself to an unfamiliar civilization and to learn the methods of an international office, it may on occasion prove insufficient. For a review board to ask for an extension in such circumstances may prove an act both of justice and of wisdom.

For a probationary period to afford optimum results, it should be considered not simply as a test for a particular post, but as a test of suitability for the service. A review board should therefore be empowered not only to confirm or reject, but to suggest that a candidate be retained if reclassified or retained if different work be allotted to him. When an initial selection is made, the selection board has to guess first that a candidate has the character and ability required of an international official, and secondly, that he is well adapted for a specific post. It may be right on the first point and wrong on the second. If a potentially good official has been found, granted all the difficulties involved in such a discovery, especially in backward areas, he should not necessarily be barred on account of a job specification.

9. *Junior Staff*

There are some problems of recruitment that have never been solved, and they may be impossible to solve. It is obviously desirable that the staff should be as international as possible from top to bottom. If all the clerical staff are either locally recruited or American, English, or French, or whatever the working languages may

be, national blocs of juniors are created which may have an unfavourable influence on the general psychological atmosphere. The locally recruited, receiving somewhat lower salaries inasmuch as they are not entitled to an expatriation allowance, are likely to feel themselves rather a caste apart, to resent this status, and by a natural process to become what they believe themselves to be. They are likely also to believe that their nationals have less chance of being appointed to senior posts because of the large number of locally recruited staff who are citizens of the country in which they live. This belief, moreover, may be to some extent justified. There is therefore a real advantage in recruiting for the clerical posts from as many countries as possible. But to devise a system for selecting statistical, registry, or other clerks from distant countries is extremely difficult. Persons of this category are best recruited straight from school, because the most efficient rise as a rule rapidly in whatever occupation they enter and are rarely 'on the market'. To hold examinations in a large number of capitals would be an expensive and time-consuming procedure and could only be successful if some very simple system of examination could be devised.

I am inclined myself to the belief that such a system could be devised and would in spite of the expense be worth while. My belief, however, is based on the inadequate evidence of a single experiment. I was asked once to arrange for the preparation of a complete list of the customs ports in the world to be published in the spelling of the two official languages. This demand clearly involved asking each government for a list of its ports, translating the lists received into the official languages, so far as translation was required, and repeating the national lists in the form of a world and continental alphabetical list in each language. For this purpose each port would have to be carded and the cards reshuffled in the various orders required. What qualifications were required for this work? Clearly three, accuracy, capacity to write legibly, and capacity to work fast. I accordingly advertised for clerks and set all the applicants the same examination, which consisted simply of copying out for three hours the names of places from a gazetteer. The result was startling. The candidate who copied out most names (125 compared with the second 100) made no mistakes and wrote the best hand; the second candidate made fewer mistakes, wrote more names, and had a better calligraphy than any other; the next two also stood out clearly above the rest, though some problem of judgement arose in choosing between them. For its in-

tended purpose the experiment proved a great success. But it was more than that, because in fact the persons selected proved amongst the most efficient clerks I ever had and were all offered permanent appointments when the list of ports was completed. Was this an accident? Are not accuracy, calligraphy, and speed the qualities above all others required of a clerk and cannot they be measured in this simple manner in the course of three hours?

I devote so much space to this incident because for the reasons already given I believe it is important to make the whole staff as international as possible, and because an examination of the sort described can be set anywhere and in any language using the European alphabet.

To employ an international clerical staff does increase costs. Expatriation allowances have to be paid; travelling expenses for holidays have to be met; time has to be allowed for the recruits to master at least the rudiments of at least one of the official languages. But the United Nations with offices in half a dozen countries and permanent missions in many more could keep down those expenses by allowing headquarters and each regional office to recruit an agreed proportion of its clerical staff locally. Each office would have amongst its clerical staff more nationals of the country in which it was situated than of any other; but it would not have a solid national block representing a particular grade in the service.

10. *Recruitment for a World Civil Service*

Nowhere is the system for recruiting international officials wholly satisfactory. In some organizations the machinery is better than in others; in some the directors and personnel officers have a more lively sense than in others of the care, imagination, and judgement required to produce even reasonably satisfactory results. But everywhere the system is amateurish, groping, dependent largely on chance, subject to political pressure which is sometimes useful and more often a menace, and among all the international organizations that exist today it is unco-ordinated. In these circumstances the question presents itself whether a new approach to the problem should not be sought and in particular whether it would not be wiser to entrust the function of recruitment to a single body acting for all the associated organizations. To recruit through a Board of International Civil Service Commissioners given the power to select officials for the UN and its satellites would seem at first sight to present obvious advan-

tages. Such a board would in the course of time acquire a unique experience in judging the relative merits of candidates drawn from all over the world, in assessing character, in making the appropriate allowances for the idiosyncrasies of different educational systems. It would be able to devote more time and care to recruitment than can be perhaps expected of a departmental director. It would be better able than any single organization to make the vacancies it had to fill known throughout the world, for those vacancies would be more numerous. It might indeed arrange for tests to be held each year on the same dates irrespective of the number of vacancies at any moment. We might expect therefore that, owing at once to the Board's greater ability to tap the market and to judge what is offered, there would be an improvement in the average competence of those officials who could be recruited in this way.

Other important advantages should ensue. The Board would automatically ensure uniform standards for all organizations and thus facilitate the movement of officials from one organization to another. That movement in its turn would promote a standardization of administrative practice and help to improve the methods employed by those organizations that are below the average efficiency. It would, moreover, by the closer personal contacts established, promote the co-ordination of the work of the UN and the specialized agencies. Finally, the admission of all international officials through the same door and their selection by the same criteria would go far to promote the idea of an international civil service as a definite profession—and, if the Board selected with the care it should, a profession worthy of the public respect that is so vital to it.

The case that can be argued in favour of a centralized system of recruitment is a strong one; but it is dependent on the possibility of applying uniform criteria. The case is therefore the strongest, if those uniform criteria can be applied, not only to all organizations, but to all recruits. In order to apply them to all recruits it would be necessary to recruit young and to elaborate a system of examinations fair to all irrespective of educational backgrounds or language. I have already argued that no written examination can be fair to all; it could indeed only be linguistically fair if all were entitled to write in their mother tongues, and, if they were, no single board could understand what was written. Conceivably an intelligence test might be devised which would help the Board to judge native ability. But intelligence tests are more suitable for sifting candidates for a university than candidates

from a university. They cannot measure the capacity of members of a multi-lingual group to express themselves, and an international civil service cannot ignore literary capacity. A knowledge of languages may be acquired later; but the university graduate who cannot express himself in his own language is unlikely ever to be able to do so in another. It would seem extremely doubtful therefore, even if it were agreed that all candidates for the permanent cadre of the international civil service were recruited young, whether any satisfactory general test could be devised. Special tests for certain classes of officials such as précis writers, translators, and editors present no difficulties, for these are tests of a knowledge of the official languages. But for them no heavyweight Board of Commissioners is required. Any specialized agency can arrange to accept the findings of the UN examiners if it will.

Furthermore, the time has not yet come when it would be possible for the UN or the specialized agencies to confine their recruitment of administrative officers to candidates coming straight from the universities. Were they to do so they would never obtain a normal age distribution. Their policy should, I believe, be directed to recruiting a growing proportion young, and some day the great majority. But this must be a gradual process.

If no uniform test can be applied to all candidates, it remains to consider whether recruitment by a Board of Commissioners which applied different tests for different classes of candidates uniformly for all organizations would not prove more satisfactory than present methods. The benefits of a certain uniformity would remain; the movement of officials from one organization to another would still be somewhat facilitated; the idea of a unique service somewhat furthered.

Unfortunately a Board of Commissioners suffers from the weakness that it must apply more or less cut-and-dried tests. The director of a department will rely largely on personal contacts, personal knowledge, and personal recommendations. He is in touch with people in his field all over the world. The Commissioners could not have the same personal links relating to all the subjects for which candidates are sought. When experience as well as native ability or when training in a special branch of knowledge in addition to an all-round education is sought, a Board of Commissioners would be much less well placed than the director of a department and his colleagues to form a judgement. A board could never hope to acquire an intimate knowledge of

the nature of the posts that become vacant in the various specialized agencies, situated as they are in half a dozen countries. Unless and until methods can be devised for a common entrance examination for all candidates that is fair to all, the present system of recruitment, in spite of all its defects, is open to less serious objection than recruitment by a Board of Commissioners.

If, as the International Civil Service Advisory Board suggests they should, international organizations gradually recruit more young officials, the case in favour of a Board of Commissioners may become stronger. But it will not be greatly strengthened. An international organization can recruit young without a world-wide competitive test. For certain posts it may hold examinations which confessedly give advantage to the countries with more advanced university standards; for others it may limit the field to candidates from countries or even a country with less advanced standards. For these latter countries, it may hand-pick candidates who have studied abroad, or it may hold examinations in a non-official language. There is no reason why examinations should not be held in non-official languages, if the number of languages is strictly limited. In the ultimate analysis it is the very merits of the Board of Commissioners, uniformity of standards and universality, that renders it inappropriate.

Some contribution to the solution of the recruitment problem might possibly be made by a more indirect and more expensive means. World-wide intelligence tests are inadequate for sifting university graduates, but they are not necessarily inadequate for sifting applicants to universities. Possibly the best means for the recruitment of nationals from the less-advanced countries would in the long run be to finance educational facilities at certain universities on quite a large scale. To be successful an all-round education and normal western European educational standards—not a special training spear-pointed to an international career—and very liberal financial support would be necessary. For in order to maintain the standards required of, international officials, only the outstanding graduates from these university centres should stand a chance of selection. There must be a large group from which to pick and the education given must be of real value to those graduates who are not recruited and return home.

This may seem an expensive and cumbersome method of recruitment. But if sufficiently high standards were maintained and the whole scheme was designed primarily as a form of technical assistance and

only secondarily as an aid to recruitment, it should not prove extravagant.

Although the point falls outside the scope of this book, I should perhaps add, in order to avoid risk of misunderstanding, that it would be much more practical to try to create a European than a world Civil Service and for this purpose possibly a common machinery for recruitment. The present large number of regional institutions spawned casually here and there in Western Europe without any apparent consideration of the administrative effects of this uncontrolled fecundity involves an obvious waste of human and financial resources and at the same time affords quite inadequate chances of promotion for the abler officials in the smaller offices. Were conditions created under which the officials in one organization could easily transfer to another, the opportunities for advancement would at least be somewhat increased, as would the possibility of putting the right man in the right place. To create such conditions in Europe with its relatively limited number of languages, with so much in common in the cultural traditions of the countries participating in the regional organizations and with university standards generally, if not always, in reasonable distance of each other, would no doubt not be easy, but would not present the insuperable difficulties just discussed. There are two obvious alternative courses. The first and easier course would be to agree common staff regulations, standards of conduct, and conditions of service; the second to go a step farther and in addition establish common recruitment machinery. The second course would be greatly facilitated did some such university centres as those mentioned above exist. For the first and easier solution what is essential is a European Administrative Committee of Co-ordination. It is worthy of note that European institutions have lagged far behind the UN family in co-ordinating their administrative systems.

11. *Conclusion*

This first task in the whole process of international administration, the recruitment of a competent staff, is one of the most difficult and at the same time one of the most important. It is difficult to devise means for finding suitable candidates and far from easy to make the right selection once a group of candidates has been assembled.

There is no high road to success. Every source of information regarding possibly suitable persons should be tapped; no suggestion should be ignored, though those put forward by departments of

external affairs are more likely to be inspired by some consideration other than the welfare of the international organization than perhaps any other. Rigid rules guiding the process of discovery, other than rules determining the area of search or granting equality of opportunity to possible applicants, will only prove an encumbrance.

Every available source of competence is required for successful selection: the man who knows the work intimately, the man who can assess character, the man who can judge attainments. And even when all these sources have been employed, there should be no assumption that the right choice has been made. The real test begins after the choice has been made and that test must be treated seriously. It is better to reject a person after a period of probation, who might have made good, than to grant a permanent contract to someone who in the end fails to do so; a permanent contract should be permanent and not broken save for grave incompetence or misconduct, while a new search and a new selection can always be made. Moreover, the man who has not proved to fit the needs of the organization may well fit those of another.

The safest test is always work actually performed in or for the organization itself. Only for such work is there a satisfactory criterion of comparison and only in the conduct of such work can a man's character be satisfactorily assessed. The more the current flow of work can be organized with a view to the employment of temporary collaborators, the easier the selection of permanent officials will be. But to create a quasi-permanent pool of such persons who can be drawn on as occasion arises may be as socially undesirable as to organize a country's business on the basis of a large pool of unemployed. Moreover, it will not help recruitment. What is wanted is a succession of individuals employed temporarily to help in carrying out special pieces of work, not a permanent reserve of persons who just fail to make the grade.

The tests applied must be the right ones. In the long run the success of an international Secretariat will depend more on the personality of its officials, on their ethical outlook, and their instinctive behaviour than on their intellectual attainments. Exceptional intellectual ability is required for some posts; character for all. A loyal, harmonious, and efficient international Secretariat can only be created if at all stages of selection prime importance is attached to the character of the candidates recruited. It is futile to look first for brains and then sift for personality.

V

THE MAINTENANCE OF MORALE

1. *Introductory*

THE second essential of successful administration in an international organization mentioned at the beginning of the last chapter was the maintenance of morale. In all co-operative undertakings similar problems of morale arise. I propose in this chapter to ignore many of those problems which are common to all administrations and direct attention rather to those that assume a special form or a special significance in international organizations. These problems arise from the nature of the life or the nature of the work considered in Chapters I and II.

2. *Special Problems Arising from the Life Led*

The life, as we have seen, is one in which the majority of the senior staff at any rate are *dépaysés* without becoming integrated in the society of the country in which they live. Their home ties and cultural roots have been severed or enfeebled, and the only society in which new roots can easily be struck is bureaucratic, hierarchical, and alien. The rights of citizenship cannot be exercised. Life planted neither in citizenship nor in native culture seems, and in a sense is, superficial and, as time passes, the official becomes increasingly harassed by doubts about his ability ever to become fully integrated in any society. While these doubts are developing, he is worried by similar and perhaps even profounder doubts about his children. To those coming from far-distant parts of the world and widely different cultures all these difficulties are enhanced. For the secretarial staff the chances of marriage are poor and of suitable marriage still poorer.

These characteristics of the life must have a profound influence on the whole system of administration, if morale is to be maintained, and I shall revert to them frequently in the course of this and subsequent chapters. Three conclusions arising directly from them may, however, with advantage be mentioned here. First, whatever the cost may be, adequate opportunity must be afforded to officials and their families to maintain contacts with their home countries. Secondly, while affording full security to those who wish to make a life career in inter-

national service, every facility should be afforded to all grades, but especially to the secretarial staff, to leave whenever they may wish to do so. Thirdly, no official should be prevented on financial grounds from having his children educated at home should he so desire.

The wise administrator will go farther and take a personal interest in the creation of facilities for cutting across the hierarchical stratification of the international society by the organization of clubs, games, sports, and other activities. The international schools founded in Geneva and elsewhere through the vision and enterprise of one or two officials have done much to promote unity, for in societies that have to form themselves artificially unity is always attained largely through the children.

3. *Conditions of Psychological Satisfaction*

Before turning to the special problems arising from the nature of the work in an international organization it may be useful to consider briefly what are the conditions likely to be necessary for the maintenance of morale in any administration, for it is only with these considerations in mind that the special problems can be effectively tackled. Of these conditions perhaps the most important is belief in the value of the work that has to be done. In the absence of such a belief the individual official will probably think more about himself than his work; his morale will suffer and he will be a nuisance to the administration he serves. On the other hand, in an international organization exaggerated ideas about the probable results that can be achieved and an inflated belief in one's own self-importance may prove as pernicious as the absence of any belief. In times of crisis a sense of history is much more useful than sentimental idealism.

Belief is necessary as a motive power; once the motive power is there the second condition for satisfaction is a consciousness of competence in the work undertaken. Since types of capacity in an international Secretariat vary widely, it follows that the work must be so planned as to give adequate scope for widely variant creative abilities. Opportunity for creative ability implies opportunity for initiative and responsibility. It implies also opportunity to play some part in determining the instructions under which in any large administration work must be done.

The third condition, and perhaps the most difficult to satisfy, is that the official should become an integral part of the group in which he works, and the fourth, that he should be aware that those to whom he

is responsible have a genuine interest in the groups of persons working under them and a capacity for leadership. It is much easier to meet the third condition if the groups are not large, and this fact should influence the whole organization of the Secretariat.

The other major conditions are on rather a different plane, but collectively scarcely less important. They are reasonable opportunity for improving status, security, and sufficient income and prospects after retirement to obviate constant worry.

In an international organization these conditions are difficult to fulfil. To many the work as well as the life seems divorced from reality and this estrangement weakens belief in it. Linguistic difficulties may limit the scope for creative work or render it unduly difficult. Differences in upbringing and experience are unfavourable to the formation of close-working groups. Both semantics and nationality may render, or seem to render, the opportunity for advancement unequal. There is, again largely for reasons connected with language, an exceptionally high proportion of what may prove dead-end jobs.

4. *Divorce from Reality*

To be conscious that any work on which one may be engaged is of strictly limited importance is probably a healthy attitude of mind and induces a humility which the typical public servant, national or international, often lacks. But it is at least necessary to feel that one's daily work contributes something to some end which is apparent, perceived, and accepted as desirable. When this belief is lacking, morale will be feeble; for it to be present the relationship between means and ends must be understood, and the importance of the ends must be appreciated. In international work this relationship and the importance of the ends frequently fail to be starkly apparent.

To some extent in all, but especially in international political organizations, many questions are dealt with in an abstract, verbal form only; they often refer to parts of the world with which the official is unfamiliar and for which he has no sympathetic understanding. The events which led up to those questions have not been experienced; they are known by hearsay only. Imagine yourself in an office looking out from your window on nothing more human than the lac de Genève or the white breast of Mont Blanc, and pondering over the significance of a debate you have just attended of the Assembly of the League or of the Economic and Social Council of UN. 'Cataracts of

declamation thunder here.'[1] You have listened to protracted discussions and doubted the sincerity of all the speakers. There has been no government to submit a policy. Most speakers have concentrated on saying nothing, some with superb eloquence, or on casting scorn on the alleged sins of their neighbours. You may have watched how, after a week of violent disputation, a resolution is carried so devoid of substance that it would seem capable of no effect other than that of ending the disputation; and you ask yourself what the disputation was really about; or you participate in framing a resolution containing real substance, constructive in thought and lucid in expression, and know that no government will in fact act on it.

Any parliamentary debate may give a very similar impression of divorce from reality. But such debates do lead to the passing of laws that affect the individual citizen; the subjects debated are for the most part nearer home and more readily understood; public opinion, whether hostile or complacent, is omnipresent. In international affairs as a rule not more than a recommendatory opinion is possible; those to whom the recommendation is made are invisible and scattered over the four quarters of the earth; the public whose opinion might make itself felt is equally widely scattered, is necessarily ignorant of the real issues, and is overlaid with government propaganda.

The consequential sense of unreality is likely to affect the attitude of mind on the one hand of the new recruit to an international organization to whom so much must in any case be strange, and on the other those who have served for a relatively long period of time without having reached a position in which they can themselves directly influence policy. It is likely to be most acute and have the most serious influence on morale when some stage in history is reached at which agreement among governments cannot be achieved because in fact it is not sought. In such circumstances the machinery of an international organization may continue to rotate with what seems a meaningless repetition and those responsible for it feel an almost inevitable frustration. Thus morale in the League was undermined when a depression, which in fact lasted less than three years, but seemed endlessly protracted, was succeeded by secessions and the growth of two hostile political camps. But it was exactly during this period that the maintenance of a high morale, if the credit on which the organization depended was not to be exhausted, was most essential. Thus, too, it is obviously far more difficult to maintain morale today in a disunited

[1] W. Cowper, *On the Employment of what is called an Idle Life.*

United Nations than in those technical organizations that are more concerned with the local application of some agreed principle or method than with promoting political agreement among states.

This risk of morale being affected by scepticism arising from lack of understanding or a sense of frustration naturally determines in large measure the administrative system appropriate for an international Secretariat. Obviously what is required is to spread as widely as possible opportunities, first for participating in the constructive work of the Secretariat, and secondly for acquiring a full understanding both of the means by which results are gradually achieved, and of the particular events and forces that are influencing any given situation. Clearly it will be difficult to meet these needs if the Secretariat is organized on a rigorously hierarchical basis. In some national administrations it is the practice to confine discussion of any subject to the head of the organization or of any department and the official immediately below him in the hierarchy. It is the function of the latter to obtain the views of those directly responsible to him, but it is not his duty to allow his juniors to participate in discussions with his chief. Such a system is inappropriate in an international organization. Good relations will be promoted if the Secretary General and every senior official feel at complete liberty to discuss any question with whom they will, and if they adopt the practice of calling for the official, whatever his grade, who has been specializing on any particular question. When they do so they should keep the official's immediate superior informed; they may consider it advisable to ask him to be present if he can spare the time; but to complete freedom of discussion between those responsible for reaching a final conclusion, and those anywhere in the organization responsible for the work on which that conclusion must depend, there should be no bar.

The adoption of this system, especially in the early days of the League, was a major cause of the excellent morale that the Secretariat then enjoyed. It is essential in a political organization in order to give to all officials a sense of reality in an unreal world and a sense of responsibility in work often too halting in its results readily to incite their zeal; it is, moreover, as we shall see, of the greatest importance because of the inevitable bars to easy communication caused by linguistic and national differences.

The second obvious means of promoting a keener sense of reality is to facilitate travel as much as possible. Almost all questions can be studied best on the spot, and, although constant travel takes much

time and involves additional expense, its advantages greatly exceed its costs. I have no doubt that in the League the staff and expenses were kept down too low and that travel was too restricted, and in the UN the provision for travel, although much greater than it was in the League, would seem to be unduly cramping.

Closely related to the use of travel as a means of spreading a sense of reality throughout the staff is the practice adopted by the more enlightened administrators of asking a junior official to be present at interviews which he may have with government representatives on one question or another. Each question which arises, other than those of quite major importance, is likely to be assigned or to have been assigned to the attention of some official below the rank of director, and it is to the advantage of all concerned that this official should learn about the introduction or development of the problems with which he is charged whenever possible at first hand. He may add nothing to the discussion; is probably not expected to intervene unless called upon; but he and his work will benefit from the experience, and the whole Secretariat will benefit from the system. Again the hierarchical stratification is to some extent broken down.

In normal times considerable advantage is likely to result from allowing every member of the staff from top to bottom the fullest possible opportunities for learning what all branches of the organization are doing. If it publishes a monthly Bulletin recording its activities, every member of the staff who desires to take a copy home to read should be entitled to do so; and the Bulletin should be sufficiently popular in form to make a wide appeal. The *United Nations Bulletin*[1] with its illustrations, biographical sketches, and annual records of work done by the heads of agencies or departments, though it suffers from too much puff, is incomparably more useful in this respect than was the too official *Monthly Summary of the League of Nations.*

Some experienced administrators would argue that there is a clear net advantage also in holding regular departmental meetings including, if possible, all officials, at which the work in hand is explained by the director and discussed. There is, granted the director has the right personality and the nature of the work permits of a free exchange of views. If the director is costive, such meetings may prove detrimental, for nothing is more damaging than an air of secrecy. If, on the contrary, he has the capacity to create a free-and-easy atmosphere, to delineate briefly and vividly the essentials of the situation, and to

[1] Now called *Review.*

induce others to exchange views and, still more important, experience and information regarding the progress of work, such meetings may prove invaluable. But they are more appropriate to an executive organization than to an organization (or department) mainly concerned with negotiations of a confidential character. In the latter, the director, conscious of all the risks of failure and all the need for diplomatic reticence, will not be willing or responsibly able to give a full and completely candid exposition of what he has in mind. There may be, however, occasions even in such an organization, for instance after the Assembly meeting, when a considerable part of the work to be undertaken as a result of that meeting may with advantage be roughly planned in this way.

What is useful in all circumstances is the practice of small meetings of directly interested and responsible persons, irrespective of grade, on specific questions as occasion arises.

I do not refer here to directors' meetings, at which all the participants are at the same or approximately the same hierarchical level, nor to inter-departmental committees. The former are discussed in Chapter X.

When any organization is passing through a bad period, as the League was in the late 'thirties' and the United Nations in and after the late 'forties', neither such literary aids to education as the *Monthly Bulletin* nor departmental meetings are likely to have any substantial influence on morale. But small meetings amongst the responsible officials may be of great value. Shortly after the outbreak of the depression in 1930, a far-sighted president of a very large American business called all his sales agents from all over the world to a special meeting. They came expecting to hear that their contracts would be terminated. The president opened the meeting with the statement that the world was faced by a serious depression, now was the time to advertise; advertising and sales staff must be fully maintained or increased. Similarly, in an international organization, when world politics are so disturbed and roily that no agreement in the near future can be foreseen, the wise procedure is to seize the occasion for stocktaking and re-examining, in the light of long-term developments one question after another by small groups of responsible officials and for carefully planned journeys by officials to different parts of the world. In the setting of history, however great the immediate frustration, the long-term endeavour will not lose in reality so long as the endeavour persists.

5. *Languages*

The importance of the linguistic difficulties of officials is probably overestimated in anticipation, and underestimated later in the daily routine of office life. The candidate from any non-official-language country who is not already a skilled linguist is inclined to believe that he will for a long time be seriously handicapped in conveying his ideas in his normal intercourse with his colleagues. That is rarely true. Any average person living in the atmosphere of a foreign language should during his probationary year be able to learn enough of it for conversational intercourse within the Secretariat. Most international officials acquire subconsciously the habit of discounting and indeed ignoring linguistic deficiencies. So long as their colleagues can convey their meaning at all they are satisfied.' Indeed the newcomer, unless he is exceptionally shy, is likely to meet with more difficulty in following accurately all the nuances of what is said by those who speak fluently than in making himself understood. He may be at a disadvantage in putting his points pungently or forcibly, but he should at least be able to convey them. Every senior official should, however, do all in his power to help his juniors and allow them to speak in whatever language known by him they may select, even if he wishes to speak in his own language. Every senior official therefore should understand at least two languages. There is no inherent difficulty in conducting a conversation in more than one language.

Much more serious is the disadvantage in committee work when to linguistic limitations is added the difference in status between the official and the committee members. In such work a perfect command of one of the official languages is of real advantage and those who possess it are likely to advance more rapidly than those who do not. They will be able not only to exercise more influence through their interventions in the discussion, but to contribute to the agreement sought by their capacity to draft a formula or a report round which all can rally. Their command of language indeed goes far to establish their status, for the majority of the committee will themselves be speaking in a foreign tongue and will naturally look for assistance to those members of the Secretariat whose mother tongue is that in which the report will be written. For a member of the Secretariat to attain an equivalent status by his command of a language not his own demands real linguistic ability and very considerable experience of this class of work.

On the other hand, for an official to acquire even a sufficient command of a language to be able to dictate a departmental or interdepartmental minute presents no serious difficulty to the average person. His secretary will correct his expressed or unexpressed errors in spelling or grammar.

Nevertheless, the official who is compelled to work in a foreign language may be very seriously handicapped. Until he has acquired a complete control of one of the official languages he will be unable to dictate a long memorandum at anything like the speed or with anything like the force and pungency that may be expected of the abler of those of his colleagues to whom an official language is a mother tongue. It is, however, difficult to assess how great or how general this handicap is. Quite a large proportion of officials do acquire sufficient mastery over one or more foreign languages to dictate at average national speed and with reasonable accuracy; some even with elegance. Some never do so and are always compelled to draft first in longhand, and those who are thus impeded are frequently in other ways excellent officials.

The most serious difficulty presents itself naturally in the preparation of documents for publication. Allowance must be made in any international organization for these linguistic or national characteristics and for the fact that those whose mother tongue is one of the more important official languages do enjoy a very real advantage over their colleagues. If adequate allowance is not made, the jealousy of the less-privileged linguistic groups will be aroused and morale adversely affected. That jealousy will certainly be aroused if the administration gives way to the temptation to appoint a disproportionate number of persons from official-language countries. There will in fact always be a numerical disproportion because the majority of the interpreters and précis writers and, unless the organization is located in a non-official-language country, the vast majority of the junior staff will be citizens of those countries. The administration is faced therefore with the dilemma that if it determines the national distribution of administrative posts by, for instance, the contributions of each country to the organization's budget, it will adversely affect chances of promotion amongst the majority of its staff—and thus adversely affect morale; if on the other hand it adheres to the principle of promotion on merit, morale will be adversely affected by the jealousy of the less-advantageously placed linguistic groups.

The best procedure is to endeavour to make good a linguistic defi-

ciency by allowing a suitable candidate for a post who suffers from such a deficiency six months' leave of absence to perfect himself. Although perfection is rarely acquired, it is surprising how successful such a course may be, even in the case of persons approaching middle age, provided they cut themselves off completely from their work, and are prepared to separate themselves also for some such period from their families.

Another administrative procedure which is helpful in breaking down linguistic obstacles, especially in departments which are responsible for preparing documents for publication, is to allow certain departments to conduct the greater part of their work in one language only. Obviously none can become wholly monolingual, because more than one language will be required when dealing with delegates and with other departments. But a greater general competence in one language is likely to be reached in a department which normally speaks and writes in one language only, than in one which employs two or three.

But, whatever facilities are afforded for learning the official languages, some otherwise thoroughly competent officials will never be fully successful, and will suffer a handicap on that account. Indeed it is often the most dynamic and constructive persons who are the least competent as linguists. To afford therefore that degree of equality of opportunity necessary for the maintenance of morale or the retention of this type of personality, care should be taken not to rate linguistic ability too high. Personality and administrative competence are more important than verbal fluency. It is wise to appoint the man who is most suited for the post of committee secretary, for instance, so long as his linguistic deficiencies do not clearly rule him out, and make sure that one of his assistants is capable of affording the necessary linguistic aid.

6. *Nationality*

The mixture of nationalities in an international Secretariat naturally lies at the root of many of the special problems that present themselves in international administration. The problem of divided loyalties I have mentioned already, and shall discuss more fully in Chapter VI.

In all circumstances, the national distribution of the higher posts must be politically acceptable to the Assembly. Were a Secretary General to resist the political pressure which is always in favour of a

widespread distribution of such posts, he and the Secretariat as a whole would lose the confidence of governments, and conditions of work would become intolerable. These facts have two effects. First, the chances of any official obtaining a senior post will depend in part on circumstances over which he can have no control. Secondly, some of the higher posts will always be held by nationals of the Great Powers. There will not be an automatic *roulement*. This does not imply that the chances of promotion to such posts of the nationals of the Great Powers already in the Secretariat will be greater than those of other officials. Those chances will depend *inter alia* on the relative size of the different national groups in the existing staff and on the probability of senior posts being filled by persons not already in the Secretariat. But it does imply that nationals of the smaller powers, taken as a group, have less chances of obtaining senior posts than they would were all states equal or treated as equal.

This semi-political distribution of senior posts reduces the attractiveness of international work as a career, and involves a danger that international organizations will be forced to recruit second-rate people or watch with equanimity the departure of an appreciable proportion of the more dynamic members of the Secretariat. This is one reason why it is necessary to offer a scale of salaries rather higher than is current in comparable national work. But other measures can be, and should be, adopted. Unlike the League, the ILO initiated quite early the practice of dividing departments into a considerable number of sub-sections, and appointing a Chief of Section—a grade intermediate between the member of section and the high command—in charge of each. This was a sound practice, and is generally adopted today, for what is deadly to an institution is the thought in the mind of the recruit or the permanent official that he is unlikely to emerge out of the ruck. These intermediate posts may and probably do have a political tinge, but not a definite political colour.

Another procedure which can be adopted to a much more limited extent, and was adopted by the League, is to grant what are in effect compensation prizes to persons clearly deserving higher status than the political chances at the moment permitted. These prizes were granted *ad hominem*. The post was termed Councillor and earned the same salary as Chief of Section. Granted a high standard of integrity in the administration, the system has distinct advantages. But it might be open to abuse, for it is extremely difficult for any supervisory committee to reject a proposal submitted by the head of the administra-

tion in favour of a senior official when the post is not one for which another person might compete. A rejection would be almost equivalent to a vote of no confidence against the official whose name was under consideration. In fact, in the League the system was very sparingly used, and no problem ever arose in connexion with it; but it would be much more difficult to employ in the larger UN.

The nationals of certain countries must enjoy, as noted in the last section, certain linguistic privileges, and most of these same persons enjoy some advantage, quite apart from any question of promotion, in being the citizens of great powers. Any influence they may exercise on their governments is likely to have a wider world and organizational influence than can any equal influence that nationals of small powers may enjoy in their governmental circles. This is an inescapable fact, which may give rise to jealousy, and it should be the purpose of the administration to reduce the just grounds for jealousy to a minimum.

On the other hand, the citizens of certain countries may be at a disadvantage because their national culture is relatively primitive, or is so different from that of the majority of the Secretariat and delegates as to fit them ill for international work. What is important in the case of the great majority of the staff, apart from language, is not their nationality, but the cultural group from which they spring.

As in the case of languages there are really two problems: first, how to prevent or offset any advantage springing from nationality; secondly, how to mitigate or make good any disadvantage.

The first of these two problems raises at once the question of the location of the organization. There can, I think, be no doubt that from the point of view of the morale of the Secretariat it is a profound mistake to locate an international organization within the territory of any great power. The culture of a great state must affect the members of the Secretariat and increase that state's already potent influence. That fact will be resented and reasonably resented by the citizens of other states serving on the Secretariat, and more especially, the citizens of small states. There may be overriding reasons of a political order; but those reasons will in no way affect the fact that by the decision taken the work of the administration will be rendered more difficult. It behoves the administration in such circumstances to pay the closest attention to securing equality of treatment for all members of the Secretariat, irrespective of nationality. Indeed, when no administratively unfortunate decision has been taken regarding the site

of the organization, the risk of morale being adversely affected by special national advantages can, I believe, be countered to a large extent by the right attitude of mind among officials regarding the delegation of work, and by the application of scrupulous justice in affording equality of opportunity to all.

Administrative competence always implies capacity to delegate work to others. In an international organization, however, willingness to delegate is not only a condition of individual competence; it is a fundamental social need—and it is much more difficult to ensure than in a national administration. An official who is used to certain methods of work, who has a perfect command of an official language, who works rapidly and efficiently, is naturally hesitant to delegate a task to a junior who he knows will do it blunderingly and slowly, express himself with difficulty, and very probably approach the subject from an angle different from his own. He may think and think rightly that he will in the end spend less time on the task if he does not delegate it than if he does. He should, nevertheless, always be disposed to opt in favour of delegation; for if he does not, the department will always lack unity and those who suffer from national disadvantages will add to them a not unjustified sense of grievance.

Willingness to delegate and skill in delegating are of vital importance in all international organizations because the staff is composed of persons of different nationality. When a technical organization adopts the practice of engaging persons with prior experience, to the need to consider national sensibilty is added the need for officials to treat each other rather as professional equals than as rungs in a hierarchical ladder.

There is a danger, however, that recognition of these needs may lead to administrative chaos, and it is likely to do so if the Secretariat is largely composed of so-called experts employed on short-term contracts. The purpose of the director must be to create a united working group through delegation, not to acquire a collection of individualists working in separate cells.

The application of scrupulous justice implies a little more than the absence of prejudice in favour of the citizens of certain privileged countries; it implies perhaps a certain bias in favour of others in order to offset the natural advantage that some enjoy. Conference delegates always attach importance to the geographical distribution of a staff, and it is well that they should. But much more important in the

administration of any office is equality in the opportunity to rise. In affording opportunities, a slight bias in favour of the less advantageously placed is not unjust.

The most effective solution of this problem, however, lies not in the offsetting measures just considered, but first in rigorous selection, and secondly in the appointment of persons from less-privileged cultural groups young enough to be trained while in the service of the organization, and thirdly in their training.

It is not sufficient to appoint young, select with care, and hope that the recruit, whatever his cultural and educational background, will 'learn the ropes'. He may; he may learn to do nothing. Some directors will have a gift for bringing on their men; others will not. To leave it to chance is not enough. Some definite training scheme may be required. The United Nations has initiated such a scheme, allotting a certain proportion of its recruits to an in-service training staff, which trains them in the work of different departments, and at the end of a year or more the staff responsible for training is able to suggest for what type of work they are most suited, and where, if anywhere, they should be placed. This is an important contribution to the solution of the national problem.

Deliberate training, however, should not cease at the end of the first year or two. It is quite frequently desirable to allow an official six months' leave to perfect his studies or to work out in the most appropriate surroundings some subject upon which he has been officially engaged. The League made no provision for this, but it did occasionally grant an official six months' leave of absence, provided the costs of that leave could be covered independently. In my own experience, the results were always rewarding. They were naturally most rewarding in the case of the ablest officials. In many countries, the standard of university teaching in one faculty or another is below the average of the more advanced states. Six months or an academic year at some first-class university may have a profoundly beneficial influence on an able official who has spent long enough in the service to understand the bearing of his science on his day-to-day work. A similar period for a more senior man who is groping for the solution of some crucial problem may enable him to make a real contribution to thought and policy at the very moment that he was threatened by the deadly routine of hacking out second-rate memoranda. But, whatever the effect in specific cases, the influence on morale of the adoption of an educational policy within the Secretariat characterized

by a wide vision and special attention to those who may consider themselves underprivileged is, I feel convinced, profoundly beneficial.

The need for special training in many cases may imply that it is wiser not to employ a recruit on the work for which he is immediately most suited. There is a strong temptation, for instance, to assign to an oriental coming for the first time to Geneva or New York some work connected with the Far East. In certain cases, that may be the right policy; in others, both he and the administration may gain more in the long run by giving him some function to perform which will force him to listen to committee discussions on some subject totally disconnected with the East in order to enable him to learn the processes of thought of minds different from his own. In all cases it is undesirable to employ persons with unfamiliar cultural background on liaison work until they have had adequate opportunity to absorb the atmosphere of the international organization employing them.

Later, whenever a mission is sent to any country, it is desirable to take a national, preferably a junior national, of that country and to assign him certain specific liaison functions. It is extremely interesting and of great value to the senior officials to watch the behaviour of junior officials in their home setting. These are the occasions on which judgements regarding competence are liable to be radically revised, and the fitness of an individual for a particular job may become apparent.

Officials who are politically not *personae gratae* with their own governments, or who are stateless, constitute a special problem. Granted they are not active members of some political party, they are likely to be loyal to the institution in which they work, both because they have no other attachments and because, if stateless, they cannot as a rule find a job easily elsewhere. Past experience goes to show that as a rule they make excellent officials. But there are unavoidable limitations to both the work they can perform and the status they can acquire. Those limitations they must accept, and the proper course for the administration is to be perfectly candid with them. Most people prefer to know (or to think) that external and uncontrollable circumstances and not their own defects of intellect or character set the limits to their careers. Moreover, to some extent nationality determines the final status of all officials.

7. *Classification and Promotion*

With these general considerations regarding semantics and nationality in mind, let us turn to a more detailed examination of the problem of classification of posts and promotion.

The linguistic and the nationality problems have two similar facets. There is the real handicap that lack of the linguistic attainments or of an appropriate cultural background causes, and there is the influence on the mind of an official of the belief he holds that he is handicapped. The belief may or may not be justified. The system of promotion must take both these facets into consideration. It must make allowance within reasonable limits for the real handicap; it must remove by every possible means all grounds for an unjustified belief in personal disadvantage.

The first question that arises in practice therefore is how far should administrative efficiency be sacrificed with the first object in view. When considering this question it is well to remember that the maximum efficiency will not be attained by confining the Secretariat, to take an imaginary case, to a single nationality which happened to be exceptionally competent. The nature of the work necessitates a mixed staff. Consequently it is not possible to attain maximum efficiency by the simple process of building up a staff by comparing on each occasion the apparent administrative ability of A and B. There must be a wide national distribution of posts in the Secretariat as a whole, in each department and in so far as possible at each hierarchical level. Consequently, the promotion policy can be greatly facilitated by a wise recruitment policy.

Special difficulties arose in the League and to a lesser extent have arisen in the UN and its agencies owing to two factors; first, the initial recruitment of a large proportion of the staff within one age group, secondly, the gradual extension and, in the case of the League, later contraction of the number of Member States. I shall ignore for the moment these special difficulties and consider first the general problem of the principles on which promotion should be based in order to maintain both morale and efficiency.

There are three distinct problems relating respectively to the principles determining (*a*) ascent within a grade, (*b*) jumping from one grade to the next, (*c*) filling the senior posts. The last of these problems I shall consider, not here, but in Chapter X.

The League adopted a rule that promotion within a grade, which

in fact is equivalent to the granting of a salary increment, should not be automatic, but should be dependent on a report stating that the value of the official's work had increased in the past twelve months. Increments were conditional on the official having 'given satisfaction' during the past year, and in a footnote it was explained that the Assembly had stated that: 'The Administration could rightly consider that, in order to give satisfaction, an official must not merely have avoided giving grounds for criticism, but also have increased his efficiency with his experience until he was a fit person to perform all the duties normally assignable to officials in his class.' Whether the official was automatically entitled to an increment once he had attained the state of grace indicated never to my knowledge became clear. The stipulation was in fact meaningless and is a good example of finicky and pernicious interference with the discretion of the Secretary General. No honest director could sign a statement in every case of a perfectly satisfactory year's work that the efficiency of the official had increased with his experience. The only effect of such stipulations is to create disrespect for the regulations under which the staff work. Increments should in fact be automatic unless there are grounds for dissatisfaction; and the official should be informed, if there are grounds for dissatisfaction, and warned on paper before his annual report is written that it may not be possible to recommend him for an increment.

Promotion from one grade to another involves the problem of the number of grades into which the officials should be divided. Is it better to have a restricted number of grades for, for instance, higher division officials and give all a fairly clear run or to set a number of hurdles? If for one reason or another it is considered desirable to set up hurdles, should they be surmounted simply on merit or should more or less fixed predetermined ratios be maintained between the number of persons employed in each grade or should predetermined 'jobs' carry predetermined grades? These are vital questions, the answers to which may have a profound effect on morale.

The League adopted a mixed ratio cum budget-provision system; the UN and most of the specialized agencies have adopted the system of predetermined jobs. I shall consider these systems in their historical order.

At first sight it might seem that the staff must prefer a system under which there are as few obstructions as possible to promotion. But this is not necessarily true. For if there are no obstructions, status will

tend to depend on seniority in the service; it will be extremely difficult to promote one official over the heads of others. Indeed, if there are no obstructions at all in the administrative grade up to the status of head of section or director, such promotion can only be achieved by granting an official a double increment, a course which is only likely to be adopted in quite exceptional circumstances. The unobstructed system therefore renders it more difficult to give merit its due reward.

The League at first divided its first division officials below the grade of chief of section into two classes, which after 1930 were abolished, Members of Section, as they were called then, being given a straight run with salaries ranging from 12,000 to 28,000 Swiss francs per annum. Objections were raised to this change on the grounds that it was costly, that it made the division of responsibilities difficult, and that it did not 'encourage a spirit of emulation', and in 1937 four grades were established, ranging from 19,800 to 26,000 Swiss francs and Councillors at 28,000. The change in stipend was due to changes in the cost of living. For the top grade there was a fixed establishment in each section which could only be modified by the Assembly. This meant in effect that a director who wanted to promote someone to Grade I when there was no vacancy in that grade had first to fight a regrading of the post through the Supervisory Commission and later the Assembly, and then persuade the administration that the post should be filled by the person he proposed. The Supervisory Commission and the Assembly with whom the final decision rested were always reluctant to modify the establishment. Promotion to the other grades was not restricted in the same way by numerical as well as budgetary limitations. If the money was available, an appointment to any of the three lower grades could be made. But the administration did endeavour to maintain certain ratios between the different grades.

In the League when promotion was under consideration, the responsibilities which officials had to assume were naturally taken into consideration, but there was no attempt to define those responsibilities with precision in advance. It was taken for granted as an obvious truth that the work to be done would be constantly changing. Emphasis was placed rather on the man and his capacities than on the job and its responsibilities. This system had the advantages of allowing the director great elasticity in the use he made of the members of his staff and of enabling him to adjust work to their widely

variant characteristics. The UN thinks less in terms of the relative merit and ability of persons and more in terms of jobs. The number of grades has accordingly been largely determined by the accuracy with which it was believed that jobs could be defined. The more accurately they could be defined, the more precisely degrees of responsibility could be set out, the more classes could be created.

It started, as we have seen, with nineteen grades in an uninterrupted scale and abandoned this in favour of four categories and five grades in the administrative category. As the top of these five grades is roughly equivalent to what the League would have termed chief of section, the scale now in force amounts to a reversion to the pre-war classification.

The system of promotion, however, remained as a hang-over from the UN 1946 personnel policy. Under this system, adopted not only by UN but also by a number of the specialized agenices, each office has a basic memorandum on classification standards and salary schedules, and, in addition, a job-description schedule, which is based on that in force in the United States national service. Both documents reflect certain tendencies. Experience is as a rule demanded on paper, at any rate even for the lowest grades, posts are viewed as falling within some profession distinct from the profession of a civil servant, technical training is likely to be considered to justify a higher grade than general education; the job descriptions are as a rule narrow and again professional. To each job a specific grade is allotted. Under this system, therefore, when a director wishes to promote an official he looks up a job in a higher grade and endeavours so to arrange the work that a claim may be staked for this official to be considered as assigned to that job. If the claim is upheld, promotion is almost automatic. If the work falls off and responsibilities are reduced, the official may be demoted, though his qualities are unchanged.

Which of these various systems is the most satisfactory from the point of view of maintaining morale in an international organization? I believe that both the changes introduced in the League in the 'thirties' were a mistake. The case for some grades in the higher division is based on a number of considerations additional to those already mentioned. It is argued that it is only fair that the abler officials should earn more than the others; that since the directorate class is selected in part on political and national grounds it becomes all the more important in an international organization to make distinctions at a lower level; that the hurdles that the classes constitute

will induce the less fit to leave the service and thus raise the average ability and increase the intellectual homogeneity of the staff.

On the other hand, there are strong reasons for keeping the number of grades down to a minimum, and for avoiding rigidity. The fixed establishment introduced in 1937 had an adverse influence on morale, because owing to the abnormal age distribution in the Secretariat the top grade was over-full at the outset and chances of promotion were unreasonably low. But even had the age distribution been more normal, the system would have been inappropriate for an international organization. Unless and until all international officials can be recruited straight from the university, it is impossible to ensure a really smooth age distribution in the staff as a whole, and still more impossible in a single department. If promotion into another grade is only allowed when on the agreed ratios there is a definite vacancy, there will be a danger that the ablest younger men will quit. Indeed, if this system is applied rigorously, it is more likely to induce the abler men to leave and to lower the average ability of the staff than to have the reverse effect. An Assembly is therefore much more likely to promote at once a good morale and efficiency and economy by insisting on recruiting young than by instituting a rigid system of grade ratios

The four grades introduced in the League in 1937 below that of chief of division or councillor had exactly the adverse effects that might have been foreseen. They gave rise to a feeling of uncertainty; they increased the feeling of frustration; they increased national tensions. The United Nations has not had this experience because it changed from a worse system of an obvious excess of grades to the last pre-war system. When it made this change, some of the specialized agencies would, I understand, have preferred a smaller number than the five (or four plus division chief) which were adopted. They were right, and there is no reason for assuming that the number that may be appropriate in a large office is suitable for a small. Important as co-ordination is, uniformity should not be pressed to the point at which it imposes cumbersome machinery on the smaller organizations. The best system in the League was certainly the first with two classes, that is, one hurdle at which the less nimble stumbled and only the less nimble. It may be that in a body as large as the UN Secretariat, a case could be argued in favour of three grades below that of chief of division; but the present number of four (or five in all) is, I suggest, definitely too high.

It is well to remember in this connexion that when there are a large

number of grades, political pressure assumes its most sinister form. Those exercising it will not be satisfied with placing their protégés, but will insist that they be entered in a high grade.

Any rigid system, as we have seen, increases the risk of losing valuable officials. A flexible system may, if too loosely administered, lead to the retention of useless officials. It is, however, much better to eliminate the unfit by periodical proficiency surveys such as those applied in the UN every five years than by the creation of a large number of classes.

The psychological effects of the number of grades will be determined in large part by the system of promotion and the criteria employed. As we have seen in the League, emphasis was placed rather on the quality of the man than on the nature of the job, though both were naturally taken into consideration; in the United Nations and certain of the specialized agencies the emphasis has been placed on the job description. This latter system should render it possible to jump grades and should involve less delay than a system that may necessitate waiting for prior approval of an alteration in a department's grade ratios. On the other hand, if applied seriously, it restricts the use of officials to predetermined functions and renders it much more difficult, and frequently impossible, to employ an official on two or more different jobs. It thus limits the official's chances of making use of more than a restricted range of his capacities. Some officials, for instance, have a capacity both for research and for administration, but are likely as their age advances to find research boring, if they are confined to it, and administration alone intellectually unsatisfying. The best results will be obtained if the job can be tailored to the man and not the man to the job. This cannot be done when the jobs are predetermined except by defining a job specially to suit a man—an undesirable risk. Moreover, in fact, the director of a dynamic department working under pressure will be forced constantly to change both the day-to-day work and the responsibilities of his staff and will get the best response from them by so doing.

The professional classification implied by the job system impedes chances of promotion for many officials in a much more serious manner. First in certain 'professions' it is never possible to rise above a relatively low grade. Under this system a university graduate entering an international service at the professional level is not looked upon primarily as an international civil servant, but given a status and a price according to the subjects he has studied, subjects which will

determine his professional classification in the office. In some professions there is a clear run from bottom to top; in others there is not. This system, in fact, superimposes on all the natural barriers to the formation of an effective working group in an international organization an artificial caste polity affecting both status and salary. It divides when the purpose of the administration should be to unite. Secondly, when an official is required to have a profession and a professional badge, he can scarcely hope to shift from the class of work he is doing to another. Only on the rarest occasions can he expect to be promoted by moving sideways and upwards. That fact in a national administration employing over a million officials may not greatly matter. Each profession is large enough within the service to give all a reasonable chance. But it is of the gravest importance in an international office employing at the most a few thousand and more likely a few hundred persons. Indeed, to transplant principles of administration appropriate to the government of the United States or of any other great power into the international field is to attempt to build an ant-hill with a bulldozer.

Furthermore, this professional-job system, far from training the all-round man, the man with vision and imagination, the man who should make a real contribution to policy and by giving life to the organization stimulate its morale, tends to stifle him at birth. The ambitious official can only aim at becoming an expert in a predetermined narrow field—eyes front.

Somewhere and somehow in these narrow channels a politically acceptable national distribution has to be ensured, and somehow the official suffering from a sense of inadequacy owing to his national background has to be given confidence. Nothing is less likely to give him confidence than the knowledge that, for no cause over which he can exercise an influence, he may at any moment be demoted. In fact the system applied today is less rigid than it was in the early days of UN; directors have resisted with a certain measure of success the claim of the central administration that it has the right to regrade whenever the work changes. But the principle persists and, where it persists and the staff remains divided into a number of professions of varying status, the obstructions to transfer and the restrictions remain. I doubt whether any international Secretariat can be expected to become a united and homogeneous group, animated by a sense of common purpose and pervaded by a sense of justice, unless all officials who have been recruited for the senior service—that is, who have

had the advantage of a university education—enjoy an equal chance whatever their occupation to rise to the highest non-directorate class, unless the whole administrative system and procedure is deliberately devised so as to give all, irrespective of nationality or professional background, the greatest possible equality of opportunity, not only to improve their status but also to employ their widely different talents. This equality of opportunity can only be afforded if the human being and not the job is used by the administration as its potter's clay.

Job specification, which places emphasis rather on the job than the individual, is open to both administrative and to psychological objections; but the ratio system is also far from perfect. This latter system allows the director, who alone of the senior officials will have an intimate knowledge of the characteristics of his staff, the necessary freedom to make the best use of them and adjust the work to their needs. It does not impede transfers; it allows scope to the man of multiple parts; it creates a certain degree of equality among departments. But inter-departmental equality remains imperfect. The fact that appointments to the administrative grade[1] cannot, as in national administrations, be made by competitive examination generally gives exceptional powers to the director of a department in the selection of staff, with the result that there are frequently wide differences between the average ability of the different departments. In consequence, it is more difficult for a person of any given ability to obtain promotion if he is a member of a competent than if he is a member of a weak department. In spite of this fact, the morale in a competent department is as a rule better than elsewhere because of the pride felt by all in the unit, the general recognition of its value and status, and because competent people work harder as a rule than incompetent, and hard work is good for morale. But justice, nevertheless, demands that some effort should be made to equalize the chances of promotion of persons with equal claims. The obvious means by which, in the circumstances described, greater equality of opportunity can be secured is to facilitate transfer from one department to another.

Facility of transfer may be impeded or promoted by rules and regulations; but it is always dependent on the spirit of the institution and the attitude of individual directors. Some rules may help and should certainly be enforced rigorously, for instance, that posts

[1] I employ this term in contradistinction to clerical. It includes scientists and all specialists above the clerical level.

should be advertised within the office and allied organizations. But no rules will be effective unless there is an active desire among the responsible officials to promote equality of opportunity. A director who has gone to a great deal of trouble in selecting his staff is naturally loath to lose his best men; to ensure equality of opportunity he must either overcome his reluctance or persuade the competent authorities to afford increased chances within his department by changing the post ratios or making the necessary budgetary provision for a higher grade. In fact he will make a maximum contribution to morale, if he does more than overcome his reluctance, and deliberately creates facilities for transfer. This he can do by occasionally lending members of his staff to other departments, by arranging for one or another of them to go on missions of mixed competence, with the object in both cases of allowing others to judge the competence of his men. In the long run such a policy is rewarding. The department will acquire a reputation such that there will be competition amongst the ablest people to enter it; the officials transferred will frequently be of great value to it in their new positions, and some may come back to more senior posts in it with all the advantage of a widened experience.

There is another reason why it is more difficult to secure equality of treatment in an international than in a national service. As we have seen, promotion on grounds of administrative ability alone, even were it practicable, would not produce the most efficient possible staff, for a wide geographical distribution is essential to efficiency. Indeed the greater the number of different nationals that any department has among its staff, the easier will it be for it to maintain those intimate relationships with governments and experts that determine so largely success in international work. For the greatest possible benefit to be derived from a wide national distribution of staff, it is obviously necessary to avoid any one nationality monopolizing the senior positions and to secure, in so far as practicable, a smooth hierarchical distribution. What does this mean in practice? It means that when selecting a person for any particular function or grade, one qualification which must be borne in mind, in addition to his intellectual or administrative or more academic attainments, will be his personal contacts, and his ability to maintain and make use of those contacts. With regard to those contact qualifications it will be difficult for his colleagues to compete unless they have the same background as himself. He may consequently succeed in obtaining a position, or having work assigned to him, while colleagues, who in a national

service would have been considered better fitted, fail. There is an obvious risk of this fact leading to jealousy and discontent. What is the solution of this difficulty? The solution is to render the service as little hierarchical as possible; to treat the largest possible number of officials as equal; to sacrifice the obvious administrative advantages of a clear order of seniority to the more vital need of avoiding friction and legitimate grounds for discontent. This is a reason for keeping the number of grades down to a minimum.

In practice in an international organization it is neither the intellectual or administrative ability of an official, nor his suitability for a predefined job, that constitutes a rational and exclusive criterion for promotion; it is rather the all-round value of the man to the organization. In some cases his value to the organization as a whole is much greater than his value to the department to which he belongs. This all-round value can only be determined case by case. The best results are therefore likely to be obtained by a system which is as flexible as possible.

Such a system can, however, only work satisfactorily if there is a body dealing with promotions in which the staff as a whole has confidence, and if that body establishes, not a set of rigid rules, but a tradition for determining objectively the individual cases as they arise. Again, what matters most is the spirit of the institution, and the capacity of the administration to win the trust of the staff.

8. *Pensions*

The grading system is of importance in connexion with morale, at least as much because it determines the form of hierarchical scaffolding as because it determines the salary scale. It also has a direct influence on pension expectations and the pension scheme should be based on the grading system. If able men are to be secured and retained, they must be given this expectation of financial security after retirement.

Under the League pension-scheme pensions were earned at the annual rate of one-fiftieth of the average salary during the last three years of service, and it took twenty-five years for an official with an uninterrupted and unaccelerated run from the bottom of the lowest to the top of the highest member of section grade. Consequently, the new recruit would know that even if he started at the bottom he might expect to receive a pension which would be approximately half of his

leaving salary at the age of sixty, and until the fixed establishment was introduced, that, granted average ability, his leaving salary would be at the top of the scale.

Under the United Nations grading it takes twenty-seven years to move from bottom to top, and owing to the job-description system of promotion such a clear run is well nigh impossible. It takes thirty years to earn a pension equivalent to half the 'final average remuneration', by which was until recently meant the average annual pensionable salary during the last ten years of service. In other words it took nearly forty years for a person entering at the bottom and enjoying this highly improbable clear run to receive a pension at sixty equal to half the top salary of an official below the rank of chief of section.

In view of these facts it is not surprising that some of the specialized agencies would have preferred to suppress the bottom grade altogether. This would at least have rendered it easier to mount from bottom to top. For these agencies, however, of still greater importance was basing the pension on the average salary during the last ten years of service and the thirty-year rule. In 1955 the ten years were reduced to five; but the thirty-years' rule remained unchanged. This provision regarding the rate at which pensions are earned is ill adapted to the personnel policy of certain of the specialized agencies. If these agencies insist on recruiting a large proportion of persons with prior experience, they have a strong case for reverting to the pre-war rate. If they are to secure the best candidates, they must offer them adequate inducements to surrender their acquired rights, or alternatively only employ officials on quite short-term contracts. The latter course for the reasons already given is inimical to sound administration and sound morale.

There is another more general reason for allowing a more rapid rate for earning pensions in an international than in a national service. Most international officials, as we have seen, find great difficulty in readjusting themselves to the conditions of life in their home countries when they leave. They will adjust themselves most readily if they can take up employment on their return. They are much more likely to find employment at, for instance, fifty-five than at sixty. Consequently, some will be induced to quit at this earlier age if by then they have earned nearly their maximum pension. The maximum can of course only be earned at whatever is the statutory leaving age.

I have referred here only to the pension prospects of officials of the administrative class. Lower categories are just as adversely affected.

9. *Dead-end Jobs*

A special difficulty arises in an international administration owing to the relatively large proportion of posts which do not lead automatically to executive positions commensurate with the ability required of such officials. Numerically by far the largest group of persons employed on such jobs are the précis writers, editors, and translators. It is, I believe, an established fact that in any international Secretariat there is likely to be more dissatisfaction among members of these groups than anywhere else. This discontent is not due to the type of person employed for this work, but is caused by the work itself and the limited prospects of promotion it affords.

A high degree of intelligence is required for this work and, for most of it, considerable literary ability. Both précis writers and translators are compelled to listen with attention to all, or almost all, that is said in the committees they attend; they are compelled to listen for long hours at a stretch to the speeches and discussions of persons, many of whom are much less intelligent than themselves, and forced to refrain from all comment. Their duty is to repeat in another language or record whatever is said, sense or nonsense. Skill is no doubt required in translating or recording in neat phrases the halting remarks of someone struggling with a foreign language. But sooner or later this work becomes monotonous, and the sense of constantly filling a secondary role irksome. The opportunity for exercising creative power is limited, and literary people are at least as likely as others to feel the need to create.

Not only is the work liable to become monotonous and irksome, but the chances of advancement either within the service or outside are limited. They are limited within the service for two distinct reasons. The great majority of persons in these classes are likely to be of the same two or three nationalities, so that a nationality bar will prevent any considerable number being transferred to other departments; the competence required for these jobs is specialized and the jobs themselves afford little scope for learning any other skill.

All dissatisfied groups are a menace to the general morale of any service, and this problem of dead-end jobs deserves closer attention and more constructive thought than it has received. There is, unfortunately, no general or satisfactory solution of the problem; but certainly more could be done than has to the best of my knowledge been attempted.

First the risk of creating a caste apart can be lessened by giving the linguistic division exactly the same status as any other division with approximately the same number of posts in each grade. This implies treating it as *hors de cadre* as regards the geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat as a whole; and it is logical that it should be *hors de cadre*, for appointments to it are made without reference to geographical distribution, the essential requirement being the possession of an official language as a mother tongue. The League made some attempt to do this in the middle 'thirties' by assimilating the rates of pay of précis writers and translators to those of other members of section, and at the same time showing them as a separate category.

Administrative practice can also greatly influence the monotony of the work and, incidentally, status. It was a common practice in the League for a director to ask if possible for particular translators and précis writers to be assigned to particular committees. The translators and précis writers thus specially assigned gained a knowledge of and interest in the work of what they came to consider 'their' committees. Their work was thus lightened and they established personal relations with the committees, which made them feel themselves part of the group and afforded them a recognized status in the group. This practice might, and in fact did, compel them on occasion to work for long hours at a stretch; but on balance it afforded satisfaction. The United Nations has adopted a different practice and assigns these officials for specified hours to whatever committee may be working in those hours, so that they very probably will not know until the evening of the preceding day what committee they will serve next morning, and may be switched almost at random from one committee to another. The effect of such a policy is to reduce these officials to the status of skilled or semi-skilled labourers working on a chain-system in a factory.

The assignment of particular translators and précis writers to specific committees has the additional merit of enabling them to learn a good deal about the work which has to be done by the officials of that committee's department, and to compete for transfer, should occasion arise, with much better chances of success than they could otherwise have. In a relatively small organization such as the League of Nations the chances were very limited, and they are even more limited today in some of the highly technical specialized agencies. But even though no great results can be expected, the administration should do all that it can to facilitate transfer, and transfer can be facilitated by organizing the work of these officials in such a way as

to enable them to learn what is required of a departmental official, as well as by affording opportunities to them to compete for posts that become vacant.

Attaching précis writers and interpreters to particular committees is one method of affording administrative educational opportunities. It is not the only or the most important method. Much more important is the adoption of a deliberate policy of temporary transfer of these officials to other departments which require extra help owing to some temporary pressure of work. There are constant fluctuations in the amount of work that the different departments have to undertake, and it is sound administration to have rather too few than too many permanent officials. This understaffing, as we shall see later, has the advantage of rendering it possible to maintain permanently a certain proportion of temporary officials who serve for a year or two and are then replaced by others. It also renders it possible to test the administrative ability of permanent officials in the linguistic and records departments. A great deal of administrative work consists in the preparation of memoranda, for which task these officials are up to a point well qualified, and in a political organization such as the League or UN, the amount of technical work demanding a scientific training in, for instance, medicine or economics is in fact strictly limited. Most officials acquire the rather specialized knowledge necessary for the execution of their duties within the organization.

Special missions afford a particularly favourable opportunity for temporary transfers, not only because they frequently require special linguistic attainments, but because all the officials on a mission will be engaged on work rather different from their daily routine and the newcomer will find himself on a basis of greater equality with his colleagues than he would at headquarters. Moreover, missions afford to all greater opportunities for initiative.

Whatever steps are taken, however, to facilitate transfer there will and must remain a large proportion of officials in the linguistic divisions who, if they remain in international service, must accept the work of these divisions as their career. Some will be well satisfied with it; others will not. There remains the question, therefore, what can the administration do to make that career more satisfying?

The principle that definite hours should be fixed for all work that is mainly repetitive, irrespective of the status attached to it, is, I believe, generally accepted both in public administration and in business.[1] A senior civil servant, a political secretary, a director or a com-

mittee secretary may reasonably be expected to work abnormally long hours when occasion demands; but the hours of the pool of typists (overtime apart) should be definitely fixed, and the same is true of all officials whose job it is to convert what others think into a new form, whether that change be the conversion of a speech into a record, or of one language into another. This does not mean that they should never be called upon to work for long hours during a given day or week. It does imply that overtime worked should be credited to them. With more senior officials for overtime pay should be substituted time off. The reason for this rule, which is widely adopted today, is not any abstract principle of justice. but the need for allowing these officials time and leisure to exercise their own creative faculties to an extent or in a manner for which their daily work does not provide. Many may not wish to do so. Those who do not scarcely constitute a problem. What is important is to afford an opportunity to those who do feel the need.

From this last consideration it follows that the administration should adopt a liberal policy about writing. Writing is not the only way in which an official of the class I am considering can express himself; but it is the only one in connexion with which any question of control arises. So far as other forms of self-expression are concerned, all that the administration can do is to afford opportunity by arranging for defined hours of work. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that defined hours should mean regular hours or that there would be a psychological advantage in arranging for absolutely regular shifts whatever the pressure. On the contrary, I believe that one of the attractions of international life lies in the occasional bouts of work when everyone from top to bottom of the staff engaged on it is extended to the limit of endurance.

10. *Research Workers*

There is another type of intellectual work which, although widely different in many ways from what I call the dead-end jobs, involves very similar problems of morale, namely, research work. A great deal of the research in a government office must be largely repetitive. We in the League were required to publish year by year a series of volumes on production, trade, balances of payments, banking, &c., recording and analysing the developments during the preceding twelve months. At first this work necessitated research into a little-explored field for which originality and imagination were required.

Countless problems of comparability, of the meaning and accuracy of the data arose. Each volume had to be conceived and planned, fitted in with the others so as to constitute a rational and complete whole. But as time passed, the unsolved problems shrank in number, and, although improvements could be and, I hope, were introduced each year, sooner or later the volumes had to become more or less stereotyped, if only in order to maintain an unbroken sequence in the statistics on which they were based.

A person capable of undertaking this type of research competently almost inevitably became bored and dissatisfied with it as the scope for original thought diminished, and the quality of his work was liable to suffer as the stimulus which the research afforded grew weaker.

What can be done in such circumstances?

Before attempting to answer this question, let us be clear about the dimensions of the problem. No question of nationality is involved. Research workers can and should be drawn from any country with adequate university faculties in the fields covered. Research is not a dead-end job. For the abler or more executive persons it is an excellent, probably the best, training for executive posts, and there should be no impediment to transfer from research to other activities. These practical officials should constitute and in my experience constituted no real problem, though sometimes, as was natural, they had to wait longer than they would have chosen for the chance of promotion or transfer. Quite a considerable proportion of research workers are content to devote the whole of their life to research, even though the work is repetitive and uninspiring. This seems to be particularly true of statisticians and of those who are not called upon to play a major part in preparing volumes for publication. There remains a hard core of persons who are excellent research workers, but not by nature executives, who need scope for their scientific abilities and are threatened by frustration if the nature of their work tends progressively to restrict that scope, and to this hard core must be added, when the age distribution of the Secretariat is abnormal, as it was in the League, a number of other officials who might be suitable for transfer but owing to lack of opportunity are compelled to continue with research.

In fact, a good deal can be done to overcome these difficulties, though I was never satisfied that they were adequately overcome in the League. As the work on regular publications becomes less exacting, more time should be available for other studies, and these supplementary studies may well afford the outlet for their creative or

scientific needs. The ILO has for a long time now used its review as a medium for articles written by its Secretariat as well as by outsiders, and more recently the Monetary Fund has initiated the publication of *Staff Papers*, a publication composed of original articles by its research staff. When the whole of a fairly large office is engaged on a unique field of work, such a solution is much easier than it would be for a single department in a general political organization such as the League or UN.

A different but equally valuable solution is always to make use of the research staff for special inquiries involving field work away from headquarters. On a more restricted scale, help may also be afforded by allowing one official or another an occasional protracted leave to pursue some study arising out of his office work. Finally, it is, I think, a sound principle not to expect an increased output from an official on the grounds that the work for which he is primarily responsible becomes easier and less time-consuming. If it is reasonable to expect an official to take about nine months or a year to produce a given annual memorandum and after the fifth or sixth year it takes him three months less, the director would, in my opinion, be well advised not to look for additional work to occupy those three months. Special, unforeseen, work may arise which will call on the official's spare time and must be done. But when this does not happen, the director would be much better advised to urge the official to browse round his subject and, if he wishes, write articles for learned societies on it over his own name. This is the surest means of raising the quality of the work done. It is good for morale, moreover, to organize the work in such a way that as many officials as possible may earn a personal reputation in their own field, and it is to the advantage of the organization that its work should be done by men of repute. But once more the best men, capable of winning a wide personal reputation, constitute a much less difficult problem than those more numerous and invaluable persons of average ability on whom so much of the drudgery inevitably falls. The better of this class feel the need for increased responsibility as they approach middle age, and if they do not receive it, suffer at once from a sense of defeat and increasing dullness of mind.

11. *Short-term Contracts*

One means of circumventing the adverse effects of repetitive work among the members of the administrative class is to employ temporary officials. By this means the number of persons on the per-

manent staff holding dead-end or similar posts is reduced, and at the same time the whole permanent staff may benefit by the stimulating and educative influence of a flow of new blood through the office. But these beneficial effects will be nullified and indeed heavily outweighed by very serious disadvantage if the conditions of employment of the temporary staff are left vague. There is no risk in the policy adopted, for instance, by FAO of always engaging, when the need arises, outside simultaneous interpreters; for as none is employed permanently no expectation of being retained can arise. There is relatively little risk, and a very definite advantage in engaging from time to time outside specialists to conduct a clearly defined piece of research of a non-repetitive nature. But to employ any considerable proportion of the staff on short-term contracts to carry out continuing work is one of the surest methods for undermining morale.

Short-term contracts in an office offering a career service may prove damaging to morale unless both the contracts and the work of the persons so engaged are so defined as to raise no expectations of permanence. They are a two-edged sword that may either protect or destroy morale.

12. *Mutual Education*

To any effort to create the right atmosphere in an international office it is often the outside activities that contribute the most—the social life, arrangements for games and sports, the founding of such institutions as the international schools mentioned above. One such activity to which I think special importance should be attached is the provision of means for mutual education. I have already mentioned the in-training schemes initiated by the UN to aid junior officials. But education is a continuing process and more important in the long run than any in-training are discussion clubs at which persons of all ages and all ranks interested in some branch of knowledge can participate. Although of particular value to research workers, there is no reason to confine them to this class of official.

An economic club of this nature was started almost immediately after the League came to Geneva, was transferred to the United States when my department moved there during the war, and proved during the twenty-five years of its existence of inestimable value. All learnt from it, the theoretical aspects of the practical problems with which the Secretariat was dealing were thrashed out, research workers brought to it theories they had elaborated and conundrums they had

failed to solve, visiting professors widened its outlook. Moreover, it was the only means and a most effective means for bringing together officials of the League and of the ILO working in contingent fields. But what was most important was that it broke down all hierarchical barriers. All met on terms of complete equality.

Much more could be done on similar lines than has been done. But for such an instrument of mutual education to be successful in an international organization certain simple rules must be observed. Any person, however junior, in interested departments should be allowed to join and other members elected. Among other members should be a limited number of persons from outside the Secretariat. A paper should never be read, only a discussion opened. If papers are read the linguistically handicapped will waste time on them and finally bore their audience and feel a sense of inferiority as a result. The opener should put a question for discussion and it should be understood that it is the discussion that matters. The chairman should induce all, especially the juniors, to speak. Each member should be allowed to speak in the working language of his choice or any other that is generally understood.

13. *Administrative Regulations and Morale*

The system of grading and promotion and the contractual basis of employment determine the official's prospects in the course of his career. Even more important to morale is the atmosphere in which his day-to-day work is carried out, and therefore the general philosophy of administration. There have since 1919 been two opposed philosophies, one the philosophy of control, the other the philosophy of trust. The former has been applied in the UN and a number of specialized agencies. On its own chosen premises it is perfectly logical. An international Secretariat, it is argued, is drawn from all parts of the globe, is composed of individuals with dissimilar education, experience, and outlook, with varying methods of work, probably with varying ideas of right and wrong. It has been selected, if not at random, at best with a much less immediate knowledge of the record, the capacities, and the work of each member of it than a national administration may expect to have of its recruits. Its members cannot therefore be expected to work on uniform lines or to work collectively with efficiency. They cannot, moreover, be expected to merit the same degree of trust as national officials. Consequently they must not only be taught but controlled.

I shall discuss some of the general implications of control in Chapter X, when dealing with organization. Here I wish to consider only the effects on morale of the introduction of a mass of detailed rules regarding every aspect of office activity. They are, I believe, almost uniformly negative, and negative, moreover, from top to bottom of the staff. It did not come as a surprise to me when I asked a very experienced director what were his main administrative worries, to receive the prompt reply: 'The administrative manual and the difficulty of finding suitable recruits from so wide a geographical area; those two in that order.' In fact the system of very detailed instructions imposes on all, and is intended to impose, a sense of restraint, of being tied down by a mesh of invisible threads—a pervading frustration added to all the inevitable frustrations of which an international staff, and especially new recruits, are likely to be conscious. To officials of, for instance, the American Bureau of the Budget, an administrative manual running into perhaps a thousand pages may seem to be an essential tool for the application of the principles of administration with which they are familiar; it may be inevitable in an administration employing over a million persons. For an international office composed of even as many as 4,000 officials, it is, I believe, quite unsuited, and for a specialized agency employing less than a thousand still more unsuited, though more detail will be required in a decentralized organization like WHO than in a centralized institution. It is unsuited because it is the exact antithesis of what is required, namely, leadership and trust.

The opposed philosophy to which I referred above is based on certain assumptions relating not to the probable shortcomings of an international staff, but to their needs. It recognizes that many members of that staff are likely to suffer from a sense of frustration because they are living in an atmosphere to which they are unaccustomed, because they come from states of minor importance and are aware of that fact, because of linguistic and educational limitations and, at first, at any rate, because of their unfamiliarity with the administrative procedure of a modern office. What is important therefore, it is argued, is to reduce not to add to that sense of frustration, to create self-confidence, to allow each individual in so far as possible to express his individuality and do his work in the way that is natural to him, to give scope for his creative powers and afford him a sense of liberty. More is required, for the first concern of the administration as a whole, and of each director in particular, is to make out of this

heterogeneous collection of individuals a group with a sense of common purpose. This group will constitute itself gradually if it is given adequate freedom. Adequate freedom is not ensured by defining with nice precision the functions, responsibilities, and mutual hierarchical relations of each individual, but by allowing the personality of each to adjust itself to that of each other, by allowing each to find out for himself from whom he can best obtain the help he is conscious of needing. The development of this group into a conscient and purposeful entity can be accelerated, and has in more than one office been accelerated in recent years by what is the antithesis of control, leadership. The qualities that compose capacity for leadership may be obscure; but in an international office at any rate they include in addition perhaps to some more mysterious force three obvious and essential elements: interest and belief in the persons led, enthusiasm for the work undertaken, and the power to inspire others with that enthusiasm. Personally, I feel profoundly convinced that a high morale in an international staff can only be created and maintained by a policy of administrative liberalism consciously and deliberately pursued by persons with a faculty for leadership. One of the most reassuring signs of the post-war scene is the existence of directors in some of the specialized agencies with an ardent belief in the value and the possibilities of their work.

Liberalism does not imply administrative chaos or the absence of rules. Some rules are necessary—simple rules about the form and registration of letters, the right to sign, the right to attend meetings, the right to incur expenditure, and, behind these laying down the broad lines of administrative procedure, the staff rules, which in a well-led office the staff will view as a guarantee of rights, not a decalogue. The purpose of an administration pursuing a liberal policy is always to keep the procedural rules down to a bare minimum, and to give them the form, not of controls and counter-checks, but of models for and aids to work. In the long run even this minimum of rules will lose such sharp edges as it may have at first and become overgrown with the soft turf of tradition. It is always tradition and not rules that in the end maintain a smooth-running and efficient office. Once the tradition is established, the new recruit will learn to conform to it whatever his background, learn without resistance through the pores of his skin, not with frustration by studying page 999 of an administrative manual. Because in so learning he has absorbed the spirit of the house, unless he has been imposed on the

organization by a government or selected with negligence, he can be trusted; and if inspired by a genuine belief in the value of the work on which he is engaged by the leadership of those whose job it is to lead, trusted even when external pressures make themselves felt.

14. *Morale in a Divided World*

Some officials, however, are imposed on international organizations, and the trust cannot be absolute when an international organization includes states whose governments insist on nominating candidates for posts in the Secretariat. It may be politically impossible for the head of the administration to refuse to accept a limited number of nationals of these states, even though he is aware that the Secretariat will then include persons receiving instructions from political parties, persons with divided loyalties or no loyalty to him. In such circumstances, morale is certain to be adversely affected; no unique cohesive group can be formed; the house will be divided against itself. As we shall see in Chapter VI, divided loyalties and the risk of external pressures on the Secretariat, to which that division gives rise, necessitates the adoption of protective measures in the staff regulations. At the same time, circumstances accentuate the need for forming all the free elements in the Secretariat into a cohesive and loyal group; they increase therefore the need for a liberal and inspiring policy regarding administrative procedure; they increase the danger of superimposing a rigid hierarchical stratification on the inevitable national, cultural, and linguistic strata; they increase the danger of too rigid an administrative control.

The life of an international official today working in a divided house, openly attacked in the press and unable to reply, openly mistrusted by one or another of the governments which collectively he serves, is at the best beset with difficulties; if at the same time the official is mistrusted—even mistrusted as regards his good sense—that life becomes intolerable.

Fortunately these facts are becoming increasingly recognized; in the UN much of the administrative manual has been allowed to fall into deliberate desuetude; in certain other international offices complete and up-to-date copies of all the rules and regulations are almost unprocurable. The soft turf of tradition is forming.

15. *Some Reservations*

To officials in some specialized agencies or regional offices, I may

seem to have exaggerated the difficulties of maintaining morale. In fact I have had most prominently in mind the complex problems of a world political organization, because it is the complex problems that are interesting. Those discussed will present themselves with very unequal force to other international bodies.

When an international organization has a limited field of activity, especially when it is concerned with a single profession which has a strong sense of professional unity and is vividly inspired by a common purpose, half of the difficulties that beset a political organization disappear. In varying degrees almost all specialized agencies enjoy the advantage of professional cohesion and unity of purpose, and with the growth of technical assistance, they and the UN benefit from the fact that so much of their work renders a direct service to Member States rather than the indirect and delicate service of settling disputes, concluding conventions, and preventing friction from generating fire.

But though some organizations may have a much easier administrative task than others, the psychological problems of an international staff are always present, below if not above the surface. They can never safely be ignored and can, I believe, only be satisfactorily solved by an administrative system which is deliberately and overtly liberal in spirit.

VI

STAFF RULES AND REGULATIONS AND MACHINERY FOR THEIR ENFORCEMENT

1. *The Need for Regulations*

I LEAVE to the last the problem of staff regulations and the machinery for their enforcement, because if the head of an international administration is judicious in the selection of his staff, and skilful in controlling them, if he possesses qualities of leadership and of administrative skill, then, granted that governments of Member States behave in the spirit of their international undertakings, the actual rules and regulations under which the staff works should prove of quite minor importance—of incomparably less importance than the rules which should guide the administrator's own conduct. In a world not torn by dissension, an efficient director would, in all probability, scarcely have occasion to look at the staff rules from year's end to year's end.

Regulations governing salary scales, promotion, leave, &c., are necessary to give an international staff a sense of security and, in spite of the best will and the greatest skill, occasions will arise on which formal rules of conduct will have to be enforced and sanctions imposed. Regulations there must be therefore to establish clearly the duties and the obligations of officials; to specify and enumerate their rights; to act as a check on misbehaviour; to establish machinery for their enforcement and for the settlement of disputes.

2. *The Four Risks*

I have dealt with certain of these subjects already, and shall confine myself in this chapter to duties and their enforcement. Too often is it assumed in discussions of this subject that the purpose of the staff rules and the ancillary machinery is to regulate the behaviour of the staff only. That is an error which may lead to disastrous results. In fact provision must be made to ensure, in so far as possible, certain agreed norms of behaviour by the staff, by the head of the international organization, by its political organs, and by Member States. When these norms are not respected by any one of these four parties, the confidence of the staff and the smooth working of the administra-

tion may be adversely affected. The regulations must be drawn up with the primary purpose of controlling the behaviour of the staff, but they should be formulated in such a way as to have some restraining effect on the head of the administration. The machinery for their enforcement and the regulations dealing with that machinery must be so designed as to constitute an efficient brake on pressures from any of the four sources of possible difficulties mentioned above.

Assemblies or boards, in drawing up regulations, should therefore not confine themselves to laying down rules of conduct, enumerating responsibilities and rights and establishing a tribunal to judge disputes, and leave it to the chief administrative officer to determine the administrative machinery. They should be as solicitous to frame machinery, both administrative and judicial, to meet the ill wind that may blow from any of the four quarters of this globe as they are to ensure equity in their rules. To some extent the regulations thus conceived may limit the authority of the chief administrative officer and it is to his interest that they should. For it is against him that criticisms will be directed, if there is felt to be injustice or if there is any pother or discontent. It is, indeed, in no way paradoxical to suggest that he should welcome regulations to limit his own freedom to act in an arbitrary manner, for in the absence of rules designed for this purpose he will be open to the accusation of acting arbitrarily whenever he acts in a way which causes annoyance to anyone else. Still more important, in the absence of rules he will be subject to external pressures from individual governments and interested politicians. Moreover, whatever his own qualities, he cannot be sure that his successor will be wise, well intentioned, and competent, and he should be more solicitous to secure the well-being of the organization than the ostensible authority of his own position. These facts are so obvious that it might seem unnecessary to insist on them. My only reason for doing so is that they have been disputed, and it has been quite seriously contended that because the Secretary General of the UN is responsible to the Assembly, his authority, subject to that responsibility, should be absolute and untrammelled, and uncurbed by any administrative tribunal or other organ.

3. *The Staff*

As the regulations we are considering are designed primarily to aid and to control the staff, it is logical to begin with the behaviour of the

staff. Indeed we are only concerned with the behaviour of the head of the administration, the Assembly, or its executive board, or with that of individual governments on account of the effect it may have on the staff and the smooth working of the administration.

In practice all staff regulations begin by setting out the duties of the staff and by insisting on certain principles that should be applied in the execution of those duties. In the formulation of these initial regulations there has been little change since the early days of the League. The members of the staff are instructed to view themselves as international civil servants, responsible to and only to the organization they serve, to be loyal and discreet. They must abstain from receiving instructions, honours, or favours from third parties or from working for a third party without permission. The whole-hearted acceptance of these conditions is obviously essential if the staff is to be truly international and able to handle delicate international questions with a vision unblurred by parochial prejudices and a will uninfluenced by national or sectional interests. At the same time, the staff must be protected against the imposition of pressure by governments, parties, or movements. With the regulations designed to afford this protection I shall deal later.

In practice more is required of the staff, and the Charter of the United Nations very rightly insists on three qualities: efficiency, competence, and integrity.

If an official fails to carry out his duties or is lacking in any of these qualities, the problem of sanctions arises—a problem which in recent years has given rise to difficulties so serious that they have contributed largely to undermining the morale of at least one international organization.

What, in fact, are the conditions under which the head of the administration should feel himself entitled to impose sanctions, including the final sanction of terminating a contract if he is to maintain an efficient international administration? In spite of the controversy that has raged on this subject, I believe that the answer to the question is simple, and that it has in fact already been found. The real cause of the very serious difficulties that have occurred lies not in the imperfect formulation of the regulations—imperfect in some minor degree though they may have been—but in much more intractable circumstances and in a certain lack of understanding of basic principles and lack of judgement.

The conditions justifying the imposition of sanctions and the

termination of contracts fall, as I see it, into five broad groups, the first of which requires to be subdivided into two parts.

Such action is justified:

(a) *If the official is lazy, incompetent, or dishonest*

These three adjectives suffice as criteria without further definition. But in fairness to the individual, it is necessary to consider causes and to distinguish in the regulations between, for instance, incompetence —or indeed apparent laziness—due to ill health or to natural inefficiency, and incompetence and laziness due to a deliberate failure to employ innate abilities. I shall revert to this point.

These criteria are indeed employed in all administrations. International organizations differ from national services regarding them only in as much as it is more difficult to gauge the ability and still more the integrity of persons recruited from all over the world than of those recruited at home, and inasmuch as the application of these criteria to persons with widely different educational and cultural backgrounds may present very perplexing problems. Thus, to take a single example, all administrations have to face the fact that certain officials, perfectly competent when appointed, become inefficient. When the cause is ill health, it can as a rule be ascertained and the appropriate action is easy enough to determine. The cause is equally likely, however, to be some emotional strain, and for the reasons discussed in earlier chapters international officials are exceptionally liable to suffer from such strain. The most familiar case is that of the unmarried woman living abroad and becoming gradually aware that the prospects of suitable marriage are definitely bad. But the uprooted, whatever their grade and whatever their age, are susceptible to special risks of nervous strain and at some point the effect of neurosis on competence may necessitate a consideration of the removal of an official from the service Such cases raise extremely delicate problems for the administration. What standard should be employed? Should the standard be applied equally to all or should it vary somewhat with grade, with age, and even with nationality? Is it reasonable to apply the same measuring rod to a person coming from a neighbouring state or serving in his home country and a person coming from a widely different cultural atmosphere? Should colour be taken into consideration when an official is forced to live in a country where there is a social prejudice about colour? I have already emphasized the point that the international administrator

would be well advised to establish conditions such as to induce junior staff who are not locally recruited to retire early. If selection is made with care so that the rate of turnover of the staff reflects adequate facilities to leave and not simply the correction of administrative errors in judgement, there is no need to regret an appreciably higher turnover in the junior than in the senior staff. But it is exactly the incompetent, the persons lacking in self confidence and in initiative who may prove difficult to dislodge by persuasion.

Still more difficult cases present themselves. In an international organization there must be a wide geographical distribution of staff and a certain proportion of the candidates selected will, owing to their cultural background and the scarcity of really competent people in their home countries, be below the standard of competence generally demanded. I have argued in Chapter IV that such persons should whenever possible be given short-term contracts; but there will always be a certain number of marginal officials to whom it has been felt justifiable to give permanent contracts. Any falling off from the initial or expected competence of these officials may bring them so far below the accepted standard as to raise a very difficult disciplinary problem. A somewhat similar problem arises from time to time in connexion with an official appointed primarily as a contact man with his own country. He may prove excellent at such work and in other work inadequate. His value to the organization will thus vary in accordance with the importance of the contact work to be done at any moment. When such work is quiescent the limitations to his competence may become so apparent that the justification for retaining him becomes open to question. The termination of his contract may be necessary in the interest of good administration even when it is not possible to suppress his post. The post may still be required, changed only inasmuch as there is a change in the emphasis placed on the balance of functions to be performed by its occupant.

No two persons are likely to form exactly the same judgement on these various cases as they arise, and the head of an international administration would be unwise to rely on his own judgement alone or that of his personnel officer; still less could he rely on the several judgements of the various directors. He must work through some appropriate machinery which should gradually develop what have been happily termed 'autonomous standards',[1] and these standards

[1] Statement by the Secretary General before the Fifth Committee at its 412th meeting on 25 Nov. 1953. Assembly Records.

are likely to differ from those applied in national administrations because the problems that present themselves are different. For this reason, members of boards and, more especially delegates to Assemblies, should be humble in their judgements, for, living outside the international arena, they are much less likely to have a full understanding of these problems than the experienced official. For this same reason a newly created international organization should set about its business with the greatest prudence and circumspection, and should draw to the best of its ability—as it rarely does—upon the experience of older institutions.

(b) *If the official is disobedient*

Curiously enough neither the staff regulations of the League of Nations nor those of the ILO, nor those of the United Nations or any of its agencies, contain any rule directly imposing an obligation to carry out instructions received. In all cases it is stated that officials must 'pledge themselves to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interest of the [Organization] alone in view',[1] and that they are responsible to the head of the organization and must not receive instructions from third parties.[2]

Here again the risk that the international administrator has to face is somewhat different from that which is likely to arise in a national service. All questions of loyalty apart, an international official, especially a senior official who is a national of a great power, will be less prone to accept instructions automatically and willingly from his chief—at best a respected foreigner—than he would be working at home. Under existing regulations he is informed, not that he must obey, but that he must discharge his functions with the interest of the organization in view; and what those interests are and how they can best be served he is inclined, viewing the matter from an angle slightly different from that of his chief, to wish to judge himself. This fact is one of the data on which the head of an international administration has to base his own administrative conduct and policy, and in practice he must give his senior officials wide discretionary powers. But at the same time he must be able to demand and enforce obedience, and each director or other senior official must, subject to appeal, enjoy the same right with regard to those responsible to him.

[1] Article I, Staff Regulations of League of Nations, and Article I (i) of those of the United Nations.

[2] But in no case is it stated baldly that they must accept and execute instructions received from him.

Disobedience does not necessarily reflect disloyalty, still less dishonesty, and may be due simply to a mistaken view about the interests of the organization. But obedience is none the less essential, and disobedience should, I venture to think, be considered as a distinct ground warranting disciplinary measures. The League and the UN sought to overcome the omission of any reference to obedience in their lists of duties by the employment of such phrases as 'unsatisfactory service' and 'wilful failure . . . in the discharge of duties' in the lists of conditions under which contracts might be terminated. In practice, these phrases are no doubt adequate to permit of action being taken in case of disobedience; but there would be, I suggest, on balance an advantage in emphasizing the special risk that international organizations have to face.

(c) *If the official is disloyal to the organization*

As I have stated in an earlier chapter, two qualities, apart from intellectual capacity, which I would place very high in any list of qualities required, at any rate of a political international official, are loyalty and tact. But to formulate a judicial view regarding any person's loyalty presents the gravest difficulties. The term loyalty relates both to conduct and to sentiments and feelings. The sentiments of an official can scarcely be judged, but only the conduct to which they lead. Even on this point, however, it is unwise to be emphatic, for morale can be as seriously affected by talk as by more formal acts, and no international Secretariat could function efficiently if its members openly and persistently asserted that their purpose was to serve their country or a party rather than the organization which they had sworn to serve 'in all loyalty, discretion and conscience'.

As we have seen already, the risk of divided loyalties creates distinct problems for an international administration, and one of its major difficulties. The person formally responsible for the successful conduct of any international administration is compelled therefore to do everything in his power to stimulate loyalty, to protect it from attack, and to eradicate the disloyal.

His task will be rendered much more difficult, may be rendered impossible, if Member States fail to play their part. No individual can in conscience and sanity be possessed of opposed loyalties. But there is no sort of reason why he should not have a dual loyalty. The Englishman who joined the American army during the Second World War and took the oath of allegiance, or the American who joined the

British army, was in no sense disloyal to his own country. He was not disloyal because the objects of both countries were the same, because the governments of both welcomed such examples of solidarity and because those governments were loyal to each other and to their common cause. In exactly the same way an international official loyal to the organization he serves should suffer from no strain on his loyalty so long as, but only so long as, his country and its government remains loyal to that organization and faithful to the obligations towards it that it has undertaken. If it fails to do so, the official is placed in an impossible position, and his loyalty as an official automatically becomes open to question. I shall revert to these points when considering the risk to which an international organization may be subjected on account of the behaviour of the government of a Member State.

(d) *If the conduct of the official is such as to affect his good repute, or bring discredit to the organization for which he works*

All national administrations retain, and must retain, the right to terminate the contract of an official guilty of serious misconduct. The special question that presents itself to an international administration is whether it should apply standards different from those which are customary in national services: That it should not feel compelled to apply standards that happen to exist in the country in which the officials are resident is obvious, for by so doing it would subject itself to the dictates of a single government, which might at any moment enforce standards that ran counter to the conscience of the majority of the Member States.

The position of an international administrator differs in several ways from that of the head of a national department. First, the officials working under him are not subject to local law or to the local law courts. As a general rule, the head of an international administration will be well advised to waive diplomatic privileges when one of his officials infringes the law. But the very purpose of the diplomatic immunities is to allow him discretion in the interest of the organization, though not of the individual.

Secondly, no international organization has the same accepted status as a national government. It must protect its reputation with vigilant solicitude and, in consequence, acts which, committed at home in national service or in private business, might be overlooked,

may be serious offences if they affect the delicate credit and reputation of an international organization.

Thirdly, the head of such an organization is responsible for introducing a group of foreigners into the territory of the country where his office or offices are situated, and is morally responsible to the government of that country for their behaviour. A government is entitled to demand the removal of a diplomat with whose conduct it is dissatisfied. Such action may lead to a diplomatic incident, even to the breaking off of diplomatic relations with another government. Both governments are in the same position and a reciprocity is possible. No similar reciprocity can, however, exist between an international organization and its host government. In consequence, international organizations have been careful not to classify their officials as diplomats, and not to admit the right of any government to insist on the expulsion of an official.

All the three facts just enumerated place the head of an international organization in a peculiarly delicate position; they impose on him, and on the officials working under him, an exceptional responsibility, and may necessitate the imposition of more exacting standards in determining misconduct than would be normally applied in a national service. Indeed, even when a course of action implies no sort of moral obloquy, the termination of a contract may be justified. If, for instance, an official repeatedly ignored traffic rules—an offence for which his chief would automatically waive diplomatic privileges—or habitually trespassed, and the local bench out of deference to the organization refrained from inflicting the severest penalties in its power, the head of the international organization would certainly be justified in terminating his contract. The official would have been guilty of conduct that, because he was abroad and because he was working for an organization which cannot afford to have its name brought into disrepute, justified more drastic action than would have been considered fair had he been otherwise employed.

For the application of this criterion also, since it is not possible to define misconduct in advance because there is no local criterion, and since there is a need to employ a rigorous standard, the head of the administration is likely to be open to attack whatever his judgement, and is in need of adequate machinery by which he can both check his opinion and protect himself against criticism.

(e) *If the official shows a lack of tact or discretion such as to affect adversely his own reputation or that of the administration for which he works*

A clear distinction should be drawn between misconduct and lack of discretion. A lack of discretion or tact is one form, and in an international organization a vital form, of incompetence. Here, however, I am not considering a lack of tact in the course of an official's daily work, but in his behaviour outside the office. The most obvious examples and the most important are participation in politics and public utterances of a political nature. I shall consider later the right of an international official to belong to a political party. That is a special aspect of the general problem of serving two masters. The point I wish to argue here is that any participation in politics, other than voting, at any rate by senior officials constitutes a lack of tact that renders their continued service undesirable. They are *ipso facto* expressing an opinion and endeavouring to influence the opinion of others concerning a controversial issue on which government action is proposed or urged. The issue may be domestic and quite unconnected with the activities of the international organization. Even granted that it is, by his political activities the official will be classed by the national civil servants and statesmen with whom he has to deal as belonging to a particular camp with which they may or may not be in sympathy—in the case of a statesman, to a camp whose major purpose may be to remove him from power. By putting himself in a position to be thus classified, he has shown a lack of tact that may well affect adversely the effectiveness of his work. Moreover, it is becoming constantly more difficult to distinguish between national and international affairs. International organizations through technical assistance and other activities are becoming increasingly associated with national affairs, all of which may at any moment be or become political issues. It is, in my opinion, greatly to be regretted that the United Nations Assembly in 1953 failed to follow the advice of its second Secretary General that officials should be quite simply forbidden 'to engage in political activities outside the scope of their official duties, other than voting'.[1] The formula adopted prohibiting 'any political activity which is inconsistent with or may reflect on the independence and impartiality required by their status as international civil servants',[2] although possessing the merit of explaining the

[1] UN Assembly 1953, Doc. A/2533, § 73.
[2] UN Assembly 1953, Resolution 781, Annex.

grounds for the restrictions imposed, has the much more serious demerit of leaving the instruction open to dispute. If, for instance, a senior official of the United Nations were to make speeches publicly supporting a Presidential candidate, would he infringe this regulation as now formulated? Clearly this is not a question on which a dogmatic answer can be given. Equally clearly he would have shown a grave lack of tact and discretion, and as tact and discretion are not easy to assess, it is wise to define with precision the limits that are admissible.

I have chosen this example of political activities because it is at once the most common and the most controversial form of lack of tact. But from time to time officials are appointed who prove themselves in their dealings either with their colleagues or with delegates and advisers so lacking in courtesy and *savoir faire* as to promote not international understanding but international friction. They are incompetent, and their special form of incompetence may justify their removal. Discretion and tact are so important in international work that it is desirable to emphasize them in the staff regulations rather than to treat the lack of them as one of the many possible forms of inefficiency.

4. *The Head of an International Administration*

In the absence of external political pressure, it should prove possible to apply these criteria with justice and without undue friction, though judgement regarding the right course to pursue in any particular case may frequently prove more difficult in an international than in a national administration because of a lack of well-established standards and of the automatic rule of law. When the world is subject to political tension and an organization is forced to function in an atmosphere charged with emotion, suspicion, and fear, the best regulations are likely to be abused and the staff of that organization is likely to suffer. It is in these circumstances that the risks arising from failure on the part of the head of the administration himself, or the political bodies controlling it, or a Member State, become so serious.

There is no *a priori* reason for assuming that the head of an international organization will prove competent and judicious. In all probability he will have been appointed as a result of a political compromise and will not be the strongest candidate available. When the organization is composed of Member States with similar cultural backgrounds, and similar ethical standards, whatever his limitations or defects, he will at least know that his administration will be subject

to criticism the nature of which he can foresee, and he is likely to shape his conduct accordingly. When the organization is a reflection of a divided world, this check is rendered imperfect; he may endeavour to ingratiate himself with one camp or another, and the staff may suffer. It will suffer most acutely if, owing to emotional stress or cynical self-interest, he moves from one camp to another. The more politically minded the Secretary General, the greater the danger.

The danger to which I refer here is that of arbitrary conduct towards the staff. General administrative ability and the positive attributes of leadership have been discussed in earlier chapters. Arbitrary conduct may be due to widely different causes and may take many forms. A Secretary General, as we have seen, may play politics and allow his judgement to be influenced by his desire to favour one government or another or to win favour from a particular government or group of governments. He may quite simply be lacking in judgement, may be given to snap decisions, or liable to reach after careful deliberation unjust ones, which are open to criticism and cause unrest.

The principle that the head of an international organization should be given full responsibility for the administration of which he is in charge, subject to review by the Assembly and general directives by the executive board, has been generally accepted and is, I believe, right. This implies in practice that such machinery as may be established to assist him must, apart from a final court of appeal, be advisory in character. In consequence, the danger presents itself that such an administrative officer who wishes to act in an arbitrary or autocratic manner may endeavour to weaken the machinery or may simply ignore the advice he has received. The first of these two dangers is by far the more serious.

On the other hand, whatever the good intentions and the good judgement of the head of an administration, he is always open to attack, and in a divided world delegates may be on the look-out for occasions to attack him. The risk of attack will be greater when the standards on which judgements are based are undeveloped or open to honest contention. The interests of the wise and well-intentioned head and those of his staff are therefore identical. Both he and they need the protection afforded by regulations that are clear and easily enforceable, by standards that are generally, if not universally, recognized to be reasonable and just, and by advisory and judicial machinery which is designed to meet dangers coming from any one of the four sources I am considering.

5. *The Political Organs*

In most international organizations the risk to the Secretariat of the Assembly exercising an inequitable influence on the enforcement of rules and regulations is relatively slight, if only because the Assembly is not as a rule directly concerned with administrative acts, but with principles. An Assembly, it is true, may on occasion be carried away by a wave of emotion and adopt a resolution which, if only on account of its folly, creates unrest, as was the Conference of UNESCO when it resolved that no person who had ever belonged to a Nazi or Fascist party should be an eligible candidate for a post.[1] Such exhibitions of fanaticism in an organization founded to promote mutual understanding through educational processes inevitably affect morale, and the damage done cannot be rapidly repaired by revoking the decision in a calmer moment. This sort of risk, however, is incidental to international parliamentary discussion, especially in early post-war years, and must be accepted philosophically.

Much more serious problems arise when, owing to a constitutional defect, there is no body other than the Assembly empowered to discuss whatever issues may arise in the administration of the Secretariat. In the United Nations there is no executive board; there is no council to which the Secretary General can have recourse for advice or direction. The only body with more than advisory powers is the Assembly and it is a thoroughly unsuitable body to deal with day-to-day administrative problems. It is unsuitable because the discussions take place in public; because, meeting as it does but once a year, it lacks the intimate relationship necessary for understanding and circumspect judgement; because it must, or at least it should, feel under an obligation, except in the most glaring cases of injustice or indiscretion, to give its full support and backing to the Secretary General and in consequence formulate its decisions in terms substantially different from those its members would have chosen had they been serving on an executive board meeting in private. The ill effects of public discussion are greatly accentuated when political tension exists and administrative problems are seized on as an occasion for casting suspicion on the staff, attacking the Secretary General, or endeavouring to undermine the authority of the administrative tribunal. No staff can be expected to function satisfactorily in such circumstances. Owing to the suspicion ventilated it must lose much of such harmony and cohe-

[1] It is only fair to add, however, that UNESCO was following the lead given by the first Assembly of UN, which adopted a resolution in this sense.

sion as it may possess, for, like liquid mud, suspicion both spreads and sticks; its loyalty must suffer from the attacks on its natural leader and defender; its sense of justice must be outraged by any cavilling at the decisions of its court of appeal, for each member of the staff will know that while a government may utilize the Assembly meeting to dispute a decision which it finds unpalatable, he for his part has no power to take any action if the decision is unfavourable to him.

In fact, however, Assemblies have been loyal to the staff in the votes they have taken and in the decisions and recommendations they have reached,[1] and I believe that as the world is constituted today—perhaps I should say *even* as the world is constituted today—any Assembly is likely to prove loyal. The risks do not lie to any serious degree in the decisions reached by the majority, but in the behaviour of a minority of the delegates in the course of the debate and in the fact that the debates are public. Publicity generates publicity, and such restraint as may be exercised at the Assemblies themselves is cast ruthlessly aside by certain sections of the press; the reputation of the staff suffers from the mud thrown, and the staff suffers in both morale and efficiency by a consciousness of its loss of public esteem. A council or an executive board presents no comparable dangers. It will discuss intimate administrative problems in private unless it is infatuated by the modern craze for public meetings; it is likely to be sufficiently familiar with the details of the administration and the personalities involved to formulate a sane opinion; it shares in the responsibility, not as a final court of reference, but as an integral part of the machine. Some dangers there are no doubt: that it may be dominated by some individual with more will power than judgement; that it may, in a relatively mild way, play politics. But these are dangers common to all collective effort and must be accepted as such.

[1] Some persons would question this statement and quote as an instance of disloyalty the decision of the last Assembly of the League of Nations not to implement the awards of the Administrative Tribunal in favour of officials who had appealed against a decision of an earlier Assembly to modify the conditions for the termination of their contracts. The real issue in this case was not whether the Assembly had the right to reverse a decision of the Administrative Tribunal, but whether the Tribunal had the right to reverse a legislative act of the Assembly. I do not propose to argue this extraordinarily difficult case because I hold the view that the right procedure would have been to send it to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion, a course rendered impossible by the fact that the League Assembly was holding its final meeting (see pp. 146–9 below).

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6. *The Governments of Member States*

The fourth possible source of danger is a government of a Member State. The major risks are that a government may foster an incompatibility of loyalties and endeavour to compel its citizens to allow their loyalty to it to eclipse their loyalty to the organization they serve;

that, with this object in view, it may impose standards of conduct on certain officials which are at variance with the international standards applied to other officials;

and that it may endeavour to induce the administration of the international organization to aid and abet it in imposing unilateral standards either on its own subjects or on all officials.

All autarchic states, especially those with a one-party system, present a special risk to an international organization, for there is no opposition to impede them from refusing freedom of choice in the recruitment of its citizens or from obliging the citizens selected to join an official party and to subject themselves to party discipline. If such a state does, in fact, prevent free recruitment or impose obedience on officials, the staff cannot be homogeneous and harmonious because no one can serve two masters. But dictatorships which do not organize a single-party system present a much smaller risk. During the inter-war period there were many dictators in, for instance, Latin-American states, but I cannot recall a single case of that fact affecting the personnel policy of the League or of the International Labour Office. When a one-party system exists, however, the government is likely to insist that all officials or at least those officials whose position is considered of political importance should be party members. Thus, in 1927, the Italian government passed a law, which it enforced rigorously as host government to the International Institute of Agriculture, forbidding any Italian citizen to accept or to continue service in an international organization without authorization (today we should say clearance) by the Italian government. The penalties for failure to comply with this law included a fine of 5,000 lire, up to a year's imprisonment, and loss of rights of citizenship.[1] As regards the Institute of Agriculture the Italian government could plead justification because the Statute of that organization stipulated that no candidate could be presented for selection without the prior approval of the delegate of the country to which that candidate belonged. As regards other international bodies this law constituted an attempt by the

[1] 68 Tg. Nr. 163.

Italian government to deprive their chief administrative officers and councils of the right to select officials freely and an attempt, moreover, to ensure that its nationals should be loyal to the party in power.

In fact the Fascist government did not interfere with junior appointments at Geneva. It did insist and was allowed to insist that the Assistant Secretary General should be a government nominee and a party member. To the best of my knowledge, neither it nor the Nazi government ever brought pressure to bear on existing members of the staff of the League or the ILO that they should join the Fascist or Nazi parties. The former did, however, bring political pressure to bear on League officials as a result of which one at least resigned and emigrated to the United States. The latter recalled certain seconded officials, and certain League officials did, in fact, join the Nazi party. The risk of pressure was always present and the problem that that pressure constituted was never satisfactorily solved. The homogeneity of the staff was weakened and morale suffered.

Governments which are not autarchic may for their part insist not that officials should belong to a unique party but that they should not belong to some party they disfavour. They may endeavour to impose their will by bringing direct or indirect pressure on the individual to resign or, by bringing pressure on the international organization, to force resignation, or, in the case of candidates for posts, by imposing a fine on any citizen of the country they govern who becomes an international official without their permission.

Indeed there is at least one instance of a bill being submitted to a democratic parliament which in substance, if not in intent, was closely similar to the Fascist law of 1927. According to this bill no citizen of the United States should be entitled to accept employment in the UN or any specialized agency unless he had received clearance from the Attorney General. The penalties proposed do not include loss of citizenship; they are limited to a fine that should not exceed $10,000 and imprisonment for not more than five years—or both. Though so similar in substance this bill differs in intent from its forerunner in as much as its purpose was not to ensure that an official should be a member of the government's party, but to ensure that he should not be a member of a party considered disloyal.

If membership of any specific party or group implies that the member is under instructions from party headquarters, a government is clearly justified in pressing for the prohibition of such membership when no prohibition is already enforced. The proper channel

to employ in such circumstances is the Assembly (or possibly the executive board) of the organization in question. Such action is justified, not because the government disfavours the party, but because when an official subjects himself to instructions by anybody other than the organization that employs him he fails in his first duty to his employer—not to his government. If party membership does not imply party discipline, but is merely displeasing to a government, the grounds for that displeasure may or may not be sufficiently serious to justify action by the Assembly; but unless there is some regulation or some agreed international standard prohibiting such membership, for a government to bring pressure on its subjects to quit their service or to surrender their membership, unless it passes a law rendering membership illegal for all its subjects, is tantamount to arrogating to itself functions which should lie with the head of the international administration. For a government to bring pressure on the head of the administration himself to carry out its wishes is tantamount to usurping the functions of the Assembly.

The danger to the administration of any endeavour by a government to exercise pressure on individual members of the staff or on the head of the administration himself lies in the facts that it indirectly undermines his authority and may still further indirectly undermine it by opening him to the suspicion of being subject to pressure even when he is not, and that it may lessen the loyalty of the officials to the organization and create a sense of insecurity and unrest among them.

There is a further contingent danger, namely that other governments may through the force of imitation or deliberately as a countermeasure act in a similar fashion.

If all governments imposed their wills, even their negative wills, on their subjects employed by international organizations and forbade them to belong to parties or groups they disliked, then international organizations could only function with any degree of harmony if they prohibited all party membership. I argue later that this is the course that international organizations should take in the face of any external pressure. If governments went a step farther—it is a small step—and endeavoured to forbid international civil servants to hold certain beliefs or to associate with persons holding these beliefs, or maybe suspected of so doing, then in the chaos created by the consequent contradictory hectologue the administration could not hope to function with either harmony or efficiency.

Suppose, however, that technically a government behaved correctly and made no discrimination between those of its subjects who were and those who were not international officials, brought no special pressure to bear on any of the former or on the head of the administration, but simply passed a law compelling all its citizens either to belong or not to belong to a party, would it in such a case threaten the morale or the smooth functioning of an international organization? Is that one of the risks against which the international administrator when considering the staff regulations and the machinery to enforce them should seek protection? The answer to that question lies, I suggest, in the nature of the international organization. If it is composed of states which believe in imposing beliefs, such laws present no problem to them, and in their eyes, which are all that matter, to their international emanation. One can imagine indeed with a certain amusement an international organization composed of states whose views were in quite violent opposition on all issues save the sacred right of governments to impose their wills on their subjects. But in any international organization composed of states which have solemnly agreed to practice tolerance, intolerance is not rendered innocuous by being rendered legal. There are indeed certain principles of conduct that an international organization must require of its staff and expect of its Member States.

A Member State in its anxiety to protect itself from malign influences, or in the ebullience of its enthusiasm for what it deems good, may completely hamstring an international organization by exercising not a censorship over the souls of its subjects, but a control over the free movement of international officials of whatever nationality. A government that persistently refuses visas to international officials when on active service, obviously threatens the very existence of that organization or its own right to membership in it.

There remains, however, the extraordinarily difficult problem of the line of policy a government is justified in taking with regard to an organization composed of Member States whose closest approximation to peace is reflected in the fact that they abstain from direct recourse to arms against each other. Is it an implied duty of membership in such circumstances that they should always admit all officials within their frontiers; and if one state fails to do so, must all others accept this obligation, even when there are grounds for belief that in so doing they threaten their own safety?

These questions are not raised with a view to entering upon a

lengthy discussion on what conduct by a Member State is compatible with its contractual obligations to an international organization or on the nature of international obligations in general. They are raised because of their intimate relationship to the subject of this chapter, staff regulations. Whatever the theoretical duty of states may be, it is improbable that all governments would in practice be prepared to admit within their frontiers all officials of any international organization, when there are grounds for believing that such action involved a national risk, if the organization for its part could take, and refused to take, measures to reduce that risk. In the circumstances that exist today, many believe that the risk is enhanced or indeed originates mainly in party membership. Party membership is in no way essential to the efficient work of international officials. On the contrary, membership of certain parties implies, even when it does not nessarily involve, the risk that the official will be under party instructions, will attempt to serve two masters, or worse still will serve another master and only pretend to serve the international organization in which he works. The international organization can therefore make a very definite contribution to the solution of this question by adding to its staff regulations a stipulation forbidding officials to be members of any political party. Such a stipulation has the positive advantages of preventing any government from imposing party membership on international officials, as well as that of reducing the risk of officials serving or pretending to serve two masters; it has the indirect advantage of removing certain at least of those grounds for suspicion that may induce a government, rightly or wrongly, to impose restrictions on the free movement of officials and thus to threaten the work for which the international organization is responsible.

Those who object to the prohibition of all political activities other than voting will of course object to this suggested and more specific prohibition of party membership. For the great majority of members, since they work abroad, the sacrifice demanded is (or should be) negligible. Certain local officials may complain of hardship. It is well that they should remember that international officials, especially perhaps international, locally recruited officials, enjoy many privileges; they should be prepared to make certain sacrifices. If they are so cantankerous or so politically minded as to be unwilling to make this sacrifice, the international organization will lose little in losing them.

This addition to the staff regulations will not remove more than one of the causes that may induce a government to impede the free movement of officials or by other means impede the work of an international staff. Other measures will be required to meet other risks, in so far as they can be met.

What in the face of the risks from the four quarters I have been considering can the head of an international organization do? What line of administrative policy should he adopt?

In attempting to answer these questions, it is necessary to distinguish between the special circumstances that have affected the United Nations in recent years and circumstances that are likely to characterize any international organization. The former constitute an extreme case of exceptional difficulties, and any protective system adequate for it should prove more than adequate for less abnormal conditions. Unfortunately, there is no system which can be guaranteed to obviate the risk of serious trouble arising in the future, as it has in the past, so long as the political atmosphere remains unchanged. Nevertheless, from a consideration of this special case, certain lessons of general application can, I believe, be drawn.

7. *International Standards*

Nearly all the Secretariat troubles of the United Nations in recent years would seem to be traceable to three distinct causes: first, the inevitable growing pangs of a new organization; secondly, the fact that the United Nations endeavoured to avoid the natural process of growth and leap fully-fledged into life; and, thirdly, the fact that it embraces within its orbit areas of the world which are not only hostile to each other, but are actuated by fundamentally different ethical principles. Some observers would add a fourth cause, the endeavour by certain senior officials to transplant quite inappropriate principles of national administration into an international body. No doubt the UN suffered from their inexperience and from the tragi-comic cock-a-hoop that went with it. I prefer to class this endeavour, however, not as a distinct cause, but rather as one manifestation of the inevitable growing pangs.

Each of these causes requires to be borne in mind by the international administrator. The first presents itself to all new organizations which must pass through a period of learning by trial and error. Mistakes in recruitment, in allotting functions to individuals, in planning the distribution of functions among departments, and in the

handling of staff are inescapable; some friction will occur and when it does the machinery for settling disputes may be over-driven before it is run in. The second cause is an historical fact. An emotional ardour to create within seven days a perfect world out of post-war chaos vanquished common sense. It inspired at once delegates to the United Nations and its Secretariat; and the specialized agencies were in varying degree subject to it. Indeed UNESCO's imaginative ambition was perhaps even more boldly fantastical than that of the Bronx or Lake Success. The ill effects of this emotionalism slowly and painfully wear themselves out and growing pangs pass with the passage of time. More serious and more persistent are the effects of the ethical dichotomy from which the world suffers. It must cause rifts in any international Secretariat and it will continue to give rise to harmful pressure from Member States and harmful acrimony in public discussions so long as it exists. The international administrator cannot hope to maintain a harmonious and efficient staff in these circumstances. All he can do is to devise defensive measures. Logically the first of these measures is the formulation by the international organization of its own standards, as the Secretary General of the United Nations proposed to the Assembly in 1953.

Such a proposal would have seemed strange to the League or ILO in the nineteen-twenties. It would today be supererogatory in OEEC. But it is the first essential rampart against pressures by governments to impose their own and unlike standards on the Secretariat and thus render impossible the application of the most important of all principles when handling an international staff, namely, that all nationalities should be judged by the same principles of justice. The report on Standards of Conduct finally prepared by the International Civil Service Advisory Board has made a real contribution to the establishment of 'a general doctrine or code of behaviour',[1] which should prove of value not only as a guide to staff members but as a protection to the administrative heads of international organizations against pressure by governments.

8. *The Staff Regulations*

The other ramparts consist of the staff regulations themselves and the machinery for their enforcement. The regulations I have already discussed and I will add here only two remarks on points which require special emphasis. The first is that they are likely to gain

[1] *Report on Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service*, 1954, para. 3.

rather than lose in clarity if they are formulated in general terms. If they are formulated as a series of detailed commands, 'dos' or 'don'ts', omissions are certain to be discovered sooner or later and irritation is likely to be caused if the rules are constantly amended. There is, however, one case in which it is wise to be specific—especially when it is apt to recur with any considerable degree of frequency—and that is the borderline case about which there may be a division of opinion. The most obvious example is political activities. I have already argued that any political activities by members of an international staff are undesirable and will probably prove injurious to the organization, and I believe that most persons who have had practical experience of international administration will agree with me. But some Assembly delegates, politicians themselves, and some politically minded members of the staff are certain to protest that no citizen should be deprived of his political rights. It is wise, therefore, in the circumstances to lay down with precision what is or is not allowed.

The second point that should be emphasized is that it is wise to include in the staff regulations and rules specific reference to the machinery that the head of the administration intends to employ for their application. Practice has varied widely on this point. For instance, the League and the International Labour Organization in their staff regulations enumerate all the committees, and define their functions and their composition; the United Nations mentions most of the committees in the rules but not all, and does not in all cases state their composition; the World Health Organization confines itself in its regulations to the statement that the Director General shall make provision for staff participation in the discussion of policies relating to staff questions and in its rules to mentioning a board of inquiry and appeal. Obviously in practice the Director General must and does appoint other committees to advise him. To think out in advance what those committees should be and to let it be known what they are can impinge in no way on his authority and will cause satisfaction to the staff. The psychological advantage of making this machinery an integral part of the regulations is all the greater when, as should be the case, the staff is directly represented on certain of the committees. There is another advantage which the head of an international organization cannot afford to overlook today. These committees are required by him (*a*) to relieve him of the burden of work, for obviously he cannot conduct all the inquiries himself; (*b*) as an

instrument by which he can check his own judgement; (*c*) as a means for promoting among the staff a spirit of co-operation, a sense of being engaged on a joint enterprise; (*d*) as a means for rendering the staff as anxious as he is himself to formulate and enforce standards of efficiency and of conduct; (*e*) as a means for affording to the staff a maximum assurance against national or cultural discrimination or any other form of injustice; and finally (*f*) as a means to protect himself against suspicion or attack either from members or from the staff or individual governments, or the Assembly or the executive board. All these purposes will be better served if he gives status and permanence to the committees he appoints, and if they are formally approved by the Assembly and council or board.

In this connexion the distinction, if distinction there be, between staff regulations and staff rules becomes important. In the League of Nations there were no rules, only regulations. Those originally approved by the Assembly could be amended by the Secretary General on the conditions that the amendments did not prejudice the acquired rights of officials and were reported to the Assembly at its next ordinary meeting. Since the last war the Assemblies of international organizations have adopted the practice of drawing up regulations in somewhat general terms and leaving it to the head of the administration to draft implementing rules in certain cases subject to the approval of the executive board.

The committees constituted to assist the head of the administration may be mentioned therefore either in the regulations or in the rules; they may be omitted from both and owe their origin to a simple office circular which may be modified or cancelled by the head of the administration at will. The purposes enumerated above will be best secured if they are enumerated in the most binding document, the regulations, and if the functions of each committee are clearly set out in those regulations and not left for subsequent definition.

9. *Administrative and Judicial Machinery*

(a) *Internal*

In the League staff regulations provision was made for no less than five administrative or judicial committees, and all these committees were charged with the function of advising about the enforcement of some section of the regulations applying to existing staff.

The Committee on Appointments and Promotion advised not only on appointments, but on promotions, on the discharge of probationary

officials, on suspension of annual increments, on the discharge of officials in the case of reduction of posts or the reorganization of the staff, and finally on the action to be taken on the septennial reports regarding work, conduct, and capacity. It dealt with all officials of what would today be called professional grades and was composed of directors or more senior officials nominated by the Secretary General.

The so-called Sub-Committee on Appointments and Promotion had similar functions regarding the junior staff and was composed mainly of officials below the rank of Director, also nominated by the Secretary General.

The Regrading Committee, which was under the chairmanship of the officer in charge of internal administration, advised regarding the creation, grading, regrading, or abolition of posts. It was not concerned with individuals, only with posts. Its members apart from the Chairman, who sat *ex officio*, were appointed by the Secretary General.

These three were supplemented by two so-called Paritative Committees—the Judicial Committee and the Administrative Committee.

The former advised the Secretary General on:

(*a*) all cases in which an official may be guilty of misconduct or wilful failure or negligence in the discharge of his duties, or be incapable of performing his duties, and become accordingly liable to disciplinary measures; and

(*b*) any complaint by an official alleging that he has been treated in a manner inconsistent with the provisions of the Staff Regulations or the terms of his appointment, or that he has been subjected by a superior official to treatment which was unjustifiable or unfair.

It was instructed to be guided solely by legal considerations. The Secretary General appointed two of its members, and the staff two; these four then co-opted a fifth and the whole Committee elected its Chairman.

The latter, the Administrative Committee, had residual powers to advise the Secretary General in the application of the regulations in regard to all matters not placed within the competence of one of the other committees mentioned in the staff regulations, and was specifically empowered to make suggestions for the amendment of the regulations.

It was composed of one member appointed by the Secretary General and one by each of the three divisions of the staff, plus a co-opted member. The Treasurer attended meetings in an advisory capacity.

I set out this apparatus of advisory boards in full, not because it presented an ideal system—I do not think it did—but because it affords an excellent example of the commendable principle of rendering perfectly clear to the staff and to the Assembly and Council how the administration was to be conducted, and because, owing to its detail, it affords a convenient presentation of certain of the problems I want to discuss.

It will be noted that a clear distinction is drawn between misconduct and wilful failure or negligence on the one hand, and simple failure to make the grade on the other. The underlying philosophy was, I believe, though this was never expounded, that, if an official had been approved after a year's probation or more, and later proved unsatisfactory for any reason other than deliberate misbehaviour or negligence, since an error of judgement had probably been committed by the administration itself, it was only fair to treat him with leniency and to allow his contract to run until the septennial overhaul took place. This, granted adequate care is taken in selection, is probably a sound view. The risk to the administration is not great and is indeed less than might appear at first sight, because a director who makes it clear to a member of his staff that he cannot recommend a renewal of his contract should be able to make it worth his while to resign before the seven years have run their course, provided he help him, as he should, to find another job elsewhere.

This philosophy has, moreover, the positive advantage of distinguishing in so far as it is possible to distinguish between administrative and judicial action. The Secretary General, it will be noted, keeps, under the regulations, a tight hold on the former. He does not seek the advice of staff representatives about how he should conduct his business, but appoints his own advisers. When judgement has to be passed on alleged misconduct, whatever its form, the advice of officials acting in their capacity as employees is sought. By this means it is possible to develop gradually those autonomous standards to which reference was made above.

The staff regulations of the International Labour Office make no such clear distinction between misconduct or wilful negligence and failure to make the grade, and, in consequence, between administrative and judicial action. Under these regulations a contract may be terminated 'if the necessities of the Service require reduction of the staff', and in this case action is deemed to be purely administrative and is dealt with by the Administrative Committee, which is a

paritative body, the official whose post is threatened being entitled to appeal to the ILO's Judicial or, as it is called, Joint Committee. But no distinction is drawn between unsatisfactory service due to wilful negligence and unsatisfactory service due to natural shortcomings. To both the same system of sanctions is applied. For both, when a sanction exceeds a simple warning or reprimand, reference to the Joint Committee is required. Only when the need for summary dismissal arises is a clear line drawn between misconduct and incompetence. The effect of this procedure is to give the staff a greater advisory influence over administrative action and to ignore in most cases the question whether an official was responsible for the acts or the lack of activity on account of which sanctions are proposed. If less justice may on occasion be done than under the League system, it is done more democratically.

To my mind, the League demonstrated a very proper discrimination in its effort to determine whether, for instance, negligence was or was not wilful. But it may well be questioned whether the distinction it made in its regulations between administrative and judicial action was not too fine-drawn. The Judicial Committee is instructed, it will be noted, to be guided solely by legal considerations. But what is the law? Nowhere is misconduct defined, and whether negligence is wilful or accidental is a question not of law but of fact. Moreover, it is not in practice legal advice only, were it possible to render it, that the head of the administration requires; and it is not because of their legal competence that staff representatives should be asked to serve on such committees. The head of the administration may no doubt need advice regarding the legal situation, regarding his right to act; but, above all, he requires a collective and representative opinion regarding the facts of the case and regarding the course of action that in view of those facts is considered fair and equitable. Failing this, he has no protection against the accusation of acting in an arbitrary manner and he has no means of checking his own judgement on the course of action he should adopt. It is a mistake to confuse a judicial committee with a panel of legal advisers. In practice the Committee did recommend appropriate action and owing to the nature of the regulations made its own interpretation of the law, applying what seemed to it reasonable principles of equity. The comparable ILO body very rightly instructed the Committee to include in its report a statement of the *de facto* as well as the *de jure* grounds for its conclusion.

The Judicial Committee was at once a court of first instance—for questions of misconduct—and a court of appeal against administrative decisions taken on the advice of the Appointments Committee or its sub-committee. In the latter capacity it afforded a guarantee against arbitrary decisions; but again to be effective it had to formulate an opinion regarding the facts of the case.

In the Administrative Committee the staff representatives were in a majority. In the early days of the League the administration frequently referred individual cases to this Committee, especially when it believed that a decision unfavourable to a member of the staff should be taken. This practice was perhaps justified in the experimental period as it facilitated the formulation of a collective opinion by the staff on administrative questions. But it was open to the objection that it tended to convert an advisory body into an executive organ. Later the administration confined itself to submitting cases clearly involving some intended question of principle, cases the decisions on which were likely to constitute a precedent of general application and cases that might suggest the need for amending some provision of the staff regulations.

Whether a small body such as the Administrative Committee with only one representative from each category of the staff is the most appropriate instrument for voicing the sentiments of the staff as a whole may well be questioned. It presents the clear advantages over a larger committee of economizing time and being much more likely to act in a business-like way and to refuse to discuss at length proposals that are frivolous or querulous. But it is not fully representative. It is true that the League had in addition a staff committee also mentioned in the regulations, which was considered the main link between the staff and the administration, but in fact it was useful rather as constituting a panel whose members could be consulted as occasion demanded than for its meetings. It was never very active, because the staff was on the whole satisfied with its conditions and was not trades union minded, thus presenting a striking contrast to the ILO, where the representatives of the staff exercised and exercise a much greater influence and are much more given to demanding administrative power. As we have seen when discussing appointments, this power has been granted them to an extent that seems paradoxical.

If the regulations are fair, the administration just, and outside pressures do not make themselves felt, few international organiza-

tions are likely to require a large staff committee like that of the UN, which is composed of twenty-one elected members, or frequent meetings between it and the administration. It is much more useful for a certain number of senior officials to take an active part, as some do in the Food and Agricultural Organization, in the staff association and in the staff committees and to endeavour on their own initiative to remove causes of friction and settle the problems that arise behind the scenes. What is of interest to the head of the organization is to establish relations with the staff such that they acquire a real sense of unity, irrespective of rank; to know where the shoe pinches so that he can correct it; to be able to resist outside pressures with the backing of the staff in the most effective possible manner. The first of these objectives can best be attained not by machinery but by behaviour, his behaviour and that of all in positions of responsibility; the second can easily be secured if that sense of unity exists and only when it is deficient will elaborate machinery be required; for the third a small body that has acquired a reputation for competence and common sense is more likely to be effective than a small mob. But when there is lack of unity in the staff a large committee representative of all shades of opinion may be necessary. Whether the committee be large or small however, it must be given the right to initiate proposals. The United Nations rule that a 'Staff Committee shall be consulted on general questions relating to staff administration and staff welfare. This shall not apply in emergency situations', which leaves all the initiative to the administration and carries in its tail a threat that the initiative will not be taken in those cases that are likely to cause real anxiety, fails both in spirit and substance. Only if the staff is given the initiative and the right to draw attention to causes of friction can the Staff Committee or any other representative body perform its real function of preventing emergency situations arising. But neither for this purpose nor for any of the others that are under discussion in this chapter can it be stated that one or another type of machinery is the best. Each organization must adapt its machinery to its special needs, to its size, to the nature of the work on which it is engaged, and to the type of official that it recruits to carry out that work.

From this discussion of machinery, however, certain crucial questions emerge, and those questions are likely to present themselves to all international organizations. I propose to consider three.

Is it desirable to have representatives of the staff on advisory

committees concerned with questions which are primarily of an administrative nature?

Is it desirable to have representatives of the staff on all advisory committees concerned with the termination of contracts whether on administrative or judicial grounds?

By what means can autonomous standards be developed so as best to secure, not only that they are equitable, but also that they will be an effective rampart against external pressures?

As I have already said, I can see no valid reason for having staff representatives on appointments committees when making appointments. No question of rights of the staff arises. To demand their presence implies that the staff does not trust their senior officers to abstain from favouritism and believes that it itself will be less given to prejudice. Such a state of mind suggests that the senior officials have failed to inspire confidence. To correct such a state of affairs, if it exists, requires measures by the head of the organization much more far reaching than packing appointments committees with representatives of the staff, who are unlikely to know exactly what qualities are required for any given post or what type of personality will prove the best fit.[1] It is, of course, reasonable to stipulate in the regulations that the members of the appointments committee should be of different nationalities, as in fact the League regulations did.

On the other hand, to decide that a contract should be terminated on account of failure to make the grade is an act of judgement with regard to existing staff so similar to the act required in cases of misconduct that it is difficult to argue that the staff should be represented in the one case and not in the other. Therefore, if the same committee is to deal with both appointments and terminations of contracts, there are grounds for having the staff represented on the committee, at least when it is performing the second of these two functions. The alternative solution is to have two committees. This alternative presents certain disadvantages. The type of man suited for the one task should be suited for the other; in both cases senior officials for senior posts are required and the number of such officials is limited;

[1] There may be more justification for having representatives of the staff on certain other administrative committees. A relatively junior member of the staff might, for instance, prove valuable on a regrading committee, because of his special knowledge of certain classes of work. But in such cases it is not the collective opinion of the staff that is sought but that special knowledge, and this can best be secured by appointing the right person, selecting him if need be after consultation with a representative of the Staff Committee. This problem lies, however, rather outside the main subject of this chapter.

when a contract has to be terminated it is likely to mean, though it does not necessarily do so, that an initial mistake was made and it is salutary that a committee's errors should recoil on it.

The reasons for advocating the presence of staff representatives when the termination of contracts is under consideration are not only the dictates of logic. An act of judgement is required regarding conduct or efficiency or both, and that judgement must be based on certain standards. It is wholly desirable that the staff in their role as employees should be concerned about both developing and upholding those standards; for their representatives to serve on such a committee is at once beneficial to the staff on account of its educative influence and to the administration because the risk of criticism is obviated and common standards are evolved.

These principles, I suggest, are clear; by what means they can best find expression in a committee system must depend on the size and nature of the international organization.

I have assumed that there must be some form of committee to deal with the termination of contracts in all circumstances. It is obvious that the head of an international administration neither can in practice deal with each case himself, nor should on paper give the appearance of doing so. Nor should he shift the responsibility on to the unprotected shoulders of his personnel officer. A major weakness of the UN staff rules lay in the fact that no machinery other than boards of appeal was established by them to deal with the termination of contracts when misconduct was not alleged. With a view to filling this gap in part at any rate the Secretary General set up in 1954 a special advisory board composed of a chairman appointed on the nomination of the President of the International Court of Justice and four members appointed by himself in agreement with the Staff Committee. The major functions of this body are to advise the Secretary General on cases relating to the termination of contracts when the integrity of a member of the staff is in doubt and when termination seems to be in the interest of good administration.

The third question raised above related to the development of autonomous standards. When an international organization is composed of Member States which normally apply the same ethical standards in human relations, no great difficulty presents itself. The Secretariat can be assumed to represent an average cross-section of opinion with typical and broadly similar views about what is right or wrong, and from its treatment of cases through an appropriate

committee system a body of precedents, of case law, will grow, reflecting broad principles or standards and constituting more specific criteria to be employed subsequently. The Administrative Tribunal composed of independent legal personalities constitutes a useful check on the opinion of the staff and a useful co-ordinating body when it serves more than one international organization.

But when the organization is composed of states with widely different standards, grave difficulties may present themselves. If the Secretariat mirrors the membership, it will not have common values, and national prejudice may outweigh any principle of equity. In these circumstances the head of the administration cannot start with regulations employing such vague terms as misconduct or wilful negligence and trust his own staff to develop its equity law. He must, as we saw in Section 7, begin by requesting some independent body approved by the Assembly to elaborate standards. The greater the risk of outside pressure, therefore, the less is the chance of the autonomous standards of the Secretariat proving an effective defence against pressure brought to bear by any Member State acting alone. In these circumstances the head of the administration will be forced to rely to a greater extent than in a homogeneous organization upon non-secretariat machinery.

Before turning to this external machinery it may be well to summarize briefly some of the conclusions reached regarding the internal.

First, then, it would seem unwise to assume that there is any one pattern of machinery appropriate to all international organizations whatever their size or function.

Secondly, the head of the administration must maintain his independence if, as I believe should always be the case, he is constitutionally the one individual ultimately responsible for the administration.

Hence it follows that such committees as he appoints must be advisory to him and not executive.

For the enforcement of the regulations at least two committees would appear to be desirable—a committee to consider administrative cases and a committee to consider judicial cases.

The former, when considering the termination of contracts, should include amongst its members representatives of the staff, and the latter should always include such members.

It may in addition be desirable to have special committees to deal with promotions, with grading of posts, and with other similar questions. It may, when the staff is large, be worth while to have

some secretariat court of appeal. But these are matters for which it is wiser not to attempt to formulate any general principles.

Whatever the committee structure, it is wise to set it out quite clearly and fully in the regulations, so that the staff may know how it is governed and what share it has by right in that government.

In order to adapt the regulations to changing conditions and to obviate so far as possible all sources of friction, there must be some consultative mechanism between the administration and representatives of the staff, or, failing this, some form of co-operative committee in the interest and for the welfare of the staff.

In order to render the advice complete, a judicial committee should be empowered to report on the whole case, including the specific action to be taken, basing its judgements on a consideration both of the facts of the case and of the terms of the relevant regulations.

In an organization whose membership includes states with widely different ethical systems, the secretariat-committee structure will prove to have only limited value in developing autonomous standards; it will possess only a partial faith in those standards, give only a partial support to them, and for these reasons will afford a weak defence against outside pressures. In these circumstances the external machinery becomes of vital importance.

(b) *External*

When a government endeavours to impose its standards on an international organization or threatens that organization's smooth working by restricting in some way the freedom of its personnel, a political issue arises which may require to be dealt with promptly. It is clearly undesirable that sole responsibility for handling such issues should fall on the shoulders of the head of the administration and that he should be exposed to attack from spokesmen of the government in question or from the press. He needs some political body with which he can discuss, from which he can obtain advice, with the aid of which he can negotiate. He needs a body with which he can on occasion share responsibility.

The constitutions of all international organizations except the United Nations have made provision for such a body, have set up a council or a board with certain administrative powers. In the United Nations there is no executive board. The Secretary General it is true might consult the International Civil Service Advisory Board or the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

But the former should be concerned rather with the elaboration of principles of personnel policy than with disputes or day-to-day administrative events. The latter, though more familiar with the actual details of administration, is primarily concerned to ensure that that administration is conducted as economically as possible, and for that very reason may not enjoy the confidence of the staff sufficiently to render it the ideal organ to use on these occasions. Moreover, appointed primarily to watch the budget, it does not possess exactly the political status required.

It is not my purpose in this book to discuss constitution building, but only principles of administration. Whatever the right constitutional solution may be, there is clearly in any international organization, especially in an organization with an unharmonious membership, need for a body which can discuss administrative problems at the political level. To be fully trusted by the Assembly, it should reflect in so far as possible the forces at play in the Assembly; it should be composed of persons some of whom are likely to be members of Assembly delegations and some of whom are familiar with the day to day administrative problems. All the executive boards of specialized agencies meet these requirements in varying degrees and the Governing Body of the ILO in an exceptional degree. There is nothing in the Charter to prevent the Assembly of the United Nations appointing a committee with appropriate powers. Until some such action is taken the Secretary General will remain unduly exposed both to external pressure to act according to the wishes of individual governments and to unavoidable criticism.

There is need for such an organ not only to act as a rampart against external pressure, but to obviate some of those risks arising from Assembly discussions mentioned earlier in this chapter. Certain questions are best ventilated in public. If, for instance, a government makes a practice of refusing visas to international officials, thus impeding the work of the organization, a political issue arises so vital to the organization that to endeavour to settle it in private and to avoid public debate would clearly not benefit the organization. On the contrary, if such impediments are systematically imposed by a host government, the need for transferring the headquarters of the organization to another country may well have to be faced. But the vast majority of questions affecting the personnel and a large proportion of diplomatic issues are best settled behind closed doors.

The first concern of the head of the administration and of all his advisory bodies at whatever level when dealing with the staff is to maintain morale, and morale cannot be maintained if members of the staff are treated as shuttlecocks for government battledores in public exhibitions of political contest. Moreover, the really important issues that should be discussed openly are much more likely to be satisfactorily settled if the Assembly is relieved of unnecessary details and can concentrate on those major issues.

In addition to a council or an executive board there is need for a court of appeal composed of independent legal experts and this need has been quite generally recognized.

There has been considerable discussion about the powers that such a court of appeal should enjoy, about the cases which should fall within its jurisdiction, about its right to review the facts of any case, about its right to determine standards of conduct and the principles of law or equity that it should enforce, about its right to reverse decisions of the head of the administration and to determine freely the compensation to be granted when it considers compensation justified, and about the finality of its judgements.

Into these discussions have been injected from time to time puffs of emotionalism which have tended to obfuscate the crucial problem.[1] That problem is, of course, how to establish rules for the staff and machinery for their enforcement such as to afford an international organization the best possible chance of obtaining and maintaining an efficient civil service; and, as we have seen, the efforts to solve this problem will not be successful unless the machinery set up affords protection against the risk of failure by the staff, the head of the administration, a Member State, or the constitutional organs of the international body to adhere to certain norms of behaviour. I propose to consider the points enumerated in the preceding paragraph with this objective of an efficient civil service constantly in mind.

(i) *The scope of the Tribunal's jurisdiction.* Curiously enough none of the staff rules or regulations define with complete clarity the scope of the Administrative Tribunal's jurisdiction. The League regulations and also those of the ILO state with admirable clarity the conditions under which an appeal may be made or a case must be submitted to their internal judicial committees. As we have seen in the League an official has a right to appeal, if his contract was

[1] See Discussions of Fifth Committee of UN General Assembly, November–December 1953.

terminated after an examination of his septennial reports, and no disciplinary measures involving a suspension of annual increments or dismissal could be taken until the opinion of the Judicial Committee had been ascertained. But no reference is made anywhere in the staff rules or regulations to the Administrative Tribunal. The ILO regulations state baldly that an official has a right to appeal to the Tribunal as provided for in the Tribunal's Statutes. The Statutes state that the Tribunal shall be competent to hear complaints alleging non-observance, in substance or in form, of the terms of appointments of officials or of the provisions of the staff regulations. The League's Judicial Committee, it will be recalled, is formally instructed to be guided only by legal considerations. This implies that it could only report on cases in which the issue at stake was the non-observance of the terms of appointment and the provisions of the staff regulations. The logical procedure therefore would have been to insert in the regulations an article to the effect that the official might appeal from the Judicial Committee to the Administrative Tribunal, and this logic should be adopted in all staff regulations. As I have said already, what is important is that the procedure and the machinery should be laid down quite clearly in the staff regulations so that the official may understand when he signs his contract what his rights are.

The regulations of the ILO state with better logic that its equivalent body, the Joint Committee, shall include in its report a statement of the *de facto* and *de jure* grounds for its conclusions. The need for considering the facts of each case has been discussed earlier in this Section. No committee and no tribunal can report on the law or equity of a case without a knowledge of the facts. To argue, as has been argued, that the Tribunal must accept the facts presented to it by the administration without ascertaining whether there is any evidence to support them leaves the member of the staff quite destitute of any protection. It would permit the head of the administration to comply with all stipulations regarding procedure, to ignore the advice received from the internal judicial or other committees he is compelled to consult, and then to submit such a version of the facts to the Tribunal as he deemed would best justify his action. In such circumstances the Tribunal would be left impotent and the staff would have no assurance of equitable treatment. What is needed is that both the internal committee and the Tribunal should be entitled in the one case to advise on and in the other to adjudicate whatever is in dispute,

fact or law; and this being so, again the logical procedure is that there should be a right of appeal from the one to the other and that that right should be specifically stated in the regulations.

The staff regulations of the UN like those of the ILO confine themselves to the statement that officials may appeal to the Tribunal in accordance with the Tribunal's Statutes. But the terminology in the Statutes is such as to imply at any rate that the scope of its jurisdiction is similar to that of the Joint Appeals Board and therefore that the appeal is from the latter to the former. The fact versus law issue is, however, eschewed in both the Regulations and the Statutes; both state that the body in question shall decide its own competence. That statement has not, as we shall see, prevented the right of the Tribunal to do so being called in question.

(ii) *Law, Equity, and Standards.* In the second judgement it gave the Administrative Tribunal of the League discussed at some length the principles of law which it should apply. The staff regulations and rules constitute the basic law. But they are, as we have seen, not sufficiently precise to give a clear answer in all cases. To them the Tribunal added in second rank existing agreed decisions, existing principles (standards) already agreed between the administration and the staff, and finally general principles of law and equity; and it added later[1] the generally recognized principles of administrative law. The second Secretary General of the UN has argued that it is not for the Tribunal to evolve a body of law, but for the chief executive officer, by his actions, to create as it were a body of common law, while the role of the Tribunal should be to provide a check upon his actions. This contention has historical support in the sense that the number of cases submitted to the Tribunal prior to the last war was not sufficient to allow any considerable body of case law to be created, and a common law and practice did in fact evolve as a result of administrative decisions. But, if the Tribunal does act as a check on the head of the administration, it follows that its rulings may reverse one or another administrative decision, and in so far as these rulings constitute precedents for the future, they and not the administrative decisions will determine the standards. If this were not so, there could be no effective appeal against decisions that were arbitrary. Administrative decisions, in fact, become basic standards if they have been formally endorsed by an Assembly or by the Tribunal and, more vaguely through the passage of time, if no appeal has been made

[1] Judgement 4.

against them. It is to the advantage of the head of the administration (and of the whole staff) that the standards should be as firmly established as possible, and for the reasons given earlier in this Section he must look to the Tribunal for aid against external pressures. The Tribunal, indeed, over time is one of the bodies, and may in a divided world prove the most important body, by which international standards are gradually developed. That fact should affect our judgement on the next disputed issue I wish to discuss, namely, whether it should be entitled to reverse a decision to terminate a contract and to compel the head of the administration to reinstate an official whom he has dismissed.

(iii) *The Tribunal's power to reinstate officials.* Two distinct questons arise: First, whether the Tribunal should have the right to rescind, and, secondly, whether the head of the administration should be entitled to refuse to reinstate an official the termination of whose contract has been rescinded by the Tribunal.

If the head of the administration is forced to reinstate, it is obvious that his administrative powers will be seriously curtailed and there is a risk also that the reinstated official may prove a permanent cause of discord. What advantage is there then in allowing the Tribunal to give an instruction that is perhaps more likely than not to be cancelled? Obviously such action and counter-action will not prove beneficial to the morale of the staff.

To give the right to rescind to an Administrative Tribunal may be vindicated in the two extreme cases that may arise. An honest mistake may have been made by the Administration. New facts may become known to the Tribunal making this mistake apparent. In such circumstances it may be argued that the sooner the mistake is rectified the better, and that to give the right to take that decision to the Tribunal, while causing no friction, will expedite justice. This argument is valid; but is not of great importance, for it may be assumed that the Administration would be willing in the circumstances to rectify its mistake itself without undue delay. The other extreme case is when the action taken by the head of the organization is patently unjust. Let us assume that under pressure from a government and against the advice received from his secretariat administrative or judicial committees he summarily dismisses members of his staff of a certain nationality, applying standards to them different from those applied to other nationalities. There is no compensation to individuals that can rectify such a situation. The only possible rectification

is annulment of the action he has taken, and in such circumstances to empower him to disannul the annulment is clearly futile.

It does not follow, however, that the ultimate power in what may prove to be extremely important administrative issues should lie with a legal Tribunal. The imaginary example I have given is essentially political, and it is the political cases that are of real importance. No serious problems arise if an official is dismissed for alleged wife beating, misappropriation of funds, or gross indecency, and officials have been forced to leave one organization or another on all these counts; but when partisan political principles are substituted for international standards in any administration, the very existence of an international organization may be threatened. The ultimate power in such circumstances should lie therefore not with the head of the administration and not with a legal tribunal, but with the political bodies of the organization. It must lie ultimately with the Assembly. But the Assemblies of most specialized agencies only meet once in two years. The right solution of this problem would seem to be, therefore, that the Tribunals should have the power to reinstate officials and that the head of the organization should have the power to refuse to accept reinstatement if, and only if, his council or executive board approves. If it does approve, the Tribunal should, of course, determine freely the special compensation to be given to the officials whose contracts are thus terminated. Such a solution would curtail not the normal administrative responsibility of the head of the organization, but his irresponsibility. It would prove of real value to the honest and wise head, for it would protect him from attack without seriously limiting his powers.

An administrative tribunal is set up in order to answer the question whether an administrative act is justified by the regulations and, if it is not justified, what damages should be paid. The main reason for empowering it to reverse the decision really lies in the political risks we have been discussing. Were it not for these risks, it would probably suffice if it were empowered to suggest to the administration that it may wish to reconsider its decision. When it rescinds a decision it is in fact taking administrative as well as legal action, and it is for this reason that its action should not be final and irreversible.

(iv) *The right of the Tribunal to determine compensation.* If importance is attached, as I believe it should be, to the function of the Tribunal in gradually developing a case law and acting as a final check on the standards applied by others, to limit its powers in any

way is a serious matter that requires the most careful consideration. If the head of the administration endeavours to induce the Assembly to impose limits on the compensation it can grant, he may find that he is thereby weakening his strongest line of defence against sectional pressures. Until standards are very fully developed and established, errors of judgement by the administration may always occur. The regulations, as has already been observed, are not and cannot be a detailed code of laws; they are guiding principles to which in all cases principles of equity must be applied. One of the means by which the Tribunal indicates the importance it attaches to specific cases and the points of principle that those cases raise is the compensation it awards. To impose limits on the permissible compensation is to impose limits on the Tribunal's power of expression and on the emphasis with which it can underline its views. It must tend to assimilate cases which in the judgement of the Tribunal require widely different treatment.

On the other hand, when a limit is imposed on its power to illustrate by a monetary value the importance it attaches to certain principles by the compensation it grants, the Tribunal can always expound its attitude in the wording of its judgements. Moreover, the determination of just compensation is by no means easy. Should the Tribunal, for instance, take into consideration only the value of the job lost, or should it consider also the value of a job that an official may have abandoned when joining an international organization? If it should include the latter (which I greatly doubt), will not the awards tend to be greater for nations of rich countries than of small? These are considerations that have nothing to do with the degree of injustice on account of which compensation is granted. In view of these uncertainties, an Assembly may well feel justified in indicating the range of compensation which seems to it suitable and the reason for its views, while leaving the Tribunal free to formulate its own judgement in each case. Such a general directive is open to none of the objections that may be raised against a definite ceiling.

I am aware that all the views I have expressed in this section on the Tribunal have been quite violently disputed and it may be useful to examine the grounds for and the nature of this disputation. Both are to be found in a speech[1] delivered in the Fifth Committee of the Eighth Assembly of the United Nations that may well become a classic in the annals of that organization. It affords a perfect

[1] 3 December 1953.

illustration of certain of the dangers I have been discussing in this chapter.

The argument may be summarized as follows. The Tribunal is and should be, not a court, but an administrative body subsidiary to the Assembly. Although its Statutes state that its judgements shall be final and without appeal and that, if its competence is extended to a specialized agency, that agency must agree to be bound by its judgements, these stipulations do not imply that the Assembly is debarred from reviewing or reversing its decisions or compelled to vote credits for compensation when compensation is adjudicated. The Assembly, should it decide to review, would not act as judge in a case to which it was a party, because the contracts are between the officials and, not the Assembly, but the head of the administration. As a subsidiary administrative body the Tribunal should have no right to consider either whether an official's services are satisfactory or the facts on a disciplinary case.

The most important of the many issues raised in this contention is whether the Assembly should have the right to review, reverse, or ignore the Tribunal's decisions or whether the statement that judgement is final should mean what it says. I shall not concern myself with the legal argument. If an organ of the state, whether king or parliament, argues that it is above the law, the law ceases to have any relevance to it and becomes *ipso facto* inadequate as a strut to support the claim to absolutism. Indeed, the only two grounds on which claims to absolute power can in logic be defended are divine right[1] and the fact of the power to be absolute. There can, I think, be no doubt that the Assembly of the UN could, if it would, prove its power to be absolute *vis-à-vis* the staff. The point of importance, as I stated at the beginning of this section, is not the legal issue, but the effect that the acceptance of the doctrine that the Assembly can review the judgement it dislikes is likely to have on the chances of obtaining and maintaining an efficient and a loyal staff. Obviously, if the contract is really between the individual and the head of the administration, the latter should be liable for compensation in the event of a breach of contract, and, unless he is covered by a guarantee fund, candidates for this post are likely to become scarce or contracts unenforceable. If contracts are unenforceable, candidates

[1] James I of England argued with good Scottish logic that the king could do what he liked with his people 'who are not permitted to make any resistance but by *flight*, as we may see by the example of brute beasts and unreasonable creatures, among whom we never read or hear of any resistance to their parents, *except among vipers*'.

for other posts in an international organization are likely to become scarce.

Whatever the legal arguments may be, the staff member is compelled to view the Assembly as his employer because it alone can vote the credits. If the Assembly arrogates to itself the right to reverse judgements, it follows that the staff has no legal recourse against its employer and no *a priori* grounds for expecting just treatment. The Assembly is sovereign and there is nothing in the Charter or in the Constitutions of the specialized agencies to prevent it taking a decision that it should become its own Tribunal. If it did so, however, it could not expect to have either a competent or a loyal staff. To be worthy of loyalty, it is necessary to be loyal. If the Assembly demands the right to reverse judgements, it means that it wishes to have the power to reverse those which are unpleasant to it, those, for instance, that cost it money. The members of the staff can have no such right. There is a complete imparity of rights.

It does not follow, however, that the decision of the Tribunal should necessarily be final and that there should be no right of appeal. The Tribunal is composed of human beings, who like all human beings including judges, are liable to error. The Statutes of the Tribunal of the ILO provide for such appeal. The Governing Body and the Administrative Board of the Pensions Fund have the right to challenge a decision of the Tribunal confirming its jurisdiction or a decision they consider to be vitiated by a fundamental fault in the procedure followed. When an appeal is lodged it goes to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion and that opinion is binding. The organization is thus protected against the risk of legal error, not by one of its organs claiming to be above the law, but by an agreed process of law. All parties benefit by such an arrangement: the staff because it reduces the risk of political interference in judicial matters, the head of the administration because it provides an additional opportunity to him to justify the administration's assessment of the case, the political organs of the institution for the same reason and because it relieves, or should relieve, them of all temptation to substitute politics for justice, the Member State because it should relieve it likewise, and all collectively because it increases the chance of maintaining an efficient and loyal staff.

I have deliberately refrained from basing my argument on the legal case because even more fundamental issues are at stake. It is satisfactory to record, however, that the International Court of Justice

stated in its advisory opinion that 'the General Assembly has not the right on any grounds to refuse to give effect to an award of compensation made by the Administrative Tribunal of the United Nations in favour of a staff member of the United Nations whose contract of service has been terminated without his assent'.[1] Moreover, on the more fundamental issue it expressed the opinion that the 'General Assembly itself, in view of its composition and functions, could hardly act as a judicial organ . . . all the more so as one party to the dispute is the United Nations Organization itself'.[2]

[1] *I.C.J. Reports*, 1954, p. 62.
[2] Ibid., p. 56.

PART II

THE MACHINE IN MOTION

VII

THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES

1. *The Importance of International Committees*

ALL government that is not dictatorial is conducted by means of committees, large and small. But committees seem to play a more important role in international governmental organizations than they do in national government, and in a sense they do. Since there is little law to administer international officials at headquarters are mainly occupied with research, preparing proposals for consideration by committees and handling committees and conferences, or with obtaining and giving technical advice. As international committees themselves can as a rule do no more than advise, little action derives automatically from their deliberations; another stage is required before action can be taken, that of the formal assent of governments and their decision to act. In consequence in any international organization, except such executive institutions as the International Bank and the Relief Agencies, committee and advisory work is the alpha and omega of a major part of their activities.

There are exceptions to this general rule. Apart from regional organizations, the Security Council with its military powers and its Military Staff Committee is by far the most important exception. But, as remarked in Chapter II, from time to time governments set up by international agreement an administrative organ to furnish relief, to control the execution of a convention, or to control an area. These exceptions, however, though important, are not numerous and the functions of the administrative organs are as a rule limited in time.

2. *The Functions of International Committees*

It would seem at first sight to follow from what was said in the preceding section that the function of international committees must be advisory and nothing more. Most international committees are advisory. But in fact their functions vary widely and each type of committee poses distinct administrative problems. I am not aware that any writer has attempted to make a scientific classification of international committees and I shall not attempt to do so; but for practical purposes it is necessary to distinguish between at least the following:

(*a*) Strictly scientific committees instructed to seek a solution of a specific problem, such as certain of the professional committees of WHO or the League's Technical Commission on Nutrition or the Tariff Nomenclature Committees.

(*b*) Advisory technical committees such as the Economic, Financial, and Health Committees of the League and the Social and the Economic, Employment and Development Commissions of the UN or the ILO Committee of Experts on Social Policy in Non-Metropolitan Areas.

(*c*) Committees similar to the above but vested with some executive or quasi-executive powers, such as the Financial Committee of the League and a number of the early committees of UNESCO.

(*d*) Administrative committees concerned with the internal administration of the organization, such as those dealing with budget estimates, pensions, or the investment of international funds.

(*e*) Administrative committees charged with the execution of a convention or the administration of an area, such as the Opium Board or the pre-war Saar Governing Commission.

(*f*) Committees appointed to prepare for a conference.

(*g*) The tripartite or bipartite committees of the ILO.

(*h*) Committees of a political character dealing with 'technical' questions, such as ECOSOC and its regional commissions and some of the sub-committees and working parties of the commissions.

(*i*) Political committees, such as the Security and Trusteeship Councils of the UN, the Council of the League, and the Councils or Executive Boards of specialized agencies.

(*j*) Political committees with special investigatory, security, or

pacificatory functions, such as UN's Greek Frontier Incidents Commission, its Special Committee on Palestine, or the Security Council's Truce Commission for Palestine.

(*k*) Assembly committees, i.e. the 'Committees of the whole house' into which the Assemblies divide themselves.

This list is far from complete. It does not include, for instance, committees intended to be simply a clearing-house of experience; nor does it distinguish between UN's permanent advisory commissions and its '*ad hoc*' bodies. The first may perhaps be best viewed as a series of independent meetings; but the distinction between the second and the third, between 'permanent' and *ad hoc* committees, to which I shall refer later, is of real importance. I propose in this chapter to consider the role of independent advisory committees to Council, the first three classes in the above list, as distinguished from Council sub-committees and working parties.

3. *The Functions of Advisory Committees*

The purpose of all advisory committees is to clarify a problem, reach an agreement on it if possible, and tender advice expressing, again if possible, a collective opinion. The purpose is always to advise and not to decide; and in most cases, though not in all, the advice takes the form of a recommendation for action by some body other than that tendering it. Purely scientific or fact-finding committees may not be concerned with action; advisory committees with some executive functions may advise that they be empowered to act. In all cases, however, the clarification and the collective opinion and advice are sought.

This collective opinion may take either of two forms. It may be an objective opinion reached as the result of a reasoned discussion; it may be a compromise reached as the result of inter-governmental negotiations. If the former is sought the advisory committee should be composed of persons serving in an individual capacity; if the latter by persons representing governments and working under instructions.

In the latter case, however, it is as a rule wiser not to appoint an advisory committee at all, but a sub-committee to which certain powers are delegated. Today when so much inter-governmental policy is made at the administrative level sub-committees composed of officials nominated by their governments to agree practices may play an important role. Most of the subsidiary bodies of ECE, for

instance, are of this nature. The arguments in favour of composing advisory committees of independent experts applies to them only when they are or claim to be more than a group of officials endeavouring to reach a working agreement on some limited administrative issue.

There has I believe been a failure on the part of international organizations since the war to appreciate the role that may be played by advisory committees and especially by advisory committees composed of persons serving in a personal capacity. Even ICAO, one of the few bodies that does enjoy the benefit of a carefully planned system of advisory committees, decided after considerable discussion, in my opinion wrongly, to compose them all of government representatives. I shall, when discussing advisory committees composed of persons serving in a personal capacity, be compelled therefore to take my illustrations mainly from the League and the ILO. The ILO, however, for reasons explained later, has only a limited need for such bodies.

Individuals serving in a personal capacity when discussing possible international agreements cannot ignore national interests and policies, for advice given is futile if there is little chance of its being accepted. They must assess the importance they should attach to the various national aims, prejudices, and interests and treat them as part of the data of their deliberations. The fact that they do not represent governments, but rather good sense, does not imply, as is often assumed, that they must give 'technical advice' only. I shall argue later that on the contrary the strongest case for an advisory committee of government nominees is likely to present itself when the subject is rather scientific than political.

A standing advisory committee should advise a council or board or in certain cases governments, and not the head of the administration. In the early days of an international organization it is conceivable that a standing committee to advise the Secretariat about the organization of its work may play a useful role. The standing committees of FAO seem to have believed this to be their major task. But once a Secretariat has learnt its job, such a committee is more likely to impede work than promote efficiency.

Ad hoc committees set up to give advice regarding possible lines of policy should likewise give that advice to the council or board and not to the head of the administration. The Secretariat may require from time to time to consult experts on points of fact, but the political

organ of the institution should consult them regarding policy. I shall revert to this question in Chapter VIII, but would add one qualification at once. When a Secretariat is responsible for promoting research it will in all probability need to consult outside experts about both the subjects to be chosen and the persons to whom the work should be entrusted. These in a sense are policy questions. If council is unwilling to give the Secretariat a free hand in the selection of its advisers, the best procedure may be for it to approve panels of experts from which the Secretariat may draw at will, and naturally in such circumstances the groups chosen would report directly to the Secretariat. I discuss this question of research in Chapter XI.

Advisory committees of experts are sometimes set up not so much to suggest means by which problems may be solved through international agreement, as to suggest that certain problems should be considered; they are intended that is, to be a source of policy ideas. All standing advisory committees must in fact have the power to put forward suggestions of this nature, for frequently the solution of one problem is dependent on the prior solution of another; but of some little more than this is demanded. Again what is sought is reasoned and collective advice. A committee which is intended to be simply a spring-head of ideas can, however, be quite differently composed from a working body.

4. *The Four Major Conditions for the Success of the Work of International Advisory Committees*

The success of a committee in achieving the purpose for which it was created is measured, in the long run at any rate, by the extent to which the advice it gives leads to the results it expects. This implies that it has correctly diagnosed the problem, has, when a course of action is suggested, proposed the appropriate course, and has exercised sufficient influence to persuade whoever is responsible for policy to act on its advice. The major conditions of success are:

(*a*) that the committee acquires a corporate sense, a pride in itself, and a consciousness of its responsibilities;

(*b*) that its members are competent to deal with the subjects on its agenda;

(*c*) that owing to the personalities which compose it and/or to the standard of its reports it has sufficient authority to induce those to whom its reports are submitted (and in the last instance governments) to act on its advice;

(*d*) that the committee members receive in adequate time before their meetings carefully prepared memoranda, which at once summarize the essential facts relevant to the points on the agenda and constitute a guide to their discussions.

I mention corporate sense first because a standing committee in any case which fails to acquire such a sense is not only useless but a menace. The international administrator can help to promote these four conditions of success by (i) ensuring that the terms of reference of each committee are defined in such a way as to render the selection of suitable members possible; (ii) determining the criteria for the selection of suitable members; (iii) establishing suitable machinery for selection; (iv) organizing the work of each committee in such a way as to afford the best chances for the development of a corporate sense by ensuring that sufficient care has been given to the preparation of the committee's documentation. I propose to deal with the first three of these points in this chapter and with the last two in the next chapter.

The terms of reference which advisory committees receive will, indeed, affect not only the work of each individual body but the whole committee structure, and the committee structure in any international organization is or should be largely determined by the nature and activities of the council which these committees are intended to serve.

5. *The Structure of Advisory Committees*

One of the most difficult tasks that the head of an international administration has to perform is that of advising the council or board what type of committee it should appoint when it wishes to obtain an independent opinion from some group of persons other than the Secretariat. Obviously when a council is not itself competent or when it is not interested and active in some question, it must seek external assistance and, if the question is a continuing one, it will require some form of standing committee. I shall consider the relationship between the constitutions and activities of councils and boards and the form of committees in Chapter IX. Here I want to consider in a more general way the relative merits and demerits of different forms of independent advisory committees as distinguished from council sub-committees.

Committees may be either standing or *ad hoc*, as the term is, or a combination of the two. In judging the relative merits of any form it

is well to remember that the major function of all forms is to give objective advice regarding facts or regarding a problem and the principles on which it may be solved. The more important reasons for giving preference to standing committees when circumstances permit are, I suggest, the following:

1. More time is likely to be available for selecting the members, and if an initial mistake is made, it can be corrected later by not renewing a member when his first period of tenure runs out. An *ad hoc* committee may be ruined by a persistent, talkative, and opinionated member.

2. A sense of corporate responsibility is much more likely to develop amongst the members of a standing committee than among the members of a committee reporting only once.

3. A standing committee will, if carefully selected and adequately served by its Secretariat and supported by its council, acquire a status and authority which give its reports weight and persuasive influence.

4. The success of any committee depends largely on the preparatory work done for it in advance of its meetings. The work done for a standing committee is likely to be superior to that done for an *ad hoc* committee because the Secretariat knows what is wanted and does not have to guess what may be required.

All the four conditions of success mentioned in Section 4 are therefore more likely to be fulfilled for this than for any other type of committee. It has, however, other merits.

5. It should not suffer from the risk that its terms of reference are too narrow to allow the real problem to be adequately discussed or so framed as just to miss the essential point. Its vision and its reasoning are not therefore likely to be restricted.

6. It can thrash out a subject that requires long discussion and time for reflection over a series of meetings. Its work is thus likely to be much more thorough than that of an *ad hoc* committee unless it is understood at the outset that the latter is justified in adjourning its discussions at appropriate points and holding a number of meetings. Even when this condition is satisfied, however, a standing committee can with much greater ease help in the solution of a continuing problem by proposing a series of measures to be adopted at intervals as one or another issue becomes clarified and ripe for action. There is a tendency for certain councils, ECOSOC in particular, to discuss and rediscuss questions as a whole on which there is no sort of hope

that global agreement will be reached. A standing committee, treating such questions dispassionately, can break them down into their component parts and, if any advance is possible, suggest how, when, and where. An *ad hoc* committee faced by such a question can scarcely do more than either pick out such points as may be ripe for agreement at one moment or suggest an all-round theoretical solution, which has little chance of adoption. It cannot be expected to propound a progressive solution, for conditions will change after it has ceased to exist.

7. Similarly a standing committee can keep under review a question which is likely to become critical from time to time, such, for instance, as the prices or stocks of raw materials, and can elaborate in advance the principles on which a solution might be sought, adapting those principles to the actual circumstances as occasion demands. It can, and an *ad hoc* committee cannot, be prepared to meet a crisis.

8. It can, similarly, keep under survey a scientific problem, on which work of an analytical and experimental character is being actively pursued, such for instance as nutritional standards, the use of atomic energy for industrial purposes, or fundamental education, and report on progress made and measures which might be applied. *Ad hoc* committees can only report from time to time as and when a council or board becomes itself sufficiently aware of the problem to demand a report.

9. Similarly, too, it can undertake continuing work on questions of administrative adjustment which can only be accomplished gradually. A series of reports by different committees on means for promoting comparability in national statistics would merely replace one form of confusion by another. But much can be and has been achieved in this field by standing committees.

10. The reports of standing committees are in fact likely to be characterized by a logic and coherence which must be lacking in those *ad hoc* committees. Indeed one of the dangers of the latter is that, composed of different groups of members, and receiving terms of reference which may be distinct from but still tangential to each other, viewing their problems therefore from different angles, they give contradictory advice or advice which seems contradictory, even though in a wider setting, on which they are not asked to report, it is not.

11. A standing committee has, moreover, the advantage and the merit that it can revert to a proposal when through the pressure of

other business or possibly owing to a misunderstanding council has failed to pursue it. The report of an *ad hoc* committee is thrown on the water to sink or swim; that of a standing committee is part of a series. If no action has been taken because in fact the proposal was politically premature the committee can revert to it when the political atmosphere changes; if no action was taken by mishap, it can do so at once.

12. Because standing committees are likely to display a logic and coherence in the advice they give, the recommendations they make regarding new subjects for investigation are more likely to prove fruitful than those derived from other sources. Standing committees are not likely to waste the time of council with chimerical ideas if only because they know that, if they do, they will probably later waste their own time.

13. Finally, when a committee is charged with work which involves continuing relations with a government or group of governments, as did that of the Financial Committee of the League or does that of the ILO Expert Committee on the Application of Conventions, it must be given a long mandate.

Though the merits and advantages of standing committees are numerous, it does not follow that all questions should be referred to them in preference to *ad hoc* committees or indeed that every council or board requires them at all. Circumstances frequently arise which call for the appointment of a special committee to report and report once only.

1. When information is required by council on the present state of knowledge about a specific question there is no point in having recourse to a standing committee unless the question falls clearly within its special competence. The choice lies between the Secretariat and an *ad hoc* committee. On this choice the head of the administration should be able to advise, and he will no doubt frequently advise that a committee is required. A committee is most likely to prove appropriate when council seeks an authoritative report on any point regarding the present state of scientific knowledge and the Secretariat when it seeks a statement comparing national administrative practices. But no firm rule can be laid down. On many legal questions, for instance, the Secretariat may advise; on others recourse must be had to a panel of jurists.

2. An *ad hoc* committee is likely to prove more suitable than a

standing committee whenever the point in question demands a specialized knowledge not likely to be found in a group of persons selected to deal with wider issues, and is likely to prove most successful if its terms of reference are defined with precision.

3. On the other hand it may prove necessary to appoint an *ad hoc* committee when the question is so wide as to overlap the competence of two or more standing committees. Such a procedure will, however, be appropriate only if the question is one on which a single report, as contrasted with a continuing process of study and discussion, will prove of real value to the policy maker. Failing this condition it is preferable to request the existing standing committees to appoint a joint mixed committee to report on and later pursue the question.

4. From time to time a council may require a report not so much to elucidate a problem that it has to solve as to enlighten the public regarding a policy already agreed in principle. In such circumstances it may find it advantageous to appoint a special committee composed of persons of outstanding authority able and willing to lift the question out of the arena of politics and expound the scientific or social grounds for the line of policy proposed. This was the real purpose of, for instance, the League Mixed Committee on Nutrition, to which I shall refer again later.

5. Finally, when a Secretariat is inexperienced or ignorant, council may be compelled to work for a time largely through small committees of experts. The need for such committees is sure to arise when a new international institution is founded.

There is an obverse side to the merits of both standing and *ad hoc* committees. As we shall see later in this chapter, very real difficulties present themselves in determining the terms of reference of standing committees and in selecting suitable persons to deal with them. Moreover, terms of reference, however appropriate when first drawn up, may cease to be so under changing conditions, and great foresight is therefore required in determining the length of a committee's mandate and at what point the terms of reference and the composition of a committee should be modified. There is always a risk that a committee may be allowed to continue in existence too long, or that a council in a moment of dissatisfaction may render it worse than useless by putting it in cold storage. There is a still more serious, because more insidious, risk that standing committees, especially those that have acquired both a corporate sense and a recognized authority, may become tied to a single line of thought or doctrine, may cease to

be representative of changing conditions, may when they know they can agree by one avenue of approach cease to explore others, may stand on their heels and not on their toes.

A number of the limitations to the value of *ad hoc* committees have already been mentioned. Such committees are in fact only of value when policy can be aided by a single report on distinct, carefully selected, and defined questions. They are always a speculation because the members once chosen cannot be changed; when council is influenced by politics in making its choice, the gamble is hazardous, and even when it is not, if little time is allowed for selecting members, the risk of a mistake is enhanced: if much, the delay may prove costly.

With a view to meeting some of these difficulties there has been a tendency since the last world war to appoint panels of experts in advance from which small *ad hoc* committees may be selected as occasion demands. This solution had its origin in the so-called corresponding committees of the ILO and has been adopted as a general system by WHO. It presents a number of clear advantages. Council can satisfy all its political preoccupations by including whom it will on the panel without harm to anyone. The political nominee remains a member of the panel and is never invited to attend a meeting. As there are no obvious limits to the size of a panel it is possible to include on it more than one expert from the same country when it so happens that that country is outstanding in any field of knowledge. The Secretariat through its contacts with these panel members will be in a position to judge their competence and to select rapidly the most suitable group to deal with any question. Any group may be invited to meet repeatedly to advise on a continuing question and thus form a quasi-standing committee. Incompetent members can be easily dropped. As and when the terms of reference of a group change, new members can be added. The risk of a committee suffering from sclerosis is obviated. The system thus has the dual advantage of being flexible and immune from politics. It has, however, obvious shortcomings.

In order to render it immune from politics council must agree in advance that the groups should be convened by the head of the administration and not by it. The groups must therefore report to him and cannot acquire the same status and authority as a standing advisory body to council. The system is in fact a means for obviating some of the difficulties that the selection of *ad hoc* committees

presents; it is not a substitute for standing committees and is only suitable for general application by an organization which has little or no need for standing committees. WHO may well be such an organization. It is a convenient method of satisfying the *amour-propre* of countries which are not rich in highly qualified experts, and a convenient means for the Secretariat to obtain the technical advice it needs. But it cannot be employed when council requires an objective opinion on a question of policy, for in such circumstances council must choose its own advisers. If it chooses badly it will no doubt obtain poor advice; that risk cannot be obviated by depriving it of its right of choice.

There has, as I have said, been a misapprehension in recent years about the role that a standing committee of experts can and should play. It so happened that ECOSOC, the Governing Body of ILO, and the Council of FAO set up committees to study their advisory bodies which all reported in 1951. All were in varying degrees critical of their committees, and with justice. But only the ILO showed any understanding of the functions that standing committees should perform. Its reports insisted quite rightly that no committee should be set up unless it 'will fulfil a genuine and continuing need'[1] or retained unless it 'performs functions of substantial value in the context of the present programme of the organisation'.[2] They insist further that the conclusions of committees, whatever their form, should be addressed to the Governing Body and observe that

> The conclusions submitted by Committees for the consideration of the Governing Body may relate to
>
> (*a*) conclusions of policy for the consideration of Governments or, in the case of matters more appropriate for joint negotiation than for legislative action, for the consideration of employers' and workers' organisations;
>
> (*b*) conclusions of policy for the guidance of the International Labour Organisation in the conduct of its operational activities;
>
> (*c*) proposals for further consideration of a question by the International Labour Conference or by some other appropriate organ of the International Labour Organisation,[3]

or proposals and suggestions regarding further studies by the Office or the committee itself or for reference to the UN or other international organizations. These conclusions, they state, should be the

[1] Minutes of the Governing Body, 115th Session, Appendix VII, para. 4.
[2] Ibid., para. 5.
[3] Ibid., Annex para. 11.

'outcome of a full and free exchange of views between the members[1] . . . and should not normally take the form of resolutions'.[2] When discussing the functioning of one committee which it was desired to maintain as an expert body, although certain of its members were to be nominated by the employers' and workers' groups, the statement is made that any difference of opinion should not be settled by voting but should be reported to the Governing Body.

What was sought of a standing advisory committee of experts therefore was a collective opinion and an opinion, when the subject justified it, regarding policy. It was not simply an expert's reply to some question regarding scientific or administrative or legal facts, but an objective opinion by persons possessed of a knowledge of the relevant facts about what could best be done—a collective opinion, not a chance vote on some issue on which no collective opinion had matured. That is exactly the role that a standing advisory committee should play.

When discussing the committee structure the report favours the panel system for highly technical matters on grounds of economy and flexibility and suggests that it should be employed whenever appropriate, notably in cases in which a committee may have to deal with a wide range of questions within the same general field, but including problems of a highly specialized character.

In striking contrast with these views are those expounded by the UN *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Organization of the Council and its Commissions in the same year.

> If a problem [it observes] calls for expert analysis, the subsidiary organ should consist of a panel of experts, chosen for their personal qualifications; if the Council wishes to take political soundings, the subsidiary organ should consist of representatives of governments. It is usually inadvisable to attempt to combine both these functions in a single body.
>
> Since no two problems are alike, it follows from this principle that a subsidiary organ of the Council will make a maximum contribution to the Council's work when its constitution and terms of reference are tailored to fit a single problem, and that it should go out of existence when its task is completed.[3]

Useful advice can, however, rarely be obtained by cutting up the picture before a council into a jig-saw puzzle and asking experts to comment on individual pieces without reference to the whole; nor can

[1] Minutes of the Governing Body, 115th Session, Appendix VII, Annex para 8.
[2] Ibid., para. 10.
[3] ECOSOC Official Records, XIII Session. Doc. E/1995, IV, §§ 15–16.

experts ignore political facts when making an analysis and give any useful advice save of a strictly factual character. They can say in studying their piece of the puzzle, 'This is the rump of a cow'; but ignorant of the picture, they cannot hope to make any useful suggestions about what council should do with it. The procedure suggested is almost exactly parallel to the system of job specification from which the Secretariat of the United Nations has suffered so greatly. It is a procedure without vision, and what the *ad hoc* committee failed to see was the value on an informed, objective, and collective opinion prior to chaffering on the political market.

The committee was aware that a 'system of large permanent commissions, whose members are neither entirely independent experts nor avowedly governmental representatives, is unlikely to produce, in most instances, the type of preparatory work which the Council requires'[1] and suggested that certain of these commissions should be discontinued; but it failed to suggest that the crucial mistake of composing the commissions of government nominees should be corrected. Government nominees cannot expect to be free from instructions and cannot, if under instructions, formulate an objective opinion. Such nominees cannot do more than chaffer at a low diplomatic level.

The working party of the FAO, which reported in the same year, also suggested that its standing advisory committees should be abolished considering that they had completed the task for which they had been created. The committees in question were composed of independent experts, but they were not strictly advisory committees to Council. They advised the Director General and were intended 'to initiate proposals for study or action and to be consulted by the Director General or his staff on technical questions'.[2] It was foreseen at the outset that they would 'be urgently needed in the early days when the FAO staff is being recruited'.[3] They were in fact similar to the miscellaneous *ad hoc* committees on which UNESCO relied so largely in its early days. Such committees are rarely, if ever, needed once a Secretariat has learnt its job. But the working party failed to consider to what extent Council had need of advisory bodies of experts or how they should be constituted, and in fact the committees ultimately maintained do not comply with the conditions which I believe are essential. Thus the Nutrition Committee reports, not to

[1] Ibid., § 17.
[2] *The Work of FAO*, 1945, para. 144.
[3] Ibid., para. 147.

Council but to the Director General, and the Committee on Commodity Problems is composed, not of experts, but of governments.

6. *The Role of Committees of Government Representatives*

Up to this point I have been considering advisory committees composed of experts serving in an individual capacity. An advisory committee may be composed, like the FAO Commodity Committee, not of individuals but of governments, and today frequently is. I have suggested that the FAO Committee is wrongly composed. What in fact are the circumstances which should determine whether a question is better referred to a committee of government representatives or a committee of experts?

This single question embraces two distinct questions which are often confused and which though distinct do at one point overlap:

(*a*) When is a council sub-committee preferable to an advisory committee?

(*b*) When is an advisory committee of government representatives preferable to an advisory committee of persons serving in an individual capacity?

The first of these two subsidiary questions is really outside the scope of this chapter and will be discussed in Chapter IX. I raise it because of the confusion of thought on the matter and because of its close affinity at one point to the second.

Whenever a council in order to save its own time or for any other reason has occasion to seek as formal an agreement as possible among governments, whether those represented on it or others, it is natural that it should appoint a committee of governments in preference to an advisory committee of experts. The function of such a committee is to negotiate rather than advise. OEEC habitually works through such committees and they are indeed particularly appropriate to an operative organization. They are in effect sub-committees to which the Council, while as a rule retaining the right of final decision, has delegated certain powers, and there should be a strong presumption that it will confirm the agreement reached. The sub-commissions of ECE do not in fact report back to the parent body for confirmation at all.

Councils are likely to be most willing to delegate when the agreement sought relates to administrative practices and it is at this point that the two questions overlap. If, for instance, council is anxious to

promote uniformity in the statistics of a group of nations, it does not much matter whether it appoints a committee of governments to reach an agreement or an advisory committee of experts. Its choice will be determined by the extent to which it hopes to bind governments by the agreement reached. Similarly, if it opts in favour of an advisory committee, whether the committee is composed of government representatives or of persons serving in an individual capacity will probably not very greatly affect the final result. Whichever procedure is adopted the majority of the committee will be constituted by the same class of persons and those persons are likely to discuss their problems with professional competence and in a professional spirit. The balance of advantage in such a case lies, however, I believe, clearly in favour of the individual experts. A carefully selected committee so composed suffers less from changes in membership or the imposition on it of incompetent members and is more likely to take into consideration the needs of the unofficial user of statistics. Indeed even if, which is rarely the case, the composition of an advisory committee of government representatives is not inferior to that of a committee of individuals chosen by council, when the general public is vitally interested in the administrative practice under discussion individual experts should be preferred. Thus a committee even on such a highly technical matter as tariff nomenclature which includes no member capable of expounding the interests of chambers of commerce is less likely to produce a satisfactory agreement than a mixed body.

In the two examples I have quoted, statistics and tariff nomenclature, much progress can no doubt be achieved by agreed advice to governments or by establishing an agreed model. But the advice can only be enforced by international convention. Whatever the form of the committee therefore it is in the ultimate analysis advisory in character.

On the other hand, The Air Transport Committee of ICAO is asked to make recommendations which if approved by the Council and not disapproved by a majority of Member States automatically become binding. It is more than an advisory body and is rightly composed of government representatives.

If the foregoing argument is correct it leads to conclusions almost exactly the reverse of those expounded in the UN report on ECOSOC and its commissions quoted above. When the question or the field of work on which advice is sought relates to administrative action of

a strictly scientific or technical nature or to scientific or technical facts then, granted it is in the latter case a field of knowledge in which officials are likely to be expert, an advisory committee composed of government representatives, though inferior, may well prove not greatly inferior to an advisory committee composed of members serving in an individual capacity. However composed there is a reasonable expectation that the committee will be animated by a scientific or professional spirit. When, on the contrary, advice is sought regarding policy at a higher level, an advisory committee composed of government representatives is inappropriate, for such a committee cannot be expected to give objective advice and to view the question on its merits. It is necessarily a negotiating committee, and if council desires to relieve itself of the time and trouble of conducting the negotiations itself it must delegate power to its committee and should therefore appoint a sub-committee. It seeks more than advice; it seeks an agreement which it should, without committing itself definitely, be predisposed to accept. In many cases, however, especially when a considerable amount of serious work is required in order to formulate a working principle on the basis of differences in national practices, legal or administrative systems, or local natural phenomena, it will benefit by appointing an advisory committee and that committee, if its advice is to be objective and useful, must be composed of a well-balanced group of persons working in an individual capacity. This does not imply that officials should be excluded from such committees; on the contrary they are likely to constitute the majority of the members of all advisory committees. It does mean that they do not receive from individual governments in advance instructions about the advice they should give to all the governments represented in council.

Committees composed of government representatives working under government instructions cannot be expected to give such advice. They are essentially negotiating bodies at a relatively low official level. It is the duty of no one to consider the best solution of the problem, but only the best for his own country. Moreover, their members will be intellectually hampered by the instructions they have received. The instructions are given prior to the discussions, and are necessarily unenlightened, and the government nominee appointed to serve on an advisory committee will be more reluctant to ask his government to modify his instructions than a government representative on the council. The greatest success for which com-

mittees so composed can hope is that they will exactly duplicate the work of the council, and if they do duplicate it they are unnecessary. The United Nations Committee on the Organization and Operation of the Council and its Commissions observes in the report I referred to above that the terms of reference of the Economic, Employment, and Development Commission 'were so wide as practically to duplicate those of the Council itself on the economic side'. Though the terms of reference were too wide, the fact that they duplicated those of the Council was only a legitimate ground of criticism because the Commission was composed of government representatives and incapable for that reason of giving advice that might prove a useful contribution to thought.

7. *Terms of Reference*

If we agree, as I think we must, that councils are likely to feel the need for advisory committees and secondly that standing advisory committees may, in certain circumstances at any rate, prove of greater value than *ad hoc* committees, the problem of the delimitation of their terms of reference has to be faced.

The terms of reference must be drafted in such a way as to render it possible to select a group of about a dozen persons all of whom are competent to give advice on the questions likely to arise within the field covered by them. The obvious, but not the only, means of complying with this condition is to render the field sufficiently narrow. At the same time if it is too narrow it will prove impossible to persuade men to serve who are capable of giving statesmanlike advice on policy and the possibility of constructive proposals for new lines of approach will be unduly restricted.

It is much more difficult to draft appropriate terms of reference for an advisory committee concerned with questions of major political importance than for a committee asked to advise on administrative or scientific questions. In all cases the terms must cover a field and not pose a specific question. For a scientific committee the field may be any recognized sector of knowledge on which men specialize, for an administrative committee any recognized administrative activity; but the political field chosen must not only relate to some definable activity or department of government, but be of immediate interest and concern to council.

Two alternative procedures are possible. Council may limit the terms of reference of a committee asked to advise on issues of major

political importance to those issues on which it is itself actively engaged at any moment. If it adopts this procedure it will probably be compelled to change both its committee (or committees) and its terms of reference at fairly frequent intervals. Alternatively it may appoint a committee with terms of reference so wide as to afford little indication of what is expected of it and determine its real field by its selection of members and by occasional requests for advice on specific points. Thus it may appoint an economic committee to advise on economic questions, and actually select specialists in commercial policy. This procedure presents the advantage that the field covered by the committee may be gradually shifted at council's will by replacing outgoing members by persons with rather a different competence. It presents the disadvantage that unless the choice of members is made with great skill, or the Secretariat is exceptionally competent and influential, the advice the committee tenders may fail to meet the real needs of council. Whichever procedure is adopted council must be clear about its own intentions and pursue a logical policy. What is quite certain to lead to trouble is to formulate terms of reference which are apparently specific and in fact cover so wide a field as to extend beyond any single group's range of competence. Thus to appoint, as the League appointed, an economic committee and a financial committee with quite general terms of reference made sense because it was recognized that these bodies were not called upon to deal with all economic and financial questions, but in an orderly way with specific issues within those fields. On the other hand, to appoint, as the UN did, an advisory committee to deal with 'General economic questions, problems of economic reconstruction, the promotion of full employment, economic development and expansion' could only make sense if ECOSOC had delegated its powers and requested this overloaded Commission to work through subcommittees. In fact some such specialized advisory committees were attached to the so-called Economic and Employment Commission, but ECOSOC never delegated its powers to the Commission, which thus became redundant.

The terms of reference of an *ad hoc* committee must relate, not to a field, but to a specific subject. The difficulty most likely to arise in framing them is that council may not know enough about the subject to put the question in the most appropriate form, and the committee will as a rule be reluctant to ask for a change to be made. Not infrequently, therefore, council will be well advised to indicate, not

only the point on which it seeks advice, but its reasons for seeking advice. Such an explanation is much more likely to prove necessary in international affairs than in national, because it is much more probable that in the formulation of a question some quite vital fact of law or constitutional, administrative, or business practice will have been overlooked. Moreover, if council indicates the relevance of the question put to its general policy, it will go some way to avoiding the jig-saw puzzle difficulty to which I referred above. Too much 'tailoring' may prove a grave mistake.

8. *Membership of Advisory Committees Composed of Elected Individuals*

If we assume that the function of a standing advisory committee today is to render advice on a range of questions falling within a recognizable field of knowledge, which may be of use to an actively interested council in the formulation of its policies, the first problem that arises is what class of person is best fitted to render that advice acting as a committee member.

As regards personal qualifications the needs of an international committee do not differ greatly from those of a national committee. Difficult questions do, however, arise regarding qualifications not connected with personality. Obviously it is desirable that a standing advisory committee should be composed of members competent in their particular field of reference, familiar with the problems to which work in that field gives rise, and of a standing such that their names carry weight. But is it more important that their names should carry weight with the general public, the council to which they report, or the officials in their respective capitals who will be called upon to advise their ministers and take action if action results? There is no single answer to that question true in all cases. The answer will depend in part on the nature of the council to which they report. As the League Council took relatively little interest in the work of its technical departments and as a rule passed on the reports it received from its advisory committees to governments with its benediction and without serious debate, it was of great importance that these reports should be drafted by persons carrying weight in official circles in their respective capitals; to influence the members of the Council was less important. ECOSOC on the contrary is disposed to discuss nearly every question at length and much less disposed than was the League Council to accept the advice of its standing committees.

Members of those committees should therefore be persons likely to approach the problems in a different way from ECOSOC, but having a status likely to gain the respect and attention of ECOSOC. To compose them, as they were composed, in such a way that they were duplicates of ECOSOC at a lower diplomatic level, was clearly futile. To compose them, for instance, of academic persons thinking and expressing themselves in terms alien and largely incomprehensible to ECOSOC would no less obviously be silly.

In the League in certain cases it was probably wise to compose some of the standing committees largely of persons who would in effect be reporting to their own desks at home. Let us consider two examples. A strong case could have been argued in favour of composing the Economic Committee, in so far as it was a committee on commercial policy, of senior officials responsible for advising their governments on this subject. The reason for this was that it was, from the nature of the subject with which it dealt, largely a negotiating body. It might seem at first sight that, granted this, the logical solution would have been to compose it of government nominees. Had this been done, it would in all probability have become a negotiating body and nothing more. In fact its merit lay in the fact that it was something more; that it endeavoured, and, until the crisis of 1930–2, with a fair measure of success, to formulate world principles of commercial policy; that it elaborated through the conventions which it prepared a corpus of international law regulating international trade.[1] Because its members were not government representatives, but served in their own right, they were able to view problems as world issues. In fact the Economic Committee never was composed of such senior officials only, and its mandate was never limited to commercial policy, though most of its work lay in that field, and there proved to be on balance an advantage in having a certain number of members whose vision was not limited by the daily routine of official business.

The Fiscal Committee of the League affords perhaps the best illustration of the need for composing certain classes of standing committees mainly of government representatives. Its function was to devise methods for reducing the burden of double taxation. The subject was and is important, but has never constituted a major political issue. There was a strong probability therefore that any agree-

[1] Regarding, for instance, Arbitral Awards; Bills of Exchange, Promissory Notes and Cheques; Customs Formalities, &c.

ment reached at the official level would be accepted by governments. On the other hand the subject was extremely intricate and involved an endless series of knotty legal problems. For any progress to be achieved it was essential first to stimulate the interest of senior officials who were probably very fully occupied at home. It is impossible to stimulate the interest of revenue officials by talking to them about the reduction of taxation. But once they were faced by the theoretical question of the principles which should be applied in any inter-state convention on double taxation, they found the problem, on account of its intricacy, one of fascinating interest, and having lived through the lengthy discussion of these theoretical problems they returned home with a strong desire to do something about it. The taxpayer was relieved. No result would have been achieved if the responsible officials had not been actively engaged from the outset in solving the theoretical problem. But even in this case there proved to be a great advantage in having at least one member of a different competence —a lawyer specializing in double taxation and familiar with the effects of such taxation on business enterprise.

I have taken two examples of committees which in the case of the League, with its political Council, might with advantage be composed mainly of officials reporting to their home desks. Both committees were concerned with establishing the principles of policy on which subsequent detailed negotiations, whether bilateral or multilateral, might, it was hoped, be conducted. For both the establishment of these principles involved not only a great deal of detailed study but a considerable amount of initial semi-official negotiation. Varying attitudes of mind and varying experience were reconciled in the process of elaborating common principles; once that reconciliation was accomplished the task of attempting to reconcile varying interests could be undertaken in an atmosphere of mutual understanding rather than mutual suspicion, and hence with much increased chances of success.

Only if certain conditions are fulfilled, however, is the case for appointing civil servants reporting back to their own desk a strong one. First, the broad lines of policy on which inter-governmental negotiations are to take place must be approved by governments and the negotiations must be sufficiently technical and detailed to create a presumption that they will be largely conducted not by ministers, but by civil servants. If there is no such presumption a committee of more mixed competence is probably preferable, for such a committee

is able to formulate principles based on rather a wider field of knowledge and experience, and probably able to win a rather wider circle of interest in and support for the work it does. Secondly, the case in favour of civil servants is stronger when there is in fact only one desk at home to which to report. When a subject concerns a number of departments, unless the system of inter-departmental committees is highly developed, a civil servant may exercise less influence at home than some distinguished person from outside the official ranks. The field from which members of advisory committees should be sought therefore depends not only on the type of question put to them, but also on the nature of the action which governments are, or are believed to be, prepared to take.

When the second of the conditions mentioned above is not satisfied and the terms of reference of a committee are so wide that its report is certain to concern a number of departments of government, no obvious choice presents itself. There may still, however, be strong reasons for selecting a civil servant especially from countries with a highly organized administration. But the main criterion of choice will be the type of question on which advice is sought. Let us consider two examples on which there has been in recent years very ample evidence—unemployment and malnutrition.

If a council is seeking an answer to the question what are the major causes of unemployment, or of economic depressions, and how can these causes be countered, there is no reason for selecting officials to give the answer. Indeed, this is not a question or complex of questions that should be submitted to a standing committee at all. A special, *ad hoc*, committee of mixed competence composed largely of economists with an admixture of men of affairs—central bankers and others—is required. But, if council is seeking an answer to the question 'Granted the acceptance by governments of the obligation to prevent unemployment or depressions to the best of their ability, what in the face of the existing situation should they do?', there is a strong case for a standing advisory body and some case for having officials amongst its members. Officials are more likely than other persons to know the limits to possible government action, the speed or lack of speed with which governments can act, the political resistance which certain lines of policy will arouse. The committee's reports are more likely to prove acceptable to governments or to a political council if the advisory body contains a sprinkling at least of members drawn from government service. How large that sprink-

ling should be must depend largely on the average competence and the type of competence of the official world at any moment of time. In the twenties very few civil services included in their ranks economists capable of tackling the theoretical issues inherent in this practical question. Today the number of first-class economists in government employ has vastly increased, and the possibility of finding competent officials to serve on the imaginary committee we are considering is therefore much greater. On the other hand, as ECOSOC is itself much more competent to deal with such questions and is likely to surround its members with official advisers, there is no absolute need to have more than the minimum necessary to assure the indispensable contact of minds between the adviser and the advised. For such an advisory committee a wide rather than a concentrated competence is required—not only officials, but economists, commercial and central bankers, business men, labour representatives. The preparatory academic work should be carried out not by the committee but by the Secretariat.

I have chosen nutrition as my second example, as the League's experience affords an excellent illustration of the problems that must be faced when a subject has to be tackled that falls outside the normal competence of any single department of national governments. It is a success story. The response to the League's initiative in trying to improve nutritional standards was probably more immediate and more widespread than the response to any comparable effort made by it. The success was due very largely to the work of advisory committees, some standing, some *ad hoc*, and both the division of work among those committees and the choice of members presented special problems which were successfully, if somewhat gropingly, solved.

The initiative was taken by the Health Committee, a standing advisory body about two-thirds of whose members were senior state officials and the remaining third professors of medicine. Over a period of about ten years a large amount of evidence regarding the physiological aspects of nutrition was collected, and in 1935 the Committee posed the crucial question—What are 'the nutritional needs of the human being in the course of its development from conception to the adult age'? This is not the type of question that any standing advisory committee can be expected to answer, and it was referred to a special technical commission composed of professors of physiology and public hygiene and directors of institutes of nutritional research.

Up to this point no unusual problem regarding the type of committee required or the criterion of selection presented itself. The next step, however, which was to consider the policy implications of any serious effort to improve nutritional standards, did present special problems. Such an effort would necessarily affect a number of distinct functions of state and distinct social activities—agriculture, trade, education, social welfare, &c., in addition to public health. Clearly no existing advisory committee had a sufficiently wide competence. Moreover, even if the field of inquiry had been narrower, a standing advisory committee would have been unsuitable, because not only advice but a clarion call was needed. A new venture was to be launched. To launch it successfully, not advice to governments so much as an appeal to the public imagination was required. It was more important that the committee should be resonant than expert. In fact the committee was composed of agricultural, health, and economic experts, a number of whom were prominent in the political life of their countries. Through its report and the discussions in the Assembly the appeal to the imagination was successfully made.

Occasions may arise when an international organization that desires to make an appeal to public imagination would be well advised to appoint a special committee for this purpose. If the appeal is made through the Assembly and council alone it will be discounted to some extent as a mere political move. A report prepared for either of these bodies by the Secretariat will probably fail to win the active support of professional opinion in the field covered by it and will run the risk of being lost in the limbo of the official records of meetings dealing with a wide range of disconnected questions.

Once the movement had got under weigh there remained the problem of keeping it afloat. What standing committee should be entrusted with the task? The determinant fact in answering this question was that there was no single home desk, no single department of government, which could claim to be primarily concerned. What was felt to be of major importance was to promote co-ordination of effort on the home front. The nature and the composition of the international committee were determined by that consideration. In consequence governments were urged to set up national nutrition committees to 'co-ordinate the work done by different authorities which affects the nutrition of the people'[1] and the League, instead of

[1] *Interim Report of the Mixed Committee on the Problem of Nutrition*, p. 98, 1936.

appointing an advisory committee, arranged for annual meetings of representatives of these national bodies. On this occasion therefore the League abandoned the principle of selecting experts itself and left it to each government to make its own choice. There was good reason for doing so. The endeavour to improve nutritional standards was in an experimental stage. Each government and national committee was meeting problems as they arose in its own way; what was required was not technical advice, but an exchange of experience, an exchange of experience moreover amongst responsible persons. Today not only the national but the international administrative machinery is divided and WHO and FAO have quite logically set up a mixed advisory committee concerned largely with the co-ordination of their efforts to promote improved nutrition.

This example of nutrition is, I think, important as illustrating the conditions under which the system adopted at the outset by the UN of meetings composed of officials nominated by their own governments is appropriate. When the purpose of a meeting is not to form a collective opinion but simply to arrange for an exchange of experience and evidence a working party of this nature may have useful results. But it is essential to be clear about its nature, purpose, and limitations. No committee is constituted. There are a series of independent meetings, the only essential link between which is a common field of discussion. No collective opinion is sought; no report should be called for, though a record of the discussion may prove of value. No person at the meeting is asked to give advice. The participants are brought together to record their conundrums, their successes and their failures, to learn from each other and to expect to learn as much from the evidence of failure as from the evidence of success. No council or other body is directly concerned with such a meeting, though the members of the council may learn something from the record of the proceedings in exactly the same way as they might from any other body of evidence. Whether the participants at such a meeting are state officials or not obviously depends on whether the subject discussed is one primarily of government or private concern.

Occasions may arise when the major function of an advisory committee, even of a standing committee, is not to advise an international political body or governments in general, but to advise a limited number of governments which have sought international aid. Thus, although the Financial Committee of the League reported to the

Council and received its instructions from the Council, its most important work lay in giving advice to those countries whose financial reconstruction the League had undertaken to help. In such cases it would be absurd to compose the committee of officials. What is required is a body of persons of such outstanding authority that their advice can be accepted and have a determinant influence on domestic policy without loss of face. In fact the Financial Committee was always composed of central bankers, private bankers, or financiers, and a limited number of very senior treasury officials, and this proved to be a most appropriate composition.

Another committee advising a limited number of governments was the Mandates Commission of the League. It was rather a political than a technical institution and I only mention it here to illustrate a point. It exercised its influence both by its discussions with the accredited representatives of the Mandatory Powers and by the public reports it submitted to Council—reports in which the questions put to those representatives and the answers given were recorded in full. For its reports to carry the authority necessary to render them effective it was essential that the Mandates Commission should be composed of persons of adequate standing. For this Commission, in order to obviate all risk of political influence, the rule was laid down that members 'shall not hold office which puts them in a position of direct dependence on their governments while Members of the Commission'.[1] Officials were thus formally barred and there can be no doubt that the decision to bar them was a wise one. Moreover, the majority of the Commission had to be nationals of non-Mandatory Powers. Under its Charter the United Nations has reversed this system and created a Trusteeship Council of government representatives. It has replaced a body of independent men selected on grounds of their personal integrity, experience, and authority and reflecting the state of public conscience, by a group of government nominees open to the accusation of playing politics and in fact playing politics.

Let us examine in a little more detail and in the light of these examples two extreme cases, the grounds for selecting for some advisory committees officials reporting to their own desk and for precluding from others any person in government employ. When the major purpose of the report of a committee, and of the discussions which precede it, is to promote a reciprocal agreement on some sub-

[1] Council Minutes, 1920, Annex 133 (a).

ject which there are reasons for believing is ripe for such an agreement, to appoint key civil servants to an advisory committee may well prove the most effective way of securing the desired result. But when a major purpose of the work referred to the committee is to marshal public opinion, or the collective opinion of the international organization concerned, in order to exercise an influence on governments to act in accordance with principles which are not already the basis of their policies, officials or other persons dependent on those governments which it is intended to influence are clearly the least suitable persons to choose.

Only a part, and in fact a diminishing part, of the technical activities of international organizations is directed towards the modification of policies that states apply to each other. Ever since the early thirties more and more attention has been paid to laying down principles for legislation affecting primarily not other states but the citizens of the states adopting that legislation. What is sought is not reciprocal but parallel action. The International Labour Organisation led the way in this movement. Since this work as a rule involves less acute international problems and since not identity, but a general uniformity, of action is sought, and since, moreover, the Governing Body is directly as well as indirectly representative of the opinion of the public most immediately interested, the major qualification of members of advisory committees concerned with it is as a rule a really expert knowledge of the subject, and less importance needs to be attached to political sense and outstanding authority. The same is true regarding the members of committees appointed to give advice regarding the principles that governments should adopt in making their contribution to knowledge—in for instance the preparation of national demographic, social, or economic statistics. The expert, however, is not necessarily the person whose function it is to collate this knowledge. On the contrary, the user of the information furnished is more likely to be conscious of the gaps in it, or of its lack of logic, than the furnisher. What is required in such cases is a mixed committee of consumer and producer.

In fact there is generally an advantage in composing an advisory body of persons of varying types of experience and not making it too rigidly specialized. Even when the terms of reference are rigorously defined it is useful to mix with the central nucleus of members chosen for their competence regarding the core of the subject one or two persons able to view that subject with a certain detachment. But an

appropriate balance will rarely be struck by chance. On the contrary it requires the most careful forethought. That is one reason why committees composed of government representatives, persons selected without any consideration of their coherence as a team, will rarely be as competent as a committee appointed by a single selecting body.

9. *Finding and Selecting Committee Members*

From what I have said in the last section two conclusions clearly emerge. First there must be a single body responsible for the selection of committee members, and secondly the forethought necessary for achieving the right balance in the committee must be given in the first instance by the Secretariat.

Normally the unique appointing body should be the body to which the advisory committee's advice is rendered. But sometimes alternative solutions may present themselves. A standing committee may, for instance, be asked to deal with a subject outside its field of competence and be given the right to seek expert advice. In such a case the experts will report to it and it is probably best to allow the standing committee to select them, even if in practice it simply passes on the report of the experts with its benediction. If it acts in this way it may be argued that the experts are in effect reporting not to it but to the superior body to which it itself reports. When the subject is one of major importance such a procedure is undesirable, as to some extent the authority of the standing committee is involved in a subject on which *ex hypothesi* it is not competent. In such cases an *ad hoc* committee should be set up. But on minor matters the probable economy of time in acting through the standing committee may justify this procedure, even if it runs to some extent counter to the general rule that the advised should select their own advisers.

When freedom of choice exists the role of the Secretariat in finding suitable candidates is at once all-important and delicate. Responsibility falls on it because it is certain that, if it does not occupy itself with finding suitable members and achieving a properly balanced committee composition, selection will be left largely to chance, or alternatively this important task will fall into the hands of the permanent delegations to the international organization. These permanent delegations, useful as they may be, are quite unsuited for this purpose. They represent the interests, not of the organization as a whole, but of their respective countries; they are to a greater or less extent pressure groups. Each of them will be more concerned to

secure a place on committees for its co-nationals than to assure the best possible committee composition. Moreover, there is the serious risk that the delegation may suggest one of its own third secretaries, who is anxious to justify his existence but is neither expert nor independent. The Secretariat is the only group of persons whose first loyalty should be to the international organization it serves and the only group with an inside knowledge of the way in which the various committees operate, of their weaknesses and defects; it is, moreover, the one stable element in the changing international scene. On it falls therefore inevitably the duty of preparing the roster from which selection can be made and advising about that selection. Unless the political organs of an international organization have made some restrictive ruling about the system of election a weak committee is almost certain to be due to lack of competence or judgement in the Secretariat. Each department tends to have the committee it deserves.

The task of the Secretariat is delicate, however, not only because a choice has to be made between states, competences, interests, and personalities, but because the Secretariat must achieve its results without laying itself open to the accusation of either dictating policy or intriguing. Its success will depend on being really better informed about suitable persons in its own field than any delegate is likely to be and on producing not only suitable names, but arguments and backing for those names. For this purpose it must travel and must keep itself in touch with the scientific and political developments all over the world in its various fields of activity, and with the key and the coming persons in thought and action.

For the head of the administration to ask governments formally to suggest names for any committee not composed of government representatives is almost always a mistake, and may well be embarrassing to the government. It not infrequently happens, for instance, that an official who holds the position in his own service which would justify him in expecting to be chosen is not the most suitable person. The government may be reluctant to by-pass him and feel compelled to put forward his name when replying to a formal request. In fact at this stage the head of the administration should not intervene at all. The responsibility for suggesting a candidate should be in the first instance with the head of the department concerned, and all embarrassment can be avoided if he has the skill to find the right man and inquire whether in the event of his services being required on a committee he could be released.

The procedure in the League was for the various *rapporteurs* to submit names to the Council for its consideration. It was the obvious duty of each director to discuss new appointments with his *rapporteur* at an early stage in order to ascertain his views. Once a tentative list had been agreed he would proceed if necessary, after obtaining the Secretary General's authorization, to get in personal touch with governments or, in the event of an official being considered, at least with the head of that official's department, and to discuss the matter with the standing committee in question or at least with some of its members individually. As a result of all these discussions the definitive choice of names would be agreed with the *rapporteur* and submitted by him to the Council. The system worked satisfactorily; and as the Secretariat acquired increasing experience the amount of work which it involved naturally diminished. Whether it would have worked as smoothly had the Council been active with regard to technical work as is ECOSOC may well be questioned. But, however active the controlling council may be, the Secretariat, if only because it is the one permanent element in the whole organization, must become sooner or later the main depository of knowledge about persons and the main source of information about the actual functioning of committees, and, if it fails to exercise an important influence on selection, that is a proof either that its judgement has been proved bad or that its relations with council are bad. In either case the Secretariat is at fault. Councils may from time to time have a difficult chairman or one or more difficult and influential members; but in the long run they are, and owing to the way in which they are appointed must be, an average body of men, susceptible to normal handling.

What is essential for the satisfactory selection of committee members is that council should have a justified confidence in the good sense and impartiality of the Secretariat. In the ILO the Director General submits names for the expert committees directly to the Governing Body, and, although that body is jealous of its rights, it rarely queries his proposals.

I stated above that it was as a rule a mistake to ask a government to suggest a name, and that to do so might in fact cause embarrassment. Circumstances are, however, almost certain to arise which render the occasional adoption of that course inevitable. The Secretariat cannot maintain equally intimate relationships with all countries, and, although standing advisory committees should be composed

of persons selected on account of their personal distinction or suitability, national distribution must influence choice. States very far distant from headquarters, very small states with which the international institution does not happen to have been in close contact, states whose mother tongue is one which prevents its scientific literature being widely known, may all possess eminently suitable candidates of whom both the council and the Secretariat are ignorant.

Most of the governments in question will find their choice restricted for linguistic reasons, so that even were governments the best selectors, which they are not, the average ability of members found in this way is likely to be lower than that of the members of, for instance, Western Europe or the American continent. This fact renders it all the more important to seek means for reducing the inevitable risk in so far as possible. There is no golden rule leading to safety; but from time to time different means may be found.

If it can be arranged that the mandates of several committees expire at the same time, certain governments may be asked to submit lists of names for all of them, it being understood that not more than one name from these various lists will be selected. Such a procedure obviates the risk of political jobbery—of a single person being put forward because he is somebody's son or nephew. Indeed, it affords a double guarantee inasmuch as a list of names is demanded for each committee as well as for each country. Even in such circumstances, however, the council may be forced to make its choice with quite inadequate knowledge. Whenever possible, therefore, procedure should be devised permitting direct experience of a candidate's capacity before his selection as a member of a standing committee. The most helpful devices are *ad hoc* sub-committees and corresponding members. *Ad hoc* sub-committees may involve some additional expense, and sometimes delay; but when the council attaches importance to securing the best possible advisory machinery they are undoubtedly worth while, and, as I have said above, I am inclined to believe that corresponding members, though they afford a less rigorous test, are of some positive value. On rare occasions another procedure may prove possible, namely to ask a group of countries with exceptionally close political attachments to agree a name or a list of names among themselves. It is unlikely in such circumstances that a second-rate person will be selected, and political jobbery is still more unlikely. The League adopted this procedure on occasion

with the Scandinavian countries, but there are few groups of states as closely allied and as sensible as these.

There remains the problem of autarchic governments. If an international organization is compelled to have nationals of countries with this form of government, it must as a rule accept the facts that it cannot hope to select its own advisers and that the advice given is likely not to be that of the individual appointed, but of his government. But in the League experience neither fact was absolute. Suggestions could be made to Rome regarding membership, though it would have been absurd to suggest the appointment of a person actively anti-Fascist, and on strictly technical questions the Italian members seemed to be as free and as helpful as any others. The greater the political content of any question, however, the greater the probability that the member was tied by instructions which he could not modify. The Russian members were all nominated by their government; but again they gave what appeared to be independent advice on technical issues and refrained from communist propaganda. This personal freedom and political restraint was due no doubt primarily to the general orientation of Russia's foreign policy at the time. But they would scarcely have been possible if the League had made either of the two elementary mistakes which have so seriously hampered the deliberations of the United Nations committees, the practice of taking votes and the rule that meetings should be normally held in public.

10. *Length of Mandate*

For standing committees two distinct questions arise for consideration: (1) the length of the mandate of the committee; (2) the length of mandate of its members.

In the League a distinction was made between temporary and permanent committees. With justifiable caution, the Council preferred to appoint a committee as a temporary body in the first instance and make it permanent only when it had proved its worth and there were reasonable grounds for assuming that the work on which it was engaged would continue to be needed. In fact, however, the word permanent is dangerous; international affairs are in a constant state of flux, and it is impossible to foresee whether any body with terms of reference sufficiently limited to render an appropriate selection of members possible[1] will be required indefinitely. The term

[1] See, however, p. 168 above.

'Functional' (Committee) employed by the UN is certainly preferable to the term 'Permanent'. Whatever its name, however, to abolish an international committee which has an undefined expectation of life is a difficult and delicate task. On the other hand, if the expectation of life is too short or too indefinite the morale of the committee may be adversely affected towards the end or presumed end of its mandate. A council may almost as easily make the mistake of interfering too much with the constitution of its standing committees as that of retaining them too long.

There is an advantage therefore in instituting a system under which the Assembly or council reviews the mandates of its standing committees—and their terms of reference—automatically at stated intervals and at the same time creates an implication that, if conditions have not materially changed, the mandate will be renewed, by providing for a rotatory system of membership which can only be carried out completely in a period longer than those stated intervals. Thus if all terms of reference and committee mandates were adopted for a period of three years in the first instance and membership changed by one-third of the members retiring every three years, changes in the mandate could be effected at the end of any three-year interval smoothly and automatically if circumstances rendered such a change necessary, but members with a six-year mandate would have the right to expect that a change would not be made irresponsibly.

As we have seen, members of standing advisory committees should be appointed on their personal qualifications and not as representatives of their governments or their countries. When determining the mandates of these members, however, consideration must be given to the very natural desire of countries to have a share in the work of these bodies. That fact poses one of the most difficult problems connected with committee membership. Some definite term of office and automatic system of rotation is necessary in order to facilitate the replacement of unsatisfactory members, of members who have grown too old, of members whose status at home has changed, and of members who for one reason or another cease to be in close enough touch with events. It is necessary too to satisfy the claims of states to play their part.

On the other hand, a rapid system of rotation may prevent the committee acquiring the needed sense of unity and responsibility, it may interfere with the sequence and efficiency of its work, especially

when it is exercising its right to initiate proposals and adumbrate policies.

In the League no uniform system was ever adopted; but General Regulations on Committees were adopted and in 1936 the rule was laid down that the term of office of members appointed in their individual capacity 'shall not be more than three years, but shall be renewable. The Council shall, nevertheless, bear in mind the necessity of ensuring reasonably frequent renewal of membership of Committees.'[1] The outbreak of war prevented the growth of a definite tradition based on these general regulations; but the intention was to appoint all members for three years in the first place, allow renewal, and endeavour to replace one-third of the members every three years. This replacement was intended primarily to give satisfaction to the desire of governments that all countries should have a chance, though not necessarily an equal chance, of sharing in the work of the technical committees. The chances were unequal for a number of reasons, of which the most important politically was the generally acknowledged need to have a citizen from most of the Great Powers on most of the technical committees.

An important consequence of the recognition of this need is that the members who are citizens of the Great Powers tend to retain their membership longer than the others. To the special influence they derive from the political or economic influence of their countries is thus added a predominance derived from their status as long-term members of the various committees. Such a situation is liable to lead to jealousy and dissatisfaction; but it is difficult to avoid. An advisory committee on economic or financial or epidemiological questions without, for instance, a North American or British member would clearly be lacking in competence and influence. To replace a member who continues to have both the competence and the status at home that are required simply on the grounds that he has served for six years would benefit no one. There is an inequality of states in the world, and that fact must be recognized and accepted.[2]

At the same time it is important to prevent members from Great Powers acquiring an impregnable vested interest in membership and continuing to serve when, owing to change of status or decline of competence, they should be replaced.

[1] *General Regulations on Committees, Monthly Summary*, 1936, p. 41.

[2] In the UN some compensation is afforded by the system of Regional Commissions.

It is wiser to have no fixed rule, but to aim at changing about one-third of the total members each third year. If on any occasion a member from a Great Power is replaced by a compatriot, the turnover of countries will be proportionately less.

There is another reason for avoiding hard and fast rules. It is important that the system of rotation should be flexible enough to allow the retention of an exceptionally able member from a small country. To sacrifice the man of really outstanding qualities to a system may be justified when issues of major political importance are involved; but it is not justified when the object of the system is to arrange for the best advice to be given to council without causing grave offence to national pride.

11. *Size of Standing Committees*

Owing to the natural desire of states that their nationals should take part in the work of advisory committees there is a constant pressure to increase their size. The larger the committee the easier it is to employ a system of rotation without adversely affecting its traditions and corporate sense. But international committees of more than fifteen members are certain to waste time, for their natural fault is to talk too much, not too little. Indeed every member over fifteen is likely to prove a definite liability and a committee of twelve members is almost certain to be a more efficient working body than a committee of fifteen. The head of an international administration is often better placed than council to resist inflationary political pressure. Whether well or ill placed, it is his duty in the interests of the efficient working of the organization to do so.

When a committee exceeds fifteen in number it tends to change its nature altogether. It ceases to be a working group and becomes a debating society. The ILO Committee on the Working of the Governing Body and its Committees to which I referred above remarked that there was a growing tendency for technical committees to limit their conclusions to proposing questions for further consideration.[1] This was a natural tendency because almost all the ILO technical committees were too large. A large committee does not work itself; it may suggest work for others; it may be useful as a source of ideas; but it is unlikely to be of much other use.

[1] Minutes of the Governing Body, 115th Session, Appendix VII.

12. *Conclusion*

Although I have been compelled to draw my illustrations in this chapter largely from the League, I do not base my argument in favour of permanent advisory committees composed of individuals serving in a personal capacity on League experience, which is often irrelevant to the situations that present themselves today. My argument is based on the belief that in international affairs an objective review of the facts and of the conclusions to be drawn from them is frequently required to promote real understanding and lasting agreements. The need for such an objective study is particularly great in international transactions owing to:

1. the variety of conditions in the different countries and the ignorance of each country about the conditions in others;
2. the inequality of power in international negotiations;
3. the fact that the field of work that has to be covered by most councils and boards generally exceeds the competence of any imaginable membership;
4. the desirability of organizing the work of these councils and boards in such a way as to render it possible for persons of real weight and importance to serve on them.

I discuss the last two of these four facts in Chapter IX. Both the first and the second have become more important since the war, the first because international organizations today have a more heterogeneous membership, the second not only on account of the increase in the gap between the power of the great states and others, but because of the growth of the tendency of certain groups of states to vote in blocs, which leaves some of the wisest and most experienced smaller states in an unduly weak position.

VIII

PROCEDURE IN ADVISORY COMMITTEES

1. *The Importance of a Sense of Corporate Responsibility*

As I stated in the last chapter, the sense of corporate responsibility on which the success of any committee so largely depends will be determined not only by the terms of reference and composition of the committee, but also by the procedure it adopts for its discussions.

In this chapter I propose to consider certain principles of procedure and take, as previously, standing advisory committees as my example. But I shall from time to time move away from them to other types of committee, if only to reinforce a point by a comparison or contrast.

Before discussing these principles, however, it may be well to consider the justification for attaching so much importance to this sense of corporate responsibility. There are a number of reasons. Only when it exists and is shared by all the members can a committee be relied upon to make a genuine effort to probe a question thoroughly, only then can individual members be induced to slough their personal or national prejudices. A political council, as we have seen, requires from its standing advisory committees a collective opinion. Were it interested to obtain individual opinions, it would ask them of individuals, not of a group of persons. It requires, as a rule, a collective opinion either regarding the solution of some technical problem, viewed not from the angle of a single country but as a problem affecting many countries, possibly in different ways, or such an opinion regarding the best line of approach for reaching an agreement on some political issue when attention is directed mainly, though not exclusively, to the economic or social facts behind political interests, emotion, and bias. In order to formulate this collective opinion, the committee must have a sense of corporate responsibility.

This corporate sense is no less important when the committee is charged with the function, not so much of advising council, as of exercising an influence on the policies or practices of certain specified governments in a defined field. Indeed, a committee charged with this function will be mischievous rather than useful if it is divided within itself.

Granted the members of a standing committee are inspired by similar ethical values and have received terms of reference sufficiently precise to enable them to have a clear view of their responsibilities, but not so narrow as to seem insignificant, a sense of corporate responsibility can be developed with surprising celerity if certain simple principles are adopted. These principles are, however, important.

2. *Voting*

The committee should never, if that can be avoided, have recourse to a vote. The committee's duty is to prepare and submit, if possible, a unanimous report. Unanimity is reached by discussion. In the course of the discussion each member is likely to shift slightly from his initial position in the light of the information submitted and arguments employed by others. There is no sort of advantage in recording any member's view prior to the submission of the draft report. On the contrary, the vote impedes that adaptation of initial attitudes which must take place if a collective opinion is to be formulated. When the draft report is under consideration, it is far better to seek a text on which all can agree than to force certain members to subscribe to the views of a majority by means of a vote. Members are much more likely to look for a solution of their differences acceptable to all if the majority know that to force their opinion through in the face of opposition by their mere numerical superiority is considered to run counter to the spirit of the discussions. The body to which the committee reports is much more likely to give full weight to the advice received, if it is known that it reflects a unanimity of spirit rather than a majority vote.

I place this principle first in my list partly because I am aware that it is in direct contradiction to American practice. Perhaps the basic fact of American democracy is willingness to accept a majority decision. All Americans are trained in the doctrine that it is right and proper to fight for one's own views till the last ditch, but that, once a vote has been taken, there is an absolute duty to accept the majority decision. That is a fine political doctrine; but it is not a doctrine which aids greatly in the search for truth, and it is, I think, a pity that a useful political practice should have been extended so widely to non-political bodies. Even when standing advisory committees are concerned with political or semi-political questions, this practice is inappropriate, for its adoption reduces the committee to exactly

what it should not be, a body of negotiators at a low diplomatic level. The councils do not as a rule require predigested negotiations from their advisory bodies; they require advice about the best line of country for them to explore when they or delegates at a conference undertake negotiations at an authoritative diplomatic level.

Like all rules, however, the rule against voting is subject to occasional exceptions. When a single member of a committee is unreasonably obstinate over some question and can by appealing to the principle of unanimity force a modification of the report which all the others consider regrettable, it may be wise to call his bluff and force him, if necessary, to add a personal footnote or minority report. When there is a real cleavage of opinion on some major issue, a vote may prove inevitable. But in such a case it is better that the minority should set out their views in a minority report and not pass on tacitly a document with which on a major issue they are in disagreement. Agreement should always be sought, sought arduously if need be; if it cannot be reached on a minor issue, a vote is unnecessary, for the minority should concede the point; if it cannot be reached on a major issue, the minority should expound their views.

Voting may also prove necessary for the election of an individual to fill a position. The United Nations in its Rules of Procedure of the Functional Commissions has laid down the principle that 'all elections of individuals shall be decided by secret ballot'. However reasonable this may seem, if intended as an instruction that no person can be elected save by a secret ballot it is, I believe, a mistake. A committee that is really united may not infrequently wish to elect by acclamation, and to prevent it doing so will weaken its sense of unity.

3. *Privacy of Meetings*

The meetings should always be held in private. The reasons for this principle are obvious, and ECOSOC's decision, in direct opposition to the advice received from the majority of the so-called Nuclear Advisory Commissions, to insist that the meetings of the UN Functional Commissions should be held in public unless they take a formal vote to the contrary, showed a misapprehension of the true functions of an advisory committee or of the conditions necessary for the development of a spirit of collective responsibility. If the meetings are in public, the members will be forced to speak with one eye on the gallery. Having spoken thus in public, it will be much more difficult for them to shift their position in order to meet the views expressed

by others. The member who is an official can no longer act as an independent person seeking the best solution of a problem in a scientific spirit, but, whether nominated by his government or selected by council, will be forced to consider how his every utterance will be viewed by his superiors at home. It will become impossible or offensive to criticize overtly the policies pursued by governments which run counter to the solution sought or constitute the real cause of the problem under consideration. Straightforward discussion becomes impossible, and is replaced by diplomatic circumlocution interspersed with political propaganda. No advice formulated in such circumstances is likely to be of value unless the subject under discussion relates to depredations of bacilli or the fermentations of composts rather than those of governments or peoples. No sense of collective responsibility is likely to germinate in such an atmosphere. The members will not acquire more than a capacity to discount each other's political clichés. To ask an advisory committee to discuss in public is as foolish as to ask a marriage counsel to think aloud.

4. *Minutes*

For reasons similar to those just set out, it is frequently a wise procedure to reduce minutes to a bald record of subjects discussed, and the stage reached in the discussions. When more detailed minutes are required, they should in so far as possible be rendered impersonal.

The WHO technical committees have as a rule no minutes, concentrating all attention on the final reports. The Economic Committee of the League, which dealt with delicate questions of commercial policy, after trying various methods finally confined the minutes of each session to a simple statement of the tentative, not final, decisions reached. I say not final, because the Committee was not in the habit of voting and the final decision was, and was only, that expressed in the report sent forward to Council. There is much to be said for this procedure. If minutes record all the views expressed in the course of discussion, it becomes more difficult for any member to change his opinion or position, as it does if he is forced to speak in public, and the early opinions of wise members will be tentative and exploratory, subject to change. Minutes, it is true, are less pernicious than publicity, for they do not incite members to exhibitionism; they can, at least, be kept private. But, if they record the views expressed by each member, they render the debate more rigid and less explora-

tory, reduce the chances of the best solution being discovered, and impede argument.

For these reasons, when fuller minutes than the bald statement just mentioned are required they should be impersonal. The pros and cons of any argument may be set out in such detail as is felt to be necessary, but they should not be recorded as the views of individual members. When the subject under discussion, whether by a standing or by an *ad hoc* committee, is likely to be discussed at several meetings before the report is completed, or when a committee has to keep a continuing watch on events, such fuller minutes may prove of great value, provided they deal with arguments or events and not with the committee members.

Still fuller minutes are likely to be required when a committee is taking evidence, or is charged with the task of interviewing government representatives with a view to giving direct advice to governments, or advice to council intended to influence indirectly the governments whose representatives it has interviewed. Indeed, in such cases a verbatim record may be necessary.

We experimented in the League occasionally with verbatim records for a very different purpose, namely when some theoretical or abstruse question was under consideration, on which members were anxious to think aloud in the first place rather than express even tentative opinions. In such cases, granted it is understood that the discussion is strictly exploratory and members are willing to think aloud, verbatim records present distinct advantages. They are far more vivid than any minutes, reflect more accurately nuances of thought, and are more stimulating reading. They generate further debate; do not simply record it as something finished. Moreover, the half-developed but none the less valuable thoughts expressed in a debate of this nature cannot be accurately summarized. Against the occasional real advantage of verbatim records must be set in the balance the facts that they take time to study adequately and lose much of their value if imperfect.

The form that minutes should take will thus not only differ from committee to committee, but for each from time to time. In consequence each committee must have the right to decide for itself what procedure it should adopt and that procedure should not be the same for all meetings. Consequently also the minutes should be for the use of the committee only and for no other body. Neither council, nor a permanent delegate, should claim the right to see the

minutes of any advisory committee charged with the function of drafting a report. By its report and by its report alone it performs its duty. Naturally when it conducts interviews and keeps a record of those interviews, it should submit that record to the person interviewed for correction, and may as an act of courtesy furnish him with a copy of the definitive text when approved; but it should guard jealously its records of its own debates and its right to determine their nature. ECOSOC, with its regrettable love of legislation, has adopted a different policy and laid down the rule that 'summary records of public meetings of the commission and its subsidiary bodies shall be prepared by the Secretariat' and 'shall be distributed promptly to the members of the commission, to the Members of the United Nations, to the specialized agencies. . . . They may be consulted by the public on publication.'[1]

This rule, it will be noted, applies only to the public meetings and, granted publicity, is not illogical. But it and the insistence on the meetings being held in public constitute the gravest handicap for any advisory body dealing with important issues. The only committees which would be able to search for the best solution with any sense of freedom would be those dealing with subjects so dull or so abstruse that they automatically create their own privacy.

5. *Languages*

In a standing committee the fact that a majority of members probably have to express themselves in a foreign language rarely causes serious difficulty; but it does constitute some impediment to the meeting of minds. When there are more than two working languages it is not easy to secure at once that informality in discussion and accuracy in interpretation that are so important for this meeting of minds. Simultaneous translation is unsuitable for a committee which is groping for the truth. It is at once too rapid and too lacking in precision. The speaker can never check an error in interpretation. For an international committee composed of persons who naturally approach questions from widely different points of view, and whose processes of thought are unlike, there is a definite advantage in slowing down the pace of the debate by consecutive translation. But when there are three working languages, the delay caused is excessive. In such circumstances the best solution would seem to be simultaneous-consecutive translation under which a speech made, for

[1] Rule 37.

instance, in French is subsequently translated into English and Spanish at the same time. This process allows the interpreter sufficient time to seize and translate the essential points made, the speaker a chance to check inaccuracies in at least one of the translations, and the committee as a whole time for reflection.

Whatever the system of translation employed, however, some members will find themselves at a disadvantage. This disadvantage is likely to affect most acutely the value of the contributions made by members coming from the less powerful states. Though some such members talk too much, the more serious of them may hesitate to intervene when important problems arise, because of the reflection that their countries cannot make a major contribution to their solution, or are less directly affected by them. When to this hesitation is added a linguistic disability, the contributions of these members to the discussions may be unduly and unfortunately restricted. Granted certain rather obvious principles for the conduct of discussions are adopted, however, linguistic inequality should not prove a matter of serious importance amongst a body of men who have acquired the habit of working together. The adoption of these principles will at once help to set at ease the member from a state with an unofficial language, and check any natural inclination that others may feel to employ an 'official' but 'non-working language', as members of UN bodies have a right to today.

The first and most obvious of these principles is that the meetings should be held in private. No one except the most perfect linguist will by preference talk to a gallery in a foreign tongue when he has the right to speak in his own. But when there is no gallery he may be willing to consider the convenience of his colleagues. The other principles are more difficult to enforce; but they should become part of the tradition of all advisory committees and indeed of all committees. There should be no oratory and no long speeches. Members should discuss, not expatiate. The chairman should, rarely and only at the end of a discussion, ask members *seriatim* round the table to express their views. He should promote the criss-cross of debate. The interpreter should repeat the points made in any intervention rather than translate the words. If the general attitude of the chairman and the interpreter conveys the impression that it is the substance of thoughts, not the words in which they are clothed, that matter, a feeling of equality among the members can without great difficulty be promoted.

It is more difficult to establish this equality when the draft report is under consideration, and demands more humility. At this point all members who lack a perfect command of the working languages are at some disadvantage. Again certain obvious principles will help, though they cannot overcome the difficulty. The Secretariat in drafting the report should employ the simplest and baldest style; should avoid idiomatic phrases; should avoid rare words. When objection is raised to a phrase on the grounds that it is not clear, the assumption should be that that objection is valid. A report intended for international consumption is only satisfactory when it is comprehensible to people of different nationalities with a limited knowledge of the language in which it is written. When an Englishman or Frenchman complains that the official style of international documents is bad, that complaint is only of decisive importance if backed by persons of other linguistic groups. But when members of a committee from these other linguistic groups complain that a phrase is obscure, their complaint must be considered seriously. A phrase in one language, translated literally into another, may convey a different meaning, and the risk of such literal translation being made must be taken into account. The chairman of a committee and the Secretariat therefore should accept the fact that the foreign-language member may make a positive contribution to the clarity of a report by replacing an elegant and apparently perfectly clear phrase by one that is cumbersome. To do so demands humility.

6. *Chairmanship*

The chairmanship should rotate annually, the sequence being determined by the committee itself and be a sequence of countries, not individuals. This system presents a number of advantages. It obviates grounds for jealousy; gives to each member a sense of the committee being his committee and not a body run by some dominant personality, and affords to each member also an opportunity of proving his worth in a capacity different from that of simple membership. It not infrequently happens that a man's character and ability are radically reassessed after serving for a year in the chair. I remember one occasion on which a committee which adopted this rule deliberated in protracted embarrassment about the wisdom of passing by one member when it was his turn to become chairman, on the grounds that he would not prove capable of steering the debates. In the end it was decided that to break the rule would be too invidious

and the person in question was duly elected. He proved so exceptional a chairman that for the first and only time the rule was broken in the contrary sense and he, with the warm support of the next man on the list, was asked to serve for a second year.

The principle of rotating chairmen does not necessarily apply to all international committees. It is more important in international than national committees, because it gives all members, irrespective of the size and importance of the countries they come from, an identical status. But occasions occur when strength of leadership is more important than equality of status. Both the League and the United Nations have adopted the practice of fixed chairmanship for their Budgetary committees, and the chairman of the League's Allocation Committee held office during the whole inter-war period. These are Committees of the Assembly charged to report back to the Assembly on financial and administrative questions on which a lively discussion may always be anticipated. The questions debated are important for the successful administration of the organization, but they are not matters of major political significance. There is accordingly no political danger in asking the same person to serve as chairman for a number of years. There is, on the other hand, a great advantage in having the report presented to the Assembly by a man who has won its confidence, who exercises an increasing influence as the years pass, and who is able, through his personal influence as well as through his mastery of the details of the subject, to check irresponsible proposals and to put a stop to irresponsible criticism. In the case of a contributions committee, which has not only to suggest a fair division of the expenses of the organization among states, but to persuade states to accept their share gracefully, there is every advantage in having a permanent chairman able to exercise a growing personal influence. All states are directly concerned with the level and with the division of the expenses of an international organization; their accredited representatives at the Assembly are not likely therefore to elect chairmen for their financial committees who are suspected of bias. Indeed, the principle of permanence applied to these Assembly committees has little merit unless men can be found who can be elected almost by acclamation.

Whenever a report is intended to be submitted to the Assembly for debate, a permanent chairman, preferably a person selected by council (or by the Assembly) to serve in that capacity, may do much to guide such debates when the Assembly meets. In the League the

Committee for the Coordination of Economic and Financial Questions was of this character. Its major function was to prepare the economic and financial agenda for the Assembly. It was elected by Council and reported to Council; but its report was circulated direct to Member States and was intended to serve as a guide to those governments and to the Assembly when it met. It was important therefore that its chairman should be a person who was likely to be a member of his country's delegation, and of real advantage if over a period of years the same person could serve in that capacity. Since international parliaments, if the word parliament may be employed, have no ministers, there is a danger that the debates may become irresponsible or inconsequential. This danger is to some extent obviated by the existence in the Assembly of delegates who, as permanent chairmen of standing committees, are recognized as having the right to take the lead and the duty of assuring continuity in the discussions from year to year. The Food and Agricultural Organization goes so far as to provide in its constitution for the election by the biennial Conference of an independent Chairman of Council, who has no right to vote, but is appointed for a period of two years in the first instance and may be re-elected.

Other considerations determine the nature of the chairmanship of *ad hoc* committees. These committees are assigned a special task, and terminate their existence once that task is completed. It may be —often is—necessary for them to hold more than one session. What is important in this case is that they should be uninterrupted in the execution of their task, that the sequence of the discussions should be logical and unbroken. There is therefore a net advantage in allotting the direction of the debates to a single individual, and it is immaterial whether the work is completed at one session or not. The reins should be kept in the same hands.

7. *Rapporteurs*

The committee should never appoint a *rapporteur* from amongst its members. The draft report should be prepared by the Secretariat. If the Secretariat is incapable of drafting a report it should be changed.

The reasons for this principle are many. The most obvious and least important is that the majority of the members of a standing committee would be compelled to draft in a foreign language and that it is clearly undesirable always to choose as *rapporteurs* members coming from a limited number of countries. Allied to this point

is the fact that the amateur member-*rapporteur* faced by a difficult responsibility is likely to wish each point in the discussion to be completely cleared up before the committee passes on to the next. He wants his notes to be quite neat and watertight. But in fact fruitful discussions do not develop best when conducted in this way. A wise chairman will frequently leave a certain number of ragged edges in the course of the discussion, knowing that they will be tidied up when other questions are debated. By such a conduct of a meeting, by refraining from bringing issues to a head which in fact need never be brought to a head, strains are avoided and the atmosphere in the committee kept unclouded. There is, however, another reason for not appointing a member as *rapporteur* at once more subtle and, from the point of view of promoting a sense of collective responsibility, more important. It is obviously desirable that all members of a standing committee should participate at all times in the discussions freely and untrammelled by other obligations. If a member is asked to act as *rapporteur*, he is in fact placed in an awkward and unfair situation. As a member of the committee his duty is to expound his views clearly and endeavour to persuade his colleagues; as *rapporteur* his duty is to express the collective opinion resulting from the discussion. If he is fair-minded when performing the second task, he is likely to be worried by the reflection that he may fail to do this successfully because his mind remains to some extent influenced by his own initial ideas; if he is not, he may take advantage of his position and give a bias in favour of his own doctrine to the whole draft. In either case there is the risk that other members may suspect him of so doing, and if in fact he has been perfectly fair, this suspicion may induce them to insist on changes, so that the final document takes less account of his views than it would have if the draft had been prepared by anyone else. For these reasons a wise and honest member will be justifiably reluctant to assume the functions of *rapporteur*.

On the other hand a competent secretary—or, if he will, director—suffers from none of these drawbacks. Through practice he soon becomes expert in the work; he has a knowledge, not possessed probably by the members, about the way in which the report of his committee links up with those of other committees; he has a knowledge of the expectations of the council regarding the form of the report, of the line of argument most likely to influence them, of what can or cannot be done. He has no *parti pris*; he is more likely than any member to view the question on its merits, without national

prejudice; he will almost certainly be able to draft the report more rapidly than a member-*rapporteur*, and will thus save the committee time and the taxpayer money. He is not suspect, and a draft submitted by him is more likely to be accepted by the committee without long debate and detailed amendment than would the same draft if submitted by a member who had taken an active part in the discussion.

This rule that the reports should be drafted by the Secretariat does not, however, imply that no part of them should ever be drafted by a member. On the contrary, it frequently happens that a member or a chairman puts a point towards the end of a discussion in a manner that appeals at once to all the members, and is quite rightly requested by the committee to repeat what he has said on paper for insertion in the report. It not infrequently happens that one member has a special knowledge of some technical question and is better able to render that question clear than anyone else. A member may be blessed with a pungent or a gracious style, of which the committee is anxious to avail itself for one passage or another of its report. In all such cases there is an obvious advantage in asking a member to lend his aid. But to request a member to repeat on paper what has already won the approval of the committee, or to expound in a style it appreciates a point already agreed, is a very different matter from asking him to prepare a draft as a basis for subsequent agreement. The foregoing remarks refer to standing advisory committees. They apply as a rule also to *ad hoc* committees. But occasions may arise when it would be unreasonable to expect the Secretariat to draft a report. The Secretariat cannot be informed in all branches of knowledge, and an *ad hoc* committee may be appointed to report on some scientific or administrative question which lies outside the Secretariat's competence. In such cases recourse must be had to a member-*rapporteur*, or to a drafting sub-committee. In either case the Secretariat should be ready to help regarding points of form and procedure.

The principle that there should be no *rapporteur* implies that, if council decides that a committee should be represented when its report is under consideration, the normal representative will be the chairman.

When a committee is appointed to advise, not a council, but the administration, it is illogical for the Secretariat to prepare a draft for the report and necessary to work through a *rapporteur*.

8. *Substitutes*

In the League there was for many years a great variety of practice regarding the right of members to send substitutes when prevented from attending a meeting. This was in accordance with its excellent practice of experimenting first and legislating in the light of experience gained, though in this case, as I shall show, a mistake was made. The legislation was passed in 1936, when the Council decided that (*a*) governments represented on a committee may at any time change or replace their representative, (*b*) members appointed in an individual capacity may only be replaced with the consent of the chairman of the committee and of the Secretary General and that, if substitutes have been appointed in advance, titular members may only be replaced by them.

There can, I believe, be no doubt that a sense of unity and corporate responsibility are best fostered and sustained in a committee, if members are not allowed to send substitutes freely. These characteristics develop gradually in a group, as the individuals constituting it learn to know each other and are forced repeatedly to undertake a common task for the success of which the group and not the individual is held responsible. Every time the group is changed by the introduction of an extraneous element, its sense of unity is weakened.

Substitution should be inadmissible when the committee is charged with the function of giving continuous advice to individual governments or reporting to a third body on the manner in which obligations entered into by those governments have been implemented. In accordance with this principle, both the Mandates Commission and the Financial Committee allowed no substitutes. The principle is important. For only when it is respected can an intimate mutual trust between the committee and the governments concerned be soundly established. Moreover, it is no more proper for a body whose composition changes to pass judgement on the manner in which a third party has carried out its obligations than it would be for a jury with changing composition to record a verdict. That is one reason why the Trusteeship Council has failed to win a respect proportionate to the importance of its functions.

Cases may arise, however, when substitutes are preferable to gaps. When, for instance, a committee is engaged upon the formulation of basic principles for subsequent inter-governmental negotiation in some important field of policy, the presence of a member

from one capital or another may be indispensable. The work may be unreasonably delayed if replacement of members is prohibited. For such committees some rules relating to substitutes must be laid down. For the example I have given, the Council's stipulation that, when a committee has been composed in advance by titular and substitute members, only the latter may be employed to fill a gap, is not helpful unless each substitute has been appointed to replace a co-national. In fact the rule was not only cumbersome, but unnecessary. Adequate protection was afforded by the condition that substitutes should only be allowed with the approval of the chairman of the committee and the Secretary General.

Each committee should be allowed through its chairman to decide what type of substitute, if any, it requires; its choice will depend upon its agenda. The Secretary General should be given a controlling power in order to assure, first, that substitution is not too readily approved by any committee and, secondly, that replacement does not involve unforeseen financial commitments.

9. *Sub-committees*

Whether standing advisory committees should have the right to appoint sub-committees might well have been considered with other questions relating to structure in the last chapter. It so greatly affects procedure and a committee's sense of corporate responsibility, however, that I prefer to discuss it here.

If a standing committee is given a field of reference and selected to cultivate part of that field, questions will frequently arise which fall within the field but outside the area of the committee's expert competence. Council then has to decide whether to appoint an *ad hoc* committee or to refer it to the standing committee. If it adopts the latter course, the standing committee clearly has a right to obtain expert advice. It may do this either by asking certain of its members to get in touch with experts, or by consulting individual experts itself, or by asking a group of experts to express a collective opinion. The third procedure implies the appointment of a sub-committee. Should such a sub-committee be selected and appointed by the committee or by council, or should it be selected by the committee and appointed by council?

If the sub-committee is a temporary body convened for a single meeting, there would seem to be every advantage in permitting the committee to select and appoint it, subject to obtaining financial

authority. But, if the sub-committee is intended to be of indefinite duration, there is a danger of the committee being accused of becoming a clique representing a particular school of thought and confining its intellectual curiosity to theories within that field and to their exponents. The committee is indeed unlikely to select experts with whom it is not in sympathy, and this fact may be important, especially in socio-economic questions. This is a real difficulty; but I believe, notwithstanding, that the committee must be empowered to select, even if council appoints, the members of the sub-committee. This is the only course compatible with the principle that the advised are entitled to choose their advisers. If it is not adopted and the sub-committee submits a report with which the committee disagrees, the work of both bodies becomes quite useless. Council obtains no guidance. The authority of the standing committee is weakened. Moreover, the standing committee may well object, and indeed if a sensible body should object, to council requesting it to give advice and simultaneously appointing another body to tell it what that advice should be. If council does not believe that its standing committees are able to deal with any question after conducting investigations in whatever manner they may consider most appropriate, it should appoint a separate group to report to it direct.

With regard to sub-committees the United Nations adopted a policy which proved not unexpectedly to be unfortunate. When ECOSOC set up its advisory commissions it created at the same time sub-commissions and drafted their terms of reference. These terms of reference were, it is true, submitted to the so-called Nuclear Commissions for consideration before their final adoption by ECOSOC. But neither the Nuclear Commissions nor ECOSOC could determine in advance whether the sub-commissions would be required, and in fact when the full Economic Commission met for the first time it found it impracticable to set up two of the proposed sub-commissions at once.

There were probably two reasons for the adoption of this procedure: first ECOSOC, aware that the technical work of the League had obviously not acquired a definitive form by 1939 or 1946, was anxious to give its own machinery a more definite shape; secondly, it was quite uncertain whether it itself was to be a co-ordinating or a negotiating body. In fact it began modestly as the former and developed into being both. But, whatever the reasons, the procedure was wrong. A committee is a group of men with a certain range of

competence. Before it has begun working it is impossible for it or for anyone else to know what sub-committees it will require. Once it has acquired a knowledge of itself, its duties, and the scope of its work it should be able, and it should be empowered, to set up its own sub-committees and determine itself their terms of reference. Council should concern itself with two points, and on both exercise a restraining influence: first, the expenditure involved, and secondly, the general orientation of the committee's activities. If the committee appoints a temporary sub-committee, only a financial issue arises. Its purpose may be merely exploratory. But whenever the proposed sub-committee's mandate is indeterminate a definite orientation of work is implied and council has every right to approve or disapprove on that account alone.

10. *Right of Initiative*

As was said in the last chapter, a council may adopt one of two alternative policies towards its standing committees. It may either treat them as bodies to which it can refer specific questions within their defined fields, or it may treat them as bodies to which it looks not only for advice on such questions, but for suggestions regarding matters to which its attention should be drawn. There can be no doubt that the right to initiate adds greatly to a committee's sense of responsibility, and this for two reasons. A committee used *ad referendum* only should not meet at regular intervals; it is required only when a specific question is submitted to it for advice. It has therefore no natural continuity of life—each meeting is a distinct and fortuitous incident. If, on the other hand, a committee has the right to put forward proposals, it will desire to keep in permanent survey the course of events in its field; there will be a continuity of study, a continuity and logic in the sequence of documents it asks the Secretariat to prepare. It will have the sentiment, furthermore, that it is a body trusted and esteemed by the council it serves, and as a result there should be no difficulty in persuading the best-qualified persons to serve on it.

When for one reason or another council decides that it does not want this continuity of study and consequential advice in any field about what might be undertaken, it would be wise to abolish its standing committee and to appoint *ad hoc* committees when required. Sooner or later all League committees acquired the right of initiative, and without it they would certainly have died a lingering death.

Quite apart from the influence of this right on the effectiveness of a standing committee, it has a great value, because it renders it much more probable that questions will be studied before a critical situation arises. Standing committees, if suitably composed and skilfully handled, become the watchdogs of the international community, keeping the events that threaten it at bay, and frequently foreseeing those events before they have attracted the attention of politicians.

But a standing committee with any right to initiate as well as advise on predetermined questions should obtain the authority of council before starting upon any new undertaking. Otherwise the central control and co-ordination of policy will be rendered impossible.

The right of initiative, however, should not entitle an advisory committee to start off on any adventure that may seem attractive to it, but only to submit suggestions to council. This is the system adopted today by ICAO. All of its standing committees have the right to submit proposals regarding new work, which must be approved by council before that work is seriously undertaken.

11. *Determination of Agenda*

The question of the right of initiative is closely linked with that of the right of a standing committee to determine its own agenda and order its own discussions. Should council in addition to formulating the terms of reference of such a committee also draw up the agenda for each meeting? The Governing Body of the ILO has adopted the principle that it should give separate approval for each session of a committee and fix the agenda and the time limits of meetings. In a sense it is true that all subjects that occupy any major part of an advisory committee's time should come down to it with the prior sanction of council. But there is, nevertheless, a great advantage in allowing a committee to draw up its own agenda, in which it is under an obligation, of course, to include all items specifically referred to it. No third party can know better than a committee itself how its discussions can best be arranged so as to save time and effort, and not infrequently a member may wish to propose a preliminary discussion of some connected prior question before the committee turns its attention to the point submitted to it. Moreover, if a committee is to have the right of initiative, it must have the right to discuss and place on its agenda new questions to which it wishes to draw council's

attention. If it is charged with the function of following developments in any field it may happen that some important event has occurred since both its and council's last meeting which it must discuss, if it is not to become guilty of a dereliction of duty.

There is, I believe, a net disadvantage in hampering a committee of this nature by a straight-waistcoat strapped on to it by council. The danger that predetermined agendas are intended to obviate is that a committee may get out of touch with its council and waste time on questions with which council does not wish to deal. This is a real danger, but it can be met quite adequately if council lays it down that a committee should indicate in each report the work to which it proposes to address itself at its next meeting, while leaving it the right to determine the final form and contents of its agenda. Council can then always instruct the committee not to pursue any matter which it considers to lie outside the range of its own immediate interest. This is approximately the system now adopted by ICAO with regard to its Legal Committee.

12. *Frequency of Meetings*

At first sight it would seem obvious that the frequency with which a committee should meet and the length of its meetings must depend on the urgency of the work it has to do. But in fact no such simple rule can be laid down. A committee may meet two or three times a year for a week or once a year for a month, and it would be quite inaccurate to assume that one procedure will necessarily lead to more rapid results than the other. Whenever a question demands for its solution not only an intelligent discussion among a group of experts, but a shift or development of informed opinion at home, as frequently happens in international affairs, it cannot be solved at a single meeting. Committee members must be given an opportunity to discuss the matter at home after the first international exchange of views. Frequently also the members themselves will want an interval in which to ponder over a question which they have been in the habit of viewing only from a national angle. At the same time there is a risk that, if too long an interval elapses between meetings, all the drive and impetus may be lost and the development of opinion at home never takes place. It is not therefore necessarily the urgent questions but the long-standing questions that render frequent meetings desirable.

There are other reasons for preferring when possible two or even

three short meetings a year for certain standing committees to longer annual meetings. The more rarely a committee meets the less readily will its members develop mutual understanding and a corporate sense, and the less mature and well balanced will probably be its reports. Its reports will suffer not only because the members have had less time to reflect and to discuss the matter at home between meetings, but also because a report adopted at the end of a meeting lasting several weeks is liable to be flabby and indefinite, to suggest that not the question but the members have been exhausted. International meetings are as a rule a great deal more exhausting than national.

A standing committee which is not allowed to meet regularly but only when convened, becomes in effect an *ad hoc* committee. Its members inevitably and rightly lose sense of continuing responsibility. They come together when requested to do so, look at a problem, report on it as best they can, and go home. They can argue with justice that council is either not greatly interested in their subject or is unwilling to trust them. Council gets the service from them it deserves.

The argument is frequently put forward today that standing advisory committees are expensive and that more than one meeting a year is therefore an impossibility. Such committees are expensive if they are too large, or if they are packed with ignorant people from far-distant states for political reasons. They are not expensive if council intends to save and does save its own time by appointing a small and efficient group whose advice it will be predisposed to accept.

Since the last world war the practice seems to have developed of asking *ad hoc* committees to complete their reports in a single session, which may last for a month or more. If an *ad hoc* committee is convened to give its opinion on some scientific fact or some narrowly defined technical question, it may well be able to do so. But whenever a large measure of judgement and valuation is involved, the committee will most always benefit if its members are allowed time to reflect on the report, to discuss it with their friends, and come back with fresh minds.

13. *Preparatory Work*

As I said in the last chapter, every department in an international organization tends to obtain the committees it merits. Whatever the

quality of the members of a committee, the quality of its output will depend greatly on what is put into it.

The duty of preparing the documentation for an advisory committee falls primarily on the Secretariat, which should rarely allow any committee to meet blindfold. In preparing that documentation the Secretariat should have four considerations in mind: (i) the need to furnish a statement of the basic facts so as to avoid misunderstanding due to ignorance, (ii) the virtue of brevity, (iii) the need to steer the committee out of culs-de-sac into the main channel of thought, (iv) the final form of the report. The Secretariat must think through the questions on the agenda itself in advance and decide what is essential for their clarification and solution. It may in the process of its work take the next step and become clear in its own mind where the solution lies. When this occurs it should remember that the members of an international body drawn from different quarters of the world will view any problem from many more angles than it can and that it will probably promote agreement better by focusing attention at the outset on the road to the solution than on the assumed solution itself.

For standing advisory committees the work is relatively easy. The Secretariat probably knows in advance what the committee will require at its next meeting and, if the committee is studying a long-term problem in an orderly fashion, it can direct its researches so as to throw light on the point reached in the discussions without attempting to cover the whole ground at once. For an *ad hoc* committee its task may prove much more difficult. If such a committee is replying to a question of fact, it may render a service by collating and summarizing material in anticipation of unexpressed needs and, if this is well done, the committee may have little more to do than check and supplement a central Secretariat document. When the question relates to administrative or legal practice the Secretariat should be well placed to render this service. But when an *ad hoc* committee is requested to advise on policy it may prove difficult to foresee what it will require for its initial analysis. When council has adopted what I believe to be the undesirable procedure of requesting the head of the administration to appoint a committee to advise him on a question on which in fact the council wants the advice, the Secretariat's difficulty is increased, for it may seem to suggest by its documentation the advice it is itself to receive. This difficulty is still further enhanced, if on grounds of economy the committee is convened for

one long session. When this happens the committee, if its documentation proves inadequate or ill adapted to its line of thought, not infrequently tends to report in terms so abstract that it exercises little influence. *Ad hoc* committees asked to advise on policy should in fact be given the opportunity to decide at a brief exploratory meeting what material they will require for a later serious analysis of the problem put to them.

On the other hand, very large committees, such as the industrial committees of the ILO, must be deliberately steered both by their agenda and by their documentation if they are to pursue any purposeful direction. Such bodies, like 'symposia' and 'colloquia', the intellectual offspring of UNESCO, will degenerate into quite futile chatter unless harnessed, bridled, and driven.

14. *The Secretariat should Propose not Impose*

The Secretariat exercises an influence on a committee by the documentation it prepares before the meeting; it may in addition do much by its conduct during the sessions. It alone devotes the whole of its time and energies to international work internationally conceived. It should have advice of value to give to the committee; it should, more often than not, have some views clearly formulated in its mind regarding policy; it may be looked to by the committee for leadership. But, unless requested to do so, or a new item on the agenda requires an explanatory exposition, it should as a rule not propound its views at the beginning of a meeting, but should wait until the members have indicated their initial attitude, and have had some criss-cross of clarifying debate. When it does put forward proposals, it should present them as emerging from and unifying the views which the members have expressed, not as a wedge driven through them. It should accept the fact that the views expressed by at any rate the more competent members of the committee, however narrow or irritating they may seem, are likely to reflect some fact that may obstruct action later, and must be taken into consideration. And it should realize that it should be intent about two things, first the substance of the report—the nature of the advice—and secondly, the continuing force behind the collective opinion expressed in it. If the Secretariat imposes itself on the committee and induces it to adopt a report without conviction, or without the sense that it is its report, its collective opinion, little of immediate value will have been achieved and much ultimate harm may have been done.

Some secretaries of committees seem to believe that they should be seen and not heard; that their jobs are those of a *metteur en scène* and a recorder; some believe that they should endeavour to exercise their influence only indirectly by the documents circulated or by private conversations. To be silent is to be futile; the Secretariat, at any rate of a standing committee, should have an experience and knowledge of the problems discussed, and of the way in which the work of any committee fits in with the work of the organization as a whole, of which it has no right to deprive the committee. Much may be and should be achieved over the dinner-table or on other occasions for private conversation; but to talk only to a selected few is to render oneself suspect of intrigue. The skilled committee secretary, or director, is the man who can achieve simultaneously three results—promote the unity of the committee, contribute constructive proposals, and draft a report which incorporates those proposals but is recognized by the committee as its own offspring.

15. *Who should determine Procedure?*

There can I think be no doubt that, if committees are left free to fix their own rules of procedure, they have the best chance of elaborating a system that suits their work. If they are wise they will keep their rules down to a minimum and rely on the growth of tradition. I cannot recall that any of the advisory committees with which I had to deal ever drafted any rules at all; the committees of OEEC, which have an excellent record of useful work, deliberately abstain from rules, preferring to settle differences as they arise in a spirit of compromise.

But this ideal of complete freedom does present dangers. A weak committee, or a committee with an inefficient Secretariat, may, for instance, get into the habit of re-electing the same member as chairman, when it would really prefer someone else; it may waste a lot of time and money on lengthy minutes because its members have been used to such minutes when working in a quite different capacity. A new committee is not likely to know the most appropriate procedure for an international body, and in the absence of any guiding principles will have to rely on its secretary, who may or may not be judicious in the advice he gives.

A set of guiding principles, so long as they are not drafted in an imperative form, or when imperative allow a wide latitude, may therefore prove of real value. Thus, the rule adopted by the Council

of the League, that 'the committee shall fix the chairman's term of office, while bearing in mind the necessity of making possible reasonably frequent changes', with its juxtaposition of 'necessity', and 'making possible', and 'reasonably frequent', struck exactly the right note. The UN in fact gives still greater liberty with regard to the chairman, and insists only on a chairman being elected at each meeting, allowing re-election.

While there would seem to be a clear advantage in allowing committees the greatest latitude regarding their procedure, council may with reason wish to insist on two principles: first, that it retains the right of selecting its own advisers, and secondly that no expenditure is incurred without its approval. The first point I discussed in Section 9 above. The second may lead to it laying down rules regarding, for instance, the languages to be used, the approval by it of any proposed programme of work, or recourse to experts for advice. The fewer the rules, however, the better it is likely to be served.

One important point on which it is difficult to lay down rules or even to formulate working principles is the right of a committee to demand work from the Secretariat. Unless it obtains the documentation it requires it may be seriously handicapped. On the other hand, if there are a number of committees and collectively they overburden the Secretariat, all will suffer because the quality of the work will be low. Inefficient committees, especially those composed of government representatives, often ask for further studies because they do not know what else to do. Very large committees make similar demands in the hope that these studies may give point to their semi-digested ideas. All councils which make considerable use of committees have been faced by this problem and no satisfactory solution has been found. Certain negative principles may be employed as pruning knives, but there is no certainty that they will prove adequate. For instance, a number of ECOSOC's Functional Commissions have the habit of requesting the Secretary General to publish documents, or to include in one or another annual publication some special feature of interest to them. Even when the financial regulations give some protection against such demands, they should be considered *ultra vires*. Council and the Assembly should retain absolute control and the committees confine themselves to making suggestions to council. Similarly, committees unless specially empowered should not feel entitled to instruct the Secretariat to prepare and send out questionnaires to governments. On the other hand, to prevent the

Secretariat starting immediately on work seriously required by a committee may quite unduly impede the committee in its work. In the long run, this problem can only be solved by the head of the administration. He must insist that the council or the Assembly fashion the staff to the work and the work to the staff.

A somewhat similar question presents itself regarding the right of advisory bodies to give other instructions to the Secretariat. Thus certain of ECOSOC's Functional Commissions have adopted the practice of requesting the Secretary General 'to draw the attention of governments' to their proposals. By so doing they arrogate to themselves the right to advise, not the body appointing them, but governments directly. This procedure has, I understand, been adopted first in order to obviate the need for a vote on a formal resolution by ECOSOC and the division in that body to which votes have habitually led, and secondly, in order to allow the Secretary General to use his discretion when deciding to which governments he will communicate the Commission's suggestions. It may be justified by the extraordinarily difficult circumstances in which advisory bodies find themselves in a divided world. At every point that division poses the question whether to pretend to agree or overtly to present the grounds for disagreement. In this particular case, the preference for the first solution involves a constitutional anomaly and imposes on the Secretary General duties which really appertain to the council, in addition to running counter to the principle that advisory bodies should render their advice through council.

16. *Form of Report*

All the procedural principles discussed up to now have one purpose, namely, to enable the committee to produce the most helpful possible report. They may prove valueless if the form of the report is wrong. Many committees, inadequately advised by their Secretariat, submit reports in so unsuitable a form that, however much work may have preceded them, they are almost useless.

What council requires of an advisory committee is a considered, collective, and authoritative opinion on some matter or sometimes a model agreement. The nature of this requirement determines the form the report must take. The council has sought authority and the names of the members present should be given in each report. It has sought advice and the question on which the advice is sought, or, if the terms of reference are wide, on which advice is proffered, should

be clearly stated. The facts relevant to that question should be briefly set out. If the point referred to the committee is one of fact only, no more is wanted. If the committee is requested to advise about what should be done, it should state its conclusions, preceded or succeeded as the circumstances suggest, by a statement of the reasons on which they are based. If the committee is given a general watching brief over a defined field of activity, it may have occasion to add a chapter stating that, on viewing the situation, it has come to the conclusion that action may be required on certain matters and explaining its reasons. That is all.

The report should be drafted in language so simple as to be internationally comprehensible and in terms as precise as that consideration permits.

If the council is seeking advice it should, as we have seen, appoint the committee itself and the committee's report should be addressed to it, and not to the head of the administration. If the committee appoints a sub-committee, the report should be addressed to it and not to council.

If the members of the committee disagree, they should either report that they have not finished their discussions, or submit a majority and a minority report. Both reports, when there are two, should argue the case, not simply state an attitude or by silence imply a prejudice. To inform council that Mr. *X* dissented is quite useless. Council is not interested in Mr. *X* or any individual expert; it may be interested in his views if they are rationally expounded. But an advisory committee will in the long run prove of much greater value if it accepts the principle that when it fails to reach agreement it has failed in its function as an advisory body. There is indeed little chance of its advice leading to any result when its members are divided, unless that division reflects an accepted division in world politics, when a majority report may result in majority action. Then its failure is a reflection of the world's failure.

Still less is council likely to be interested in the procedure by which committees reach their conclusions. Many reports today are, like incidentally those of ECOSOC, not reports on a question at all, but reports on a committee's session. Nothing could be less interesting or helpful. The only circumstances in which a report on a committee's session has any value is when council, while retaining a watching brief, has delegated powers to some committee to negotiate. It may then be interested to learn from time to time how the negotia-

tions are progressing, and what the attitudes of the parties to it are at a given moment. But even in these circumstances the report should be confined to a summary of the crucial issues and attitudes. It should not take the form of abbreviated minutes.

The foregoing observations amount to little more than the statement that advice given should be collective, clear, and reasoned. They are indeed so obvious as to be banal. But, if we study the reports submitted by international advisory bodies in recent years, we shall find that many of them cannot claim any of these characteristics. It is perhaps worth while to examine a typical report dressed in the style that has become popular, especially in New York. The reports of the Commission on the Status of Women offer a good example of this fashion. They are divided into chapters. Each chapter begins by mentioning the number of the meeting at which some agenda item was discussed; it then proceeds to enumerate the documents laid before the Commission without indicating their contents, and then to relate that 'some members' expressed approval of some document, or certain views or regrets, 'other members' others; sometimes 'some members' are transmogrified into 'certain members' or 'several members' or 'one member' and then 'another'; it records that it had before it various draft resolutions or amendments which are neither published nor explained, and that it heard the representatives of various bodies whose attitudes are not explained; finally the chapter concludes with a resolution, or a draft resolution for ECOSOC to adopt, recording the votes; occasionally by way of artistic variation the resolution is introduced by a superbly jejune observation as, for instance: 'After a brief discussion, in which several delegates expressed approval of the ideas contained in the resolution, the Commission adopted unanimously. . . .'[1] In fact nearly the whole of these reports is irrelevant and a waste of time. No sane council can have the slightest interest in knowing to what subject a commission devoted its 179th meeting, or the names of unobtainable documents, or the casual observations of the unidentified individuals, or the quantity of unpublished draft resolutions received, or even the names of bodies allowed to make unrecorded statements. On the other hand, what council might well desire, a reasoned argument supporting (or even opposing) the resolution, is wholly lacking.

What lies behind this form of reporting is the failure of the Commission to effect a meeting of minds and the failure by the Secre-

[1] 1953 Report, para. 96.

tariat to draft a report on which a real debate in the Commission might take place. The resolutions are a compromise between varying views that have not been thoroughly thrashed out. Resorting to voting as these Commissions do, the pressure to thrash them out is insufficient. In the absence of those final efforts to reach agreement from which logical arguments spring, it is no doubt difficult for any Secretariat to draft a reasoned report. The crucial weakness in the whole procedure therefore lies in the habit of voting, and the love of resolutions. If instead of voting, the Commission requested the Secretariat after a general exchange of views to prepare the draft of a report, and then proceeded to endeavour to reach agreement on this draft, it and ECOSOC might be much more fruitful in results. Naturally if the world is divided, it may be impossible for a commission to produce a single unanimous report. In these circumstances two opposed and reasoned reports about the points at issue are incomparably more useful than a unique report about procedural trivialities. If all advisory bodies adopted the practice of reporting in the first person plural, they would, I believe, be less prone to irrelevancy and would be forced either to agree or to write and defend majority and minority theses. In the abstraction of the third person singular, the corporate sense of any body tends to evaporate.

I am not arguing that reports of advisory committees should contain no draft resolutions for council's approval. Such drafts may on occasion prove useful. But they should result from the logic of the report; they should be formulated and agreed when the report has been adopted.

I have chosen the reports of the Commission on the Status of Women as an example of a fashion which is neither peculiar to UN nor adopted by all the Commissions of ECOSOC. The Statistical Commission, for instance, habitually submits well-reasoned reports. But even the example selected of what I deem to be a valueless type of report has some form and is addressed to Council. Reports addressed to heads of international administrations are frequently so lacking in any literary form as to be almost meaningless. Sometimes they are little more than summarized minutes. Certain UNESCO committees submitted no reports at all, the Secretariat satisfying itself with records of the meetings. When a committee discusses and then breaks up without submitting a report, it changes its whole nature and the nature of its discussions. Its discussions become a conversation. Its members, relieved of the obligation to reach agreement,

frequently fail even to formulate a definite judgement in their own minds. Thought ceases before it matures. The Secretariat may receive a certain amount of data casually thrown up in the course of the meeting; it may derive a sense of the common opinion; and unless it puts what it believes to be the common opinion into the form of a report and submits it to the committee for endorsement, it may well be mistaken. To convene a committee to sit around and chat involves an expenditure of public funds, which may be justified; but no person directly or indirectly responsible for voting the funds can judge whether it is justified or not. To demand of a committee and of the Secretariat the extra effort required in the preparation of a report which is worthy to be submitted to council will, in the long run, both prove an economy and improve the quality of the work done.

Certain specialized agencies rarely publish or even print the reports of their advisory bodies, apparently on grounds of economy. Such parsimony is liable to prove extravagant, for it will render it more difficult to induce persons of real authority to give their advice, and it leads to slipshod work by the Secretariat and in reports which, even when comprehensible, are so lacking in force of logic and expression as to create no impact on council's mind. If a council seriously desires to obtain the best collective advice it can, it should at least have the grace to print it and the mettle to insist that it is given in a form worthy to be printed.

I have considered standing advisory committees as a class before political committees, such as councils or boards and their sub-committees, because they present the least difficult problems, because they are most likely to develop into groups with a corporate sense, to acquire a unique loyalty and a consciousness of joint responsibility, and because they are more likely than any other bodies, save the Secretariat, to contribute to what should be the major long-run objective of any international organization—the creation of an international outlook. They present the least difficult problems, because when they do not represent national interests, they are more likely than political bodies to be actuated by reason, less likely to become muddle- or hot-headed owing to prejudice or emotion. They are most likely to develop a corporate sense because the duration of their mandate affords time for its development, and again because their members, tied neither by interests nor instructions, are likely to say what they think and can abstain from the reticence or prevarication demanded by bargaining tactics. Advisory bodies composed of

national representatives, lacking these advantages, present psychological and procedural problems similar to those of political bodies.

I propose to consider in the next chapter certain of the special problems that arise in meetings when these favourable conditions do not obtain, and members are forced to bargain rather than discuss —that is in political bodies, and in those curious hermaphrodites to which the United Nations has given birth, standing advisory committees composed of government nominees.

IX

COUNCILS AND BOARDS

1. *Characteristics of Councils and Boards*

BEFORE discussing the special problems that present themselves to the administrator in his dealings with council and boards, it is necessary to consider in what way these bodies differ from other international committees.

All who have had experience of international work are aware that special problems do present themselves; but it is not possible to draw up a list of common characteristics that are peculiar to councils and boards. Almost every characteristic is either shared by one type of committee or another or alternatively is not possessed by all councils. Governments when drafting the constitutions of international organizations have not been actuated by any strict logic nor adhered to any one doctrine. On the contrary, each constitution is a compromise and a somewhat different compromise between the conflicting views and interests of the delegations present at the constituent conference.

In spite of these difficulties, however, it is possible to enumerate certain characteristics that are common to most councils and shared by them to a greater extent than they are by any other international organ; and this enumeration should present a picture sufficiently coherent and complete for our purpose.

The first characteristic common to all councils is that their constitutions and functions are determined by an international convention. They are part of the machinery for international collaboration designed and established by that convention; they cannot be changed save by constitutional amendment.

In consequence, if a council proves unsatisfactory, the administrator cannot effect a change in its constitution or its composition with the same facility as he could change most committees. He has to persuade, not an Assembly or a council that a change is necessary, but governments acting independently in their own capitals; as a rule, agreement to effect a change can only be reached by a protracted and cumbersome procedure. The case for a change must be overwhelmingly strong to have any chance of success. There is no scope for experimentation.

A number of constitutions provide also for committees or commissions. But very rarely is the constitution of these committees or commissions predetermined.

The members of councils of all international organizations controlled by an Assembly are always elected by that Assembly or predetermined by the constitution. All councils except the Executive Board of UNESCO and the Governing Body of the ILO are composed of states, not individuals. In most cases the Member States elected have the right to nominate whom they will to serve and are under no obligation to select the same person for each session. In certain cases, however, constitutional limitations restrict either the choice by the Assembly of Member States or the choice by Member States of individuals. Thus the Council of the League, the Security Council, the Trusteeship Council, the Governing Body of the ILO, and the Council of ICAO all included or include certain permanent or quasi-permanent members; the constitution of the World Health Organization lays it down that governments 'should appoint to the Board a person technically competent in the field of health';[1] and the Constitution of UNESCO provides that in electing the members of the Executive Board the General Conference shall endeavour to include 'persons competent in the arts, the humanities, the sciences, education and the diffusion of ideas'.[2]

The fact that in most cases the choice of council members lies with governments is of great administrative importance, because it implies that the actual composition of the councils is a matter of chance. There is little or no possibility of securing that balance of competence or that harmony of personalities for which the wise administrator will always strive when the election of a committee of individuals is under consideration. When, in addition, governments have the right to select different persons for each session of the council, the probability that the council will acquire an *esprit de corps* and a sense of collective responsibility is reduced. With this consideration in mind the delegates responsible for the World Health Organization's constitution stipulated, and stipulated wisely, that governments should appoint 'a person', and the rules of procedure stipulate that this person can only be replaced if prevented from attending. The UNESCO constitution in an endeavour to secure both balance and continuity goes farther and, as just noted, empowers the Conference to select individuals. Under the 1954 amend-

[1] Art. 24.

[2] Art. V, § 2.

ment, while representing their respective governments, the members of the Board exercise powers delegated to them by the Conference in the name of the Conference as a whole.

In one sense of the word, almost all councils represent Assemblies. They do not portray or typify them; but they do act as a substitute or agent for them in the interval between their sessions. Indeed that, as a rule, is their major function. The League Council, was, it is true, not an agent, although it might act on occasion in that capacity, but an independent body with parallel powers. The Security Council possesses powers which in certain respects transcend those of the Assembly and even limit them; but it is under an obligation to report to the Assembly. Other councils are primarily agents set up to supervise certain or all of the activities of the international body of which they form a part between the Assembly sessions. Today, with the exception of the Governing Body of the ILO, they all report to their Assemblies and receive instructions from them.

There has been much discussion about the Boards of UNESCO and WHO, certain governments holding the view that all political organs should be composed of governments with full powers to send whom they will as representatives. What is of major importance to the administrator is that the board should be so composed as to acquire a definite personality, a corporate sense, and a tradition. With this purpose in mind the compromise amendment to the constitution of UNESCO mentioned above provides that the Conference should elect individual delegates who would continue to represent their governments on the Board as they had at the Conference. The first Director General of WHO in the opening paragraphs of his last report[1] to the Assembly remarks:

> Any . . . failure of members of the Executive Board to recognize their exclusive responsibility to the Assembly represents the greatest possible threat to the integrity of the organization. It is absolutely essential that the Assembly should be able to feel complete confidence that the advice it receives from the Executive Board is based on technical considerations, and is entirely free from national or group interests of any kind or degree.

The emphasis here is not on corporate sense or continuity of membership, but on scientific judgement. In the case of a technical organization, this may be a major condition of success; it can be argued that it is the major condition; a board or a council, however, is not con-

[1] 1953.

cerned only with scientific or technical problems, but with the formulation of policy and as a rule with administrative and budgetary control. For these functions continuity of membership is of outstanding importance. When there is no continuity the Director General and the Secretariat have to bear too great a share of the responsibility for maintaining a logic and sequence in the decisions reached and that tradition in the conduct of discussions that every working body requires if it is to be effective.

When a council or board is composed of individuals and not of government representatives it cannot negotiate formally on behalf of governments and, as we shall see later, the problems facing the Secretariat will therefore be very similar to those which arise when it has to deal with a standing advisory committee. They differ mainly inasmuch as the Director General's own work and administration is more directly under the control of a board than of any advisory body.

In their capacity as agents, councils and boards possess varying administrative and financial powers. They are thus not only as a rule negotiating bodies concerned with the formulation of policies, but executive boards concerned with the procedure to be adopted in the execution of those policies and with defined or undefined administrative duties. These administrative and financial duties place them in varying degrees in control of the head of the administration and thus directly affect his relations to them.

In their capacity as agents, all councils without exception have the power to initiate studies and set up such committees and advisory groups as they may require and nearly all of them are responsible for the preparation of the agenda or part of the agenda of the Assembly.

2. *The Administrative Importance of the Difference between Councils and Boards*

In his day-to-day work there are six cardinal points with which the head of any international organization is constantly concerned.

(*a*) How to ensure that the policies formulated and approved by the organization he serves are in conformity with the purpose of that organization.

(*b*) How to ensure that these policies meet and if possible anticipate the real needs of the Member States.

(*c*) How to ensure that these policies are formulated in such a way as to afford a maximum chance of being accepted by governments.

(*d*) How to ensure that, once accepted, these policies are actually put into force by governments severally or, when the case arises, collectively by the organization he serves or by other means.

(*e*) How to obtain from governments the funds necessary for the work they decide should be done by his organization and to expend those funds as fruitfully as possible.

(*f*) How to obtain an efficient staff and maintain its efficiency.

When dealing with a committee, an international civil servant may have one or another of these preoccupations prominently in mind. When dealing with a council or board, he may find it impossible to lay any one of them aside, for that body may have direct responsibilities regarding all of them. Its responsibilities regarding the last point will, however, be much more limited than regarding the others; the major responsibility lies with the head of the international organization alone. It is for this reason, and not because it is of less importance, that I have placed it last on the list.

Up to this point I have considered councils and boards together; but in fact it is important to distinguish between them. Though both words are used loosely the term council is preferably applied to a body one of whose major functions is to conduct negotiations affecting government policy; the term board to a body whose major function is the execution of policies already approved by governments. It is true that the negotiations conducted by a council may fail to be binding until confirmed by a Conference or Assembly, or completely binding until some convention, treaty, or other instrument has been ratified. It is true also that boards composed of government representatives may conduct negotiations regarding, for instance, proposals to submit to their Assemblies in the course of which their members may by implication at least to some extent commit their governments. But, though the demarcation line is blurred, the distinction is important. The Council of the League, composed as it was of foreign ministers, and the Security Council of UN, composed of permanent delegates with ambassadorial rank, are, owing to the nature of their functions as well as the field of their activities, obviously profoundly different from the Boards of UNESCO or WHO. Although its field is narrow, the Council of OEEC is appropriately so termed. But the Councils of FAO and ICAO might more appropriately perhaps have been

called executive boards. I emphasize this distinction because the task (and the tactics) of the head of an international organization will not be the same when the body he serves is conducting negotiations which directly affect the policies of governments and when it is conducting negotiations regarding the execution of agreed policies by the organization of which he is in administrative charge. As a general rule he will be well advised when the issues are of major importance not to intervene directly in the first of these two classes of negotiations unless requested to do so; he will win respect and ultimate influence, not by interfering, but by not interfering. When, however, his organization is to be charged with the execution of the policies under discussion, it is clearly his duty to assure to the best of his ability that the policies proposed are practical and compatible with the purpose for which the organization was created. When the discussions relate, not to the formulation of policy, but to the execution of agreed policies by his organization, his own responsibilities are still more directly involved.

The Trusteeship Council is rather an advisory committee than a council; but like the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League it has semi-judicial functions. It is the agent of the Assembly—the Assembly's watchdog—for the supervision of the administration of trust territories. Unfortunately it is composed, not of experts, but of states. Unfortunately also it is not instructed to endeavour to formulate collective opinions, but to reach decisions by majority vote.

Had it, misguided by these instructions, pursued the same policy as ECOSOC and recorded all its votes in its reports, it might have completely undermined its authority as a supervisory body. In fact it has had the good sense to record each recommendation as an agreed collective view, and the regrettable habit of weakening a number of them by appending the 'observations of members representing their individual opinions only'. This system, while weakening the force of the recommendations, affords certain members of the Commission opportunities for political propaganda, which they are not prone to miss. In these circumstances all that the Secretariat can hope to do is to promote such measure of agreement as may be possible and when necessary redirect attention from ideological dispute to technical discussion. Both these two purposes may best be realized if it refuses to commit itself to a doctrine and abstains from taking sides. Gradually as it becomes through the passage of time the most permanent element in the Council, it should acquire, if it abstains from partisan

utterances, an experience and a status which will win respect. Thus although the Council is primarily an advisory committee, owing to its political nature the functions of the Secretariat and the tactics it should employ are similar to those required of it when working for a purely political council.

ECOSOC is charged both with political functions and with the particular task of co-ordinating the activities of the specialized agencies. These functions are, I believe, incompatible and have given rise to acute procedural and administrative difficulties. Though some of these difficulties differ in degree only from those that every council or board has to face, others are peculiar to it. I shall devote a separate section to them, both on account of their special and on account of their illustrative interest.

Executive boards differ from councils inasmuch as, although they cannot ignore and should not neglect policy, they are, nevertheless, more occupied with the execution of agreed policies than with the formulation of new policies. They also differ widely from one another both in their functions and in their composition, and all these differences have their special administrative significance.

As already mentioned, the first Director General of the World Health Organization argued in his last report that the members of the Executive Board should be responsible to the Assembly only and not to governments. This view implies a conception of the Board as the complete antithesis of the Council of the League, for if it was actually responsible to the Assembly only, it could never be a negotiating body. It would in fact be very similar to the advisory committees discussed in the last two chapters, most suitably composed of members with the same characteristics as might be sought in an efficient Director General, technical competence, administrative good sense, and world mindedness. Clearly the administrative problems of dealing with such a body would be profoundly different from those that a political council raises.

In point of fact members of the Board, or certain of them, do receive instructions and it is difficult to contend that they should not. The argument against instructions is based on the fact that the constitution stipulates that governments shall appoint to the Board persons 'technically qualified in the field of health';[1] it stipulates, however, also, that the delegates to the Assembly 'shall be chosen from among persons most qualified by their technical competence in the

[1] Art. 24.

field of health',[1] and it is obvious that these delegates must be responsible to their governments. Whether the argument can be substantiated or not, however, it reflects a fact of great administrative importance, namely that the field of activity of WHO is at once so clearly defined and so far removed from the centre of political controversy that the work of its Board is primarily executive and not political. In these circumstances its Director General can and should play a leading role in its deliberations.

The delimitation of the field of activity of an international organization does not necessarily imply that its board is primarily an executive organ, still less that it can avoid controversial political issues. Thus, though ICAO is limited in its activities to one form of transport, its Council has to deal not only with the highly technical questions of airworthiness, aeronautical telecommunications, and meteorological conditions, but with such political issues as air law and the settlement of disputes. Similarly few questions give rise to more heated discussions than the assignment of radio frequencies with which ITU, another organization with a strictly limited field, has to deal.

Under the original constitution the Executive Board of UNESCO, like that of WHO, was not a negotiating body, for its members represented not their governments, but the Conference. The field of the activities of UNESCO, however, is, unlike that of WHO, ill defined and indeed frontierless, and the major difficulty which this agency has to face is the essentially political difficulty of determining what should be done. The general scope of the work to be performed by WHO and the amount to be spent on it raise, no doubt, political issues, but the choice lies within relatively narrow limits. The choice before UNESCO is almost without limit. Moreover, the purpose of WHO, which is to 'promote and protect the health of all peoples'[2] involves few value judgements, while education and culture lie very close to the centre of political controversy today. Indeed those responsible for the conduct of UNESCO affairs are faced by the paradox that they have to apply a constitution based on liberal principles in a world almost destitute of liberal governments. The fact that in spite of its political involvement the Executive Board of UNESCO was not composed of government representatives raised for its Director General serious administrative problems, for if the Board members could never speak with the authority of their governments behind

[1] Art. 11.

[2] Constitution: Preamble.

them, they might hesitate to propose policies that do not clearly reflect the orientation of the previous Conference.

In fact, however, a different difficulty presented itself. A number of the members of the Board were as a rule Permanent Delegates of their governments attached to UNESCO and always therefore represented their governments until they entered the Board's room. As it was difficult for them to change their complexion as they crossed a Paris street, the head of the administration could never be sure whether the statements they made reflected their personal opinions or instructions received, and the task of promoting agreements was thus rendered more difficult.

The Council of FAO raises administrative problems of a somewhat different order. Composed, as it is, mainly of officials with a relatively low status in their administrative hierarchy at home reporting to ministers with, as a rule, a relatively low status in their ministerial hierarchy, it has tended to move timidly away from major political issues and to devote its time first to the technical work of the organization and later to constitutional and administrative matters of minor importance. If the Secretariat gives way to the not unnatural temptation to ignore its Council it may find itself, however excellent its technical work, deprived of the political backing it needs and furnished with inadequate funds. To canalize the important issues through an appropriate mechanism of advisory bodies in such a way as to force Council to concentrate year by year on a limited number of major issues demands both foresight in the planning of the advisory mechanism and diplomatic skill. If the skill is lacking the Council may simply pass on the reports it receives unread, unblessed, and unbacked.

The Council of ICAO also devotes much time to administrative questions, which could be settled by the head of the administration with much greater rapidity and much less waste of effort. This it does, not because it shuns major issues, but because, like the controlling body of the International Institute of Agriculture before the war, it sits in more or less permanent session. Moreover, the full-time Chairman and not the Secretary General drafts the provisional Council agenda, represents the Council at the Assembly, and exercises a large measure of influence over policy and the allocation of functions between Council, the Secretary General, and himself. The Secretary General indeed, forced to sit like an archangel at the protracted Council meetings with one wing clipped by Council and the other by its Chairman, has little time to devote to major issues of either

administration or policy. In these circumstances the most that the administration can do is to ensure that the advisory committees through which Council fortunately works are steered in the right direction by the documents laid before them. This in fact is what the Secretariat has done with marked efficiency.

The Governing Body of the ILO presents no problems comparable to those considered above. The field of activity of the organization, though it may like the universe tend to expand slowly, is at any moment of time definable and recognized. The Governing Body itself is not only a negotiating group, but a group so immediately representative of the interests its members serve that it possesses an automatic dynamism coupled with an expert knowledge. As I shall endeavour to show, a much more simple administrative procedure can be employed in this case than was possible, for instance, with the Council of the League or is possible with ECOSOC.

Other councils with their varying constitutions, compositions, and functions present still other problems. The examples given will, however, suffice to illustrate the point I wish to make, that the problems with which the heads of the various international organizations have to deal may vary widely from one another.

There is one difficulty, nevertheless, that always has to be faced and another that, although not omnipresent, is so common and so crucial as to deserve special mention. To the first I have referred already. It arises from the facts that the head of an international administration is unable to influence the composition of the body with which he has to deal and that the composition is usually a matter of chance. No thought will have been given to securing a balance of competence or avoiding a clash of personalities. There is likely to be a reasonable geographical distribution. Geographical distribution, however, is but distantly related to balance of competence, knowledge, or experience. Moreover, when changing membership is allowed, the sense of collective responsibility may be weak.

The second difficulty, one which has never been successfully solved, arises from the fact that most councils and boards have to perform functions for which quite different competences are required. They have to deal at once with principles of administration and finance and with broad problems of policy. The councils of the specialized agencies today are all in varying degrees responsible for the general administration of the offices. The Director General of the International Labour Office is 'subject to the instructions of the

Governing Body';[1] the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization is 'subject to the general supervision of the Conference and the Council';[2] the Director General of the World Health Organization 'to the authority of the Board';[3] the Council of ICAO determines the conditions of service of the Secretary General and in effect of the whole staff.[4] The constitution of UNESCO fails to define the administrative functions of either the Director General or the Executive Board, but, whatever the constitutional provisions, in practice a single board or council set up to act as executive organ or Assembly agent between two Assembly sessions must concern itself with current problems of personnel policy and must exercise some supervisory control over the financial administration. In addition, a considerable part of its time may be occupied with the election of committees, the formulation of their terms of reference, the definition of their functions, and with the determination of appropriate procedures for the execution of policies agreed by the Assembly or itself. This is all necessary and important work; but it is work which requires a type of competence, and indeed a type of personality, different from that required for the formulation of broad lines of policy or for the settlement of disputes. Statesmen will be unwilling to undertake it and, if all the work is left to officials or administrators or technical experts, however competent they may be in their own fields of activity, the organization may lack dynamism.

The need for leadership at the political level varies of course from one organization to another. For the Postal Union there is no need; for the World Health Organization the incentive afforded by an annual Conference may suffice. But for many problems of economic, agricultural, and social policy political leadership is essential. The tendency has always been for councils and boards to lack political drive and high political status except when dealing with questions immediately and obviously affecting the maintenance of peace.

The Council of the League, existing as it did before the specialization of functions which is the natural corollary of evolution, presented the unusual picture of a body highly efficient at the highest political level and neither competent nor interested in subjects other than the maintenance of peace. It was essentially a Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which tended to pass on to governments, without serious debate, the recommendations it received from the various

[1] Treaty of Versailles, para. 394 and Constitution, Art. 8.
[2] Constitution: Art. VII.
[3] Constitution: Art. 31.
[4] Constitution: Art. 58.

bodies dealing with the so-called technical questions. From administrative questions it held aloof; on budgetary questions it placed confidence in the Secretary General and the Supervisory Commission.

In this aloofness from technical questions and administrative affairs lay the Council's strength, for it enabled it to hold brief sessions attended by foreign ministers and to concentrate its attention on major issues of foreign policy. But it gave rise to special administrative problems to which I shall revert shortly.

The United Nations affords a striking contrast both to the League and to the specialized agencies. To none of the three councils on what to the statesmen at San Francisco seemed the three major fields of international concern, Security, Economic and Social Questions, and Trust Territories, were any administrative or financial powers allotted. None is charged with the supervision of the budget, none has the right to comment on the organization of the Secretariat or to discuss or approve the staff rules; to none were any residual powers given. In order to fill this hiatus in the constitution, the first Assembly set up an Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and an International Civil Service Advisory Board. As their names indicate, they are advisory only and the latter meets infrequently. I shall discuss questions of financial control in a later chapter. Here I will only observe that the absence of any body with power to decide in the intervals between meetings of the Assembly is perhaps one reason for the serious personnel difficulties that arose during the first eight years of the United Nations.

When councils have no administrative functions it should be easier to arrange the agenda in such a way as to facilitate the attendance of persons of adequate status. But the head of the administration is left without the political support he may on occasion require.

3. *Political Councils*

Although it is becoming increasingly difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between political and administrative questions, the problems that present themselves to the head of an international administration when a council is occupied with matters directly affecting the peace of the world or with other major issues of foreign policy are so different from those which arise when it is dealing with administrative or technical questions that it is convenient to consider them separately. I shall begin with the former.

Before the last world war the view both of those who framed the Covenant and those who administered the work of the League was that the Secretary General should not have a policy of his own; his job was to carry out the decisions reached by the duly accredited representatives of states and to create conditions at their meetings such as to facilitate agreed decisions being reached. He refrained from expressing an opinion unless called upon to do so and then limited himself as a rule to a view concerning what course of action would best serve the interest of the institution he served and the purposes for which it had been founded. A political council, if it is to be of any use, must be a negotiating body engaged upon reconciling diverse interests and divergent claims. If the interests and claims were quite haphazard, direct intervention by the Secretary General in favour of one side or another might involve no great risk, for *ex hypothesi* next time the cards were shuffled the interests would have changed. But they are not haphazard; they are deeply embedded in history and geography. Once he has taken sides therefore it will not unnaturally be thought that he is swayed by a particular national or local prejudice and his influence will be confined to giving some slight and diminishing advantage to the side he backed. He will be of little value as a final referee; he will have failed to acquire the position of a wise and experienced and neutral counsellor which it should be his purpose to establish.

The drafters of the UN Charter sought something more than a final referee to whom reference might or might not be made. They endeavoured to provide scope for leadership and gave the Secretary General the right to take the initiative. The experience of recent years has, I think, clearly demonstrated that these provisions of the Charter have rendered the task of the Secretary General much more difficult. Indeed the first Secretary General described it to the second as 'the most impossible job in the world'.[1] The qualities required of the Secretary General of the League in his dealings with Council were absence of prejudice, integrity, and a capacity to formulate a sound judgement on what action or policy would prove in the interest of peace and of the other objects of the Covenant. Granted he possessed all these qualities, it was certain that his opinion would be increasingly sought and that he would exercise influence without ostentation and all the risk that ostentation involves. He was neither called upon nor empowered to take the initiative. If his judgement was on any

[1] *In the Cause of Peace*, Trygve Lie, p. 417.

occasion at fault, the fault was unlikely to be on record for he would be consulted in private.

Once initiative is permitted by the constitution, either the Secretary General or public opinion may consider that by implication it is demanded, and the Secretary General is faced by the very delicate task of deciding at what point it should be taken. If it is taken early, the effect of an error of judgement may prove damaging both to his reputation and his status; if it is taken late, he may find himself open to the accusation of backing a particular party to a dispute rather than as acting, as he should act, in the interests of the institution and the purposes it serves alone. Moreover, when it is known that he has the right of initiative and of intervention which he can exercise when he will, it is less likely that he will be consulted on the initiative of others; and, if conscious of this fact, he asks government representatives to meet him so that he may express his views, he is likely to meet with a certain coldness. It is only human to take more interest in views for which you have asked than in those that are given unsolicited.

There may be good reasons for the changes introduced by the Charter; it is not my purpose to consider their merits or demerits, but only to point out that whatever the former may be, these changes have rendered the task of the Secretary General more difficult. A Director General of a technical organization may well take the reins in his hand and, granted he combines creative imagination and common sense, drive that organization to triumphant success; a Director General of a body reflecting sectional and not national interests may with appreciably greater difficulty do the same; but the causes of international friction and of world disunity are far too deep rooted today to permit of their removal by the overt action of any single world statesman. Probably the best use to which any Secretary General appointed under the UN Charter can make of the powers granted him is to lay them aside as a store of talents in a napkin to be drawn upon only when political bankruptcy is threatened. He may thus gradually gain the confidence of Council members which can more easily be gained without those powers and may enjoy the knowledge that when all others have failed he may, if he will, come into the open with some solution of his own. I am aware that the policy I suggest will be considered by many to be weak and retrograde. But nothing that has happened in the last thirty years or more gives me reason to doubt the wisdom of the view that the Secretary General of a council concerned with major issues of foreign policy

should conceive of his functions as those rather of a diplomat and administrator than of a minister of state when dealing with political questions.

That does not imply that the task he has to undertake is passive and of minor importance or that he should sit back in the hope or expectation that sooner or later he may be consulted. On the contrary, he has a positive role to play which may prove of vital importance when negotiations are being conducted. The complex nature of that task will become most easily apparent if we consider an occasion on which the negotiations relate not to a sudden crisis threatening the peace of the world, but to the gradual elaboration of a common policy implying some sacrifice by states of interests which all would accept as legitimate.

As I have said above, his primary duty is to endeavour to create the conditions and the atmosphere most favourable for the successful conclusions of the negotiations undertaken. This is a difficult task, if only because too little thought has been given to the processes by which agreement is reached. In fact, in spite of all the knowledge gained since 1919, we are still in an experimental stage. No experienced international civil servant would venture to assert that this or that procedure is in all cases likely to prove successful. There is no agreed doctrine, no clear guide to what should be done. Nevertheless, past experience would seem to suggest certain conclusions which indicate the nature of the functions of the Secretariat and especially of the head of the administration when a council undertakes important negotiations with a view to the formulation of an agreed policy by Member States.

The problem of how agreement can best be reached is different from that with which the administrator has to deal when endeavouring to promote the formulation of a collective opinion by an advisory committee, because the purpose of the discussions in a council is to bind governments in so far as they can be bound by their representatives and because those representatives are working under instructions received before the negotiations start. It differs also from the problem of how agreement is reached in, for instance, national parliamentary committees for an additional reason, namely, that in national committees there is likely to be a much greater knowledge of the relevant facts.

In order to promote agreement therefore and to obviate the risk of discord arising owing to ignorance, the first essential step in inter-

national affairs, whenever the subject under discussion is at all complex, must be to induce the council to obtain an objective statement of the relevant facts. This may imply a great deal of preliminary work and will in any case imply an important decision regarding the most suitable method of ascertaining the facts. The head of the administration should be in a position to advise whether the work can be best undertaken by the Secretariat, or by a group of experts, or by a working party of national officials. Whatever the procedure, it is at least certain that the subject is not ripe for discussion about policy until the facts are ascertained and generally agreed, if not agreed in every detail.

In discussions which have not been carefully planned there is always a serious risk of waste of time, patience, and good will because the participants are basing their arguments on quite different assumptions regarding the facts. A clear presentation of the facts, moreover, not only obviates this risk, but may have itself a tremendous persuasive force. One of the best illustrations of this was afforded by the early discussions of OEEC about the division of Marshall Aid. Few subjects are more likely to lead to discord than the division of the fruits of war or benevolence. In this case there was, of course, the strongest of all incentives to reach an agreement, namely, that failure would result in loss to all. But there can, I believe, be no doubt that the picture of the general European situation which OEEC drew up with so much care proved more persuasive than any of the *ex-parte* arguments put forward by the representatives of individual states.

The purpose of this first step therefore is negatively to avoid disputes arising out of ignorance and positively to allow the facts to exercise their automatic persuasive influence. The second logical step is to ascertain with as much precision as the circumstances and prudence permit the points at which there is real divergence of interests, the points at which prejudice and emotions cause disagreement irrespective of material interests and, in addition, to throw some light if possible on the nature of the instructions under which the various members begin their discussions and, still more difficult, the probable limits to possible concessions set by public opinion and the balance of political forces in the respective countries. A complete picture of this category of fact cannot, of course, be obtained, but gradually, as the discussions proceed, more and more of it will be divulged. At this stage in the discussions the tactics pursued by the chairman and the

advice given by the head of the administration may prove of vital importance. For, on the one hand, it is desirable to obtain as complete a picture on the four points I have mentioned as possible, and on the other hand, it is most important that members should not make statements regarding their attitude in terms so absolute as to render later concessions difficult. Prudence demands therefore that the chairman should not press for a clarification of rather confused statements too early. I well remember an extremely able and logically minded chairman of a commission in an early post-war conference summarizing each statement made with a perfect clarity of expression and, whenever any point had been left obscure or apparently confused, asking the member who had spoken to elucidate it. This is exactly what he should not have done and any experienced international official would have lent him a restraining hand. The chairman assumed that the members were stupid when their speeches were confused. In fact they may merely have wished to avoid binding themselves early in the discussions by categorical statements.

Important as the judgement and discretion of the chairman are at this stage, it is after the factual picture and the picture of attitudes have been presented that his role and that of his secretariat advisers may exercise a crucial influence on creating the conditions and atmosphere conducive to ultimate agreement.

Whenever the subject under discussion is at all complex it will generally be found that there are a considerable number of minor points of discord and one or two major issues. In these circumstances a continuation of the formal debate is likely to prove not only useless but positively dangerous. What is important is to afford time for reflection and for private informal discussions. It may for this purpose be necessary to have a formal meeting in public or in private to agree procedure. It may be necessary to appoint a steering committee or one or more *rapporteurs*. The procedure to be adopted will depend on the size of the council, the number of available experts, and similar factors. But whatever the special circumstances, certain guiding principles are likely to prove applicable.

The first is that agreement breeds agreement. The points at issue therefore require classification so that specific points of discord may be referred to small groups composed of the parties mainly interested. This is the procedure habitually adopted by GATT. Secondly, these group discussions will as a rule be most likely to lead to a fruitful result if they are held under the chairmanship of a neutral member of

the council or in the presence of a neutral *rapporteur* or in the room of the Secretary General or a director. In some cases, however, when in fact only two delegations are at loggerheads, it may be wise for the *rapporteur*, for instance, not to participate until asked to do so.

In the planning of these group discussions there are two further principles which have proved their value, first that it is wise to allow every question to be settled at the lowest practical level, leaving the senior delegates free for the major issues and free to act *ad referendum*, and secondly that they should be confined to the smallest possible number of countries, that is, to the real disputants. If the initial classification of disputed points has been well drawn up, a number of agreements should be reached without great delay, which should be reported to council meeting in private in the first instance and in public later. New difficulties will, however, arise. It may be found that some government that was not thought to be vitally interested disagrees with the agreement reached and the group discussion will have to be resumed and the group enlarged, or on reflection or reference back to headquarters a delegate who has reached a preliminary agreement may back out because he wishes to reserve a particular question as a bargaining point when the major issues are discussed. But by this procedure of breaking down the whole subject into its component parts and reaching agreement in so far as possible on one point after another, the ground is cleared of many impediments and, still more important, an atmosphere is created favourable to a solution of the major issues.

I set out this procedure at length, not in order to describe a model, but to demonstrate the fact that the head of the administration and the Secretariat as a whole, without preaching a doctrine of its own or supporting one side in a dispute, has an extremely important diplomatic and advisory role to play. The proper function of the Secretariat is to promote mutual understanding; it is not, when governments are negotiating with each other on a major issue of foreign policy, to endeavour to force down their throats in the absence of such mutual understanding some ready-made solution of its own. Only when the policies proposed run counter to the obligations assumed by states in the convention setting up an international organization is the head of that organization himself under an obligation to intervene directly, whatever the subject under consideration. But when the Secretariat can make a real contribution to knowledge

and understanding or when the policies proposed relate to the work to be carried out by it he should not hesitate to take the lead.

4. *Executive Boards*

The discussions that take place at the executive boards of specialized agencies are largely concerned with the activities of those agencies, and in consequence the role their directors are called upon to play in those discussions is widely different from that perhaps more difficult diplomatic role required when political councils are engaged upon political negotiations.

As always their task is to promote the conditions under which agreement can most easily be reached, to obviate waste of time on questions not ripe for settlement, to arrange for the presentation at least of the factual picture, and when appropriate of an analysis of it and an authoritative opinion about it. But in so far as the decisions relate to the work of his organization, the head of an international administration is concerned with the content of those decisions as well as the means by which they are reached. He is one of the directly interested parties. Furthermore, even when the decisions relate to the policies of governments towards each other in the restricted field of a specialized agency, or when the object is to induce governments to formulate parallel policies in such a field, the Secretariat of the agency should be a unique source of information regarding the world situation, and acquire authority on that account. It is natural and proper, for instance, that the Secretariat of the ILO should play an important part in the drafting of labour conventions as it was that the Secretariat of the Economic and Financial Section of the League should have played an important part in the elaboration of schemes of financial reconstruction.

The duties of the international administrator when dealing with a political council concerned with foreign policy issues of major importance are therefore at once diplomatic and administrative. When he is dealing with other councils or boards they are, as always, in international life, partly diplomatic, but they are mainly creative and administrative. When an executive board is concerned with an agreed programme more than suggestions are required; it falls to the head of the administration to elaborate detailed plans both for the execution of that programme and for its subsequent development. These boards, however, as we have seen, differ so much in the range and nature of their activities that it would be unrealistic to group them

together and consider them as a whole. I propose instead to consider separately certain problems of procedure and organization and to illustrate the various issues that arise by reference to one or another of these bodies. The procedural problems may be both difficult and of vital importance—how important is shown by the experience of ECOSOC which plays a role intermediate between that of a political council and a board.

5. *The Economic and Social Council*

Although I am concerned with general principles and not with the specific problems of any single body, so many lessons may be learnt from the early days of ECOSOC that even at the risk of repetition I propose to examine in some little detail the procedural difficulties that beset it during this period.

Composed of government delegates and directly responsible to the Assembly of UN it might have been expected to become the most important body for the negotiation of multi-national economic and social policies. But although it has promoted a number of international conventions and given a certain lead to the specialized agencies, its record has been disappointing. For this disappointing record its own procedure has, I believe, been largely responsible. This was, however, a secondary cause; the three fundamental causes were first the cold war, secondly the fact that it was charged with incompatible functions, and thirdly the fact that those functions were so numerous that its agenda was habitually overloaded and in consequence persons of ministerial rank are unwilling to attend its meetings.

The second and third of these primary causes implied a procedure which the first rendered it difficult to pursue. Its functions are incompatible because it is at once the body instructed to co-ordinate the activities of the specialized agencies and in effect the board of a specialized agency; it is at once the co-ordinator and the co-ordinated. Its agenda is overcharged, not only because either one of these two functions would be more than sufficient, but also because it is empowered by the Charter and instructed by the Assembly to deal with the quite distinct and essentially political question of human rights, and because it devotes its time, not only to the specialized agencies, but also to the non-governmental organizations. Moreover, in its capacity as a specialized agency it has not confined itself to international relations or even concentrated its major attention on them, but following

the trend to which I alluded in Chapter II has devoted a large part of its time to laying down principles of domestic policy. The range of questions for which such principles may be formulated is infinite.

Charged with incompatible functions and faced by the prospect of a volume of work that threatened to become a funeral pile, ECOSOC proceeded to erect a structure of advisory commissions and sub-commissions, of regional commissions, of sub-committees and working parties; it promoted the foundation of new specialized agencies; it arranged for the creation of such inter-institutional bodies as the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Technical Assistance Board. As a result of this structural activity we find that, to take a single year by way of illustration, by 1952 'there were fourteen sub-committees and working parties reporting to it, eleven functional commissions and sub-commissions, three regional commissions, eleven specialized agencies and a miscellaneous group of eight other bodies, a total of 47 reporting bodies'.[1] In addition there were 109 non-governmental organizations with the right to submit 'written statements relevant to the work of the Council'.[2]

In dealing with this multiplicity of reporting bodies and consequent profusion of documents ECOSOC added to its own burden by adopting the practice of making long and formal speeches in public addressed in part to the point and in part to the gallery, by conducting a cold war of words, by passing resolutions on each item on its agenda, by taking a formal vote on each resolution passed. It would seem, judging from its procedure, to have viewed itself, not as a working body, but as an embryo parliament, devoting its energies rather to the ventilation of ideas than to the solution of problems. It assumed indeed a new function not clearly foreseen in the Charter, namely that of compiling an international Hansard on economic and social questions. This relieved it of the need to seek agreement; it saved work, but not time. The only recommendation required was that the Assembly or a specialized agency or a commission should read the record of debates.

It devoted much time to admonition and exhortation regarding matters of domestic policy, passing resolutions, for instance, recommending governments 'to consider the problems of raising productivity as an integral part of their efforts to raise the level of their

[1] *International Organization*, vol. vii, no. 3, pp. 326–7, Suggestions for the Reform of the UN Economic and Social Machinery, A. Loveday.

[2] Resolution 288, Part IV, para. 22.

national production';[1] inviting them to 'extend all appropriate assistance towards the formation and development of co-operatives',[2] and the Secretary General with the help of others to report on how this might be done and where; urging governments to 'ensure equality of rights and duties of husband and wife in family matters'.[3] When, as in all these cases, no agreement was sought regarding ways and means and the recommendation was confined to blessing co-operatives or productivity or parity of husbands and wives no rational limit to the items that might be placed on the agenda made itself apparent.

The Council added further to its burdens by adopting the habit of rediscussing *in extenso* at its plenary meetings subjects which had already been discussed by its advisory commissions and its own committees. When as a result of a threefold discussion no agreement could be reached, reluctant to bury its dead, it requested the Secretariat or some other body to prepare another document.[4] Furthermore, no procedural matter was allowed to escape its vigilance. No commission or committee was allowed to decide on its methods of work. For all the Council itself approved or drafted detailed rules of procedure.

Once the structure of ancillary and peripheral bodies was completed and those bodies proceeded to pour in the reports demanded, the Council became aware of the risk of suffocation and repeatedly devoted lengthy discussions to considering how its discussions could be rendered less lengthy. A number of devices were adopted prior to 1954. Commissions were suppressed or suspended or instructed to meet at less frequent intervals, attempts to reach agreement were, as already mentioned, abandoned on occasion and the simple record of speeches made passed on for digestion by others; the chairman and Secretariat were charged with the task of writing the Council's report to the Assembly after the close of the summer session; the Secretary General was requested to appoint certain of the advisory committees himself; the rules of procedure were amended and reamended; the agenda was rearranged and rearranged again. But not until 1954 when the second Secretary General came forward with a radical proposal for the suppression or curtailment of documents and the Council formally recognized the need for 'concentrating on the most

[1] Resolution 416, E.1. (a).
[2] Resolution 512, II. 1 and 2 (a) and (b).
[3] Resolution 504, D. (a).
[4] See in this connexion report of the Secretary General on the organization and operation of the Council and its commissions. 13 May 1954. E/2598.

important and pressing problems'[1] was there any real attempt to screen or expurgate the agenda. Then four measures of administrative interest were taken: the Secretary General's proposals to reduce the documentation was enthusiastically endorsed, governments were invited to give preference when proposing items to those 'which lend themselves to constructive action',[2] the Secretary General was requested to introduce the debates on two major recurrent questions, and the Council fixed time limits for its sessions.

Although these measures, and especially the policy of self-squeeze implied in the last, were all likely to have some beneficial effect, the Council never seriously considered its fundamental difficulty that it was charged, as co-ordinator and as one of the bodies to be co-ordinated, with incompatible functions. In fact ECOSOC can scarcely hope to become an effective working institution so long as its functions are incompatible. To render them compatible it would be necessary to transfer all its specialized agency tasks to another body and to make the Human Rights Commission a Commission of the Assembly. As early as 1946 ECOSOC did in fact suggest what almost amounted to the first of these two reforms when it promoted a conference for the creation of an international trade organization. The present paradoxical situation is due largely to the failure to ratify the ITO charter or rather from the mistake of writing into that charter a doctrine in addition to a constitution. I am not, however, concerned with constitutions in this book,[3] but with administration, and so long as governments are unwilling to make a radical change, a procedural problem will present itself for which the Council members and the administration must find some makeshift solution. ECOSOC can meet it partially by refusing, whenever possible, to assume functions incompatible with those that result from the fact that it is the apex of the international structure of economic and social councils. But even granted this possibility, its agenda is likely to remain overcharged. In this respect its difficulties differ in degree rather than in kind from those that all executive boards have to face, for their agendas are habitually overcharged. The problem of an overcharged agenda is normally solved by the application of three principles of council procedure: elimination, predigestion, and delegation. I

[1] Resolution 557, B. II.

[2] Ibid., I.B. para. 4.

[3] I have set out the broad principles of what seem to me the major changes required in Suggestions for the Reform of the UN Economic and Social Machinery: *International Organization*, vol. vii, no. 3.

propose to discuss these principles in a more general setting and the role the Secretariat may play later in this chapter.

In the 1954 resolution mentioned above ECOSOC was mainly concerned with elimination, requesting governments to hold their hands; accepting the Secretary General's pruning proposals; suppressing, as it did, the Fiscal Commission's activities in domestic affairs; instructing other commissions to meet only once every two years. It shifted its attention therefore to some extent from national to international affairs and abandoned the effort to do everything simultaneously in a hurry. But it did not delegate nor arrange for predigestion. On the contrary it decided to constitute a Commission on International Commodity Trade, although FAO had already set up a Committee on Commodity Problems and there was nothing to prevent GATT undertaking any work in this field outside FAO's competence; by applying its narcotic to other commissions it reduced, if these commissions had any value, its power to arrange for the predigestion of the subjects with which they had to deal.

ECOSOC indeed has never made provision for predigestion. Its commissions formed in its own image have with the honourable exception of the Statistical Commission, seldom attempted to furnish reasoned reports or a collective opinion. The principle of predigestion implies that a council, having allowed a subject to pass through its sieve, and to appear on its agenda, and having discussed that subject sufficiently to enable it to formulate the issues involved, refrains from further discussion until it receives from some advisory body, not a record of votes and individual opinions as it does from most of its commissions today, but a reasoned and agreed statement indicating the manner in which the problem might be solved should governments so wish or the fact that the question is unripe for solution.

The principle of delegation implies a willingness not only to delegate some work and authority to others but to place trust in them. Since 1954 ECOSOC has shown a somewhat greater willingness to delegate work to sub-committees and working parties and to endorse their conclusions without further protracted debate. Prior to that year it suffered as much from its own *mores* as from its constitution and from its organizational procedure, and in consequence the task of the administration has been beset with difficulties. The head of an international administration can apply principles to his staff, he can only suggest them to his council.

6. *Sources of Ideas and the Pre-formulation of Policies*

ECOSOC has suffered from an overloaded agenda and from a surfeit of ideas, and this is a common experience. All councils and boards must pay attention to the sources from which policy proposals spring and the means by which the dross is eliminated from them. It will prove convenient to consider what I have called the principle of predigestion together with the question of sources, because when the source is lacking in discrimination trouble is likely to arise.

As we have seen, when dealing with his council, two of the first preoccupations of the head of an international administration are how to anticipate real needs and how to ensure that the policies formulated promote the purposes of the organization he serves. To satisfy the first it is necessary not only to tap sources of ideas, but to select those ideas that originate in discomfort or the threat of discomfort in the future. If all is well and set fair there is no need for action.

The importance of devising means for keeping in touch with public opinion over a wide area and for foreseeing future needs no international organization can afford to neglect. A national government is subject to constant pressure from the press and other organs of public opinion. It tests its ability to interpret that opinion correctly at elections. There is little comparable international public opinion and still less international press to make its influence felt, and the attention paid by national papers to international work not directly concerned with the maintenance of peace is spasmodic and erratic. Some specialized agencies, WHO especially, enjoy the advantage of an intelligent and vocal professional opinion. But except for the ILO with its tripartite system, unless they devise some efficient stethoscope, specialized agencies are compelled to rely mainly on the opinion of national civil servants, who themselves suffer from living in a certain isolation.

ECOSOC as the body charged with the co-ordination of the activities of the specialized agencies is less concerned with this problem than the agencies themselves. It would, as I have argued, work more efficiently were it to confine its attention to co-ordination alone; acting in its capacity of co-ordinator it can look to the agencies for proposals that it should undertake the study of questions that transcend the competence of any one of them, and from the galaxy of non-governmental organizations to which it sacrifices so much of its

time it may expect at least an occasional ray of light. For ECOSOC, it is not the source but the sifting and canalization of ideas that presents a real problem.

For the League Council, on the contrary, the absence of an obvious and automatic source did present a real problem—all the more real as the Council itself was only actively interested in the maintenance of peace. It endeavoured to provide a source by the creation of advisory committees of sufficient status and in certain cases by convening regular or special conferences. The League Council is of interest here, not as a page of history, I am not concerned with history, but as an example of a problem that is likely to present itself to any council or board, namely, what procedure should be adopted when its field of activity is wider than the competence of its members. To that question there is no single answer applicable in all circumstances. In international affairs the answer will depend largely on how far the questions falling outside the ambit of the council's competence imply international negotiations and to what extent the outcome of those negotiations commit governments. When standing advisory committees are appropriate they go far to meet the need for a source of ideas and at the same time are the most effective sieve for the elimination of dross. Though the League solution is of more than historical interest, standing advisory committees are not necessarily appropriate in all cases. They are likely to prove of value in any area in which a council or board is not competent. It follows therefore that the wider the field with which any council has to deal, the greater will be the probability of such advisory committees proving useful. No body of twelve to eighteen men can hope to be competent in more than a somewhat narrow range of subjects. It follows also that when the field of activity of any specialized agency is ill defined, the need for advisory committees is likely to be felt. It would be unreasonable to expect the members of the Executive Board of UNESCO to be competent in all the subjects with which they may be called upon to deal, or even all the subjects likely to form a permanent item on their agenda. There would seem to be an *a priori* case, therefore, in favour of the use of standing advisory committees by both bodies. But their needs are very different. What is especially required by ECOSOC is a thorough predigestion of problems by persons not tied by government instructions, so that the Council itself may be seized of carefully elaborated and carefully argued proposals and not waste its time on discussing subjects until this preliminary work has been done.

What is required also is that the preliminary work should be objective and not a low-level political compromise. Hence the committees should be composed of independent experts and not of government nominees. But the preliminary work required by the Board of UNESCO is rather that of selection than of predigestion. The problem that faces the Board is not primarily how to reach agreement between opposed national interests, but what the agency itself should do in order to promote the interests it was created to serve. Dealing as it does with very disparate subjects it requires carefully reasoned advice about the next step to take in each of its major fields of activity, but it does not require as a rule suggestions for the adaptation of national policies to international needs.

As we have seen, the fields of activity of both the ILO and WHO are relatively determinate and for this reason permanent advisory committees are less essential. A major function of the Governing Body of the ILO is to conduct negotiations on controversial political issues and it might at first sight appear that an objective prior consideration of these issues would be required. But in fact the employers' and workers' representatives are experts as well as delegates, and with the government representatives playing the part of moderator, the service that an advisory committee could play is clearly limited. Certain questions do, however, fall outside the normal competence of the Governing Body, which has in consequence set up standing committees of experts, for instance, on Social Policy in Non-Metropolitan Areas and on Indigenous Labour, and also a Permanent Agricultural Committee.

The FAO, concentrating on the scientific side of its work, has abolished most of its standing advisory committees, and indeed as the laws of nature are not like the policies and emotions of mankind in a state of constant flux, there is not the same need to give a permanent watching brief to whatever committee may be called upon to advise. It did, however, retain its Committee on Commodity Problems, which is instructed to 'interpret the international commodity situation and advise the Council on suitable action'.[1] It will be noted that the Conference which set up this committee specifically instructed it to advise on the policies to be considered. The committee was designed to be a source of policy ideas, as were the advisory committees of the League.

When executive boards deal largely with scientific work and for

[1] See *Report of Special Session of Conference*, Nov. 1950, section on commodity problems.

that reason do not feel the need for standing advisory committees, the head of the administration has to seek other means for tapping ideas and opinion, for ascertaining where the shoe pinches or is likely to pinch. He may suggest the appointment of panels or regional commissions; he may rely on the Secretariat alone or on reports from regional field workers; he may rely on regional conferences.

As we saw in Chapter VII there has been a great variety of practice in recent years regarding both the constitution of expert committees and the closeness of their attachment to the council or board. In some cases these committees are appointed by or report to the head of the administration alone and it is open to him to pass on the reports received to his council or not as he will. I have discussed the disadvantages of this system already at some length and will only repeat here that such a procedure weakens rather than strengthens the position of the head of the administration, lessens the authority of the committee, and may deprive the council or board of collective views of value to it. A Director General of a specialized agency, for instance, who attempts to make himself the sole channel of communication between his board and expert opinion, weakens his position because he opens himself to the accusation of pursuing a personal policy and twisting or suppressing the advice he receives, and because, when in fact he is pursuing a personal policy, he will have much better chances of success if he can induce an expert body to adopt it as theirs and submit it to his board with their full backing. When he has no policy of his own, the experts should be allowed to have their views considered in the form in which they have expressed them and not through the mouth of a third party. The experts' views should therefore always be submitted to the council or board except when the head of the administration has been instructed to prepare a report and has obtained permission to consult experts before doing so.

Ad hoc committees are less satisfactory than standing committees as advisory bodies for the long-term evolution of policy because they lack continuity of thought. That fact, however, does not affect the general principle that the links between councils and boards and advisory bodies set up should be as close as possible. Those links may be strengthened by the appointment of *rapporteurs* as a channel of communication. Before discussing the function of *rapporteurs*, however, it is necessary to consider the other sources of ideas available to the head of an administration.

For international organizations when dealing with inter-state or

human relations as distinguished from the application of the natural sciences the Secretariat should through its research work prove an important source of ideas. An international organization is able to conduct and should conduct a type of research for which universities are ill equipped. From the official statistics, records, and laws it receives from all Member States automatically it can construct a world or regional picture, can trace world and regional trends, can compare national legislation and policies, and allow the pictures of fact and intention to teach their own lesson. It is better placed than any other body to show where an adjustment of policy or practice may have beneficial results, and if the research is objective and thorough and earns the reputation it should, it can exercise a very real influence. The Secretariat's function is not to preach a doctrine, but to add to knowledge and to allow the collected and digested data to exercise their own automatic influence. That influence may act indirectly on the opinion of a widely scattered public or directly on council, board, or Assembly. What is essential is that the work done should be pragmatic, honest, thorough, and free from all political interference or control.

Today the Secretariats of the specialized agencies with field workers all over the world engaged on technical assistance and other work can also with much greater ease gather evidence about what at least are believed to be or to be likely to become the major problems requiring attention than was possible in the inter-war period. Moreover, through their regional organizations or regional conferences they can with greater ease obtain a detailed world picture. It is natural therefore that the executive boards of these agencies should look in the first instance to their Secretariats as sources of ideas regarding policy.

But, however fertile in ideas and dynamic the Secretariat may be, it and the board alone can seldom constitute a sufficiently broad and solid basis for the formulation of policy.

A very large and an increasing proportion of the time of the boards of technical agencies is occupied with planning the work, the studies, inquiries, 'projects', &c., of the office. On this work the Director General will be expected to have definite views and a definite policy for which he is anxious to obtain the board's approval. But more than this is required. For the work, however well done, to be successful the Director General needs not only the approval of the board, but its whole-hearted support; he needs also at a later stage the approval

and support of the Assembly and at all stages not only that governments should agree but that they should take a lively and active interest. This approval, support, and interest can always be best assured if all parties have the sentiment that the work undertaken is due rather to their initiative than to the initiative of another body or of a single individual, and great skill is required to achieve this result. Much more than a problem of tactics is involved. An international organization to be successful in the long run must spring from the grass roots over a wide field. Special circumstances will determine the choice of means. What is important is that the Director General should present his policy to the board with as wide and as genuine prior support as possible. He should never place himself in the position of being the sole international advisor to his board.

Moreover, for a Director General to rely on the Secretariat alone as a source of the ideas and policies to submit to an executive board, while it may be apparently successful for a time, presents latent dangers which are far from negligible. When a new agency is created it is likely to attract a number of persons of constructive imagination and executive ability. But no Secretariat can be sure of maintaining the level of competence and enthusiasm that may, if it is fortunate, characterize its early constructive years and does without doubt characterize certain specialized agencies today. It is likely sooner or later to develop a certain sclerosis with age and to attract less dynamic people when its first creative period is past. There is a further danger, that even in its early years and more especially later the Secretariat in the advice it gives, unless it is quite unusually hard-headed, will tend to respond too readily to the suggestions it receives from one quarter or another and prove weak in the difficult task of selection.

Today when specialized agencies spend much of their time, energy, and financial resources in rendering special services to individual countries or interested groups of individuals, this task of selection (and rejection) has acquired an enhanced importance. It should not fall to the Secretariat alone even in the first instance, and a board is not well served if the whole burden of choice is placed on it. Some preliminary sifting is always required. When standing advisory committees or panels exist, much of this preliminary work will automatically fall to them; when they do not, it may be necessary to refer it to a sub-committee or a working party. Such sub-committees, however, though of great use for screening proposals, are not likely to prove to be endowed with much creative imagination.

I referred above to regional commissions and other regional organizations as a possible source of proposals for policy and in certain cases as instruments for sifting proposals and projects. Some form of regional organization or of regional conferences is without doubt frequently of value. But elaborate regional organizations may tend to develop into semi-independent kingdoms and strengthen, if not create, pressure groups at Assembly meetings; and general conferences without any elaborate regional machinery are not likely to produce a large crop of useful proposals. Regional conferences have, I understand, already given rise to considerable disappointment amongst officials who placed high hopes on their fruitfulness. That they are not more fruitful, and especially that they seldom anticipate later needs, is due to the fact on which I have insisted already, namely that ideas of value originate in the course of work, not in the sky, and that therefore the most constructive proposals regarding collective policies spring from the work of a standing body charged with the formulation of a collective opinion. A regional conference is most likely to prove of value if it is not viewed as a bran pie from which surprise prizes may be drawn, but is very carefully organized and is given a restricted agenda on which a great deal of preliminary work has been done in advance. Conferences of national committees have also caused disappointment and in fact have suffered from the same inevitable weakness as more formal governmental regional conferences. National committees are more likely to be of value as supplementary instruments for the national application of agreed policies or for the propagation of the ideas underlying those policies than as fountains of original thought and ideas. To the head of an international organization they and regional conferences also are ancillary sources and not more.

In the absence of standing advisory committees therefore, although other sources may be tapped, the Secretariat may find that by far the major responsibility for formulating policy suggestions falls on it. For a time, possibly a very considerable time, it may assume this responsibility with complete success; but as stated above, there is always the danger that it will become unimaginative and insensitive and that the international organization may become unconstructive and miss opportunities of doing useful work. The more the organization is concerned with human relations rather than with scientific laws the greater that danger will be unless the board itself represents vital group interests other than those of governments.

There has been a tendency among some board members in recent years to consider themselves simply as executive agents of their Conference, to which they look as the sole source of policy. This tendency is not unnatural when the board members are officials accustomed at home to receive policy instructions from their ministers. One of the duties imposed on all boards, however, is to put forward proposals for the Conference agenda. The Conference must take the final decisions about policies, but in the absence of any cabinet system, these decisions will be haphazard and lacking in coherence if it cannot look to its board for guidance. When a board suffers from timidity or official blinkers it becomes all the more incumbent on the head of the administration so to organize its work as to render it possible for persons accustomed to assuming responsibility to attend its meetings.

7. *The Organization of Work*

The less fully questions have been subjected to expert appraisal before the meeting of a council or board the more necessary it is to organize the work in such a way as to relieve its members of all avoidable detail and allow them time to devote to major questions of policy as and when they arise. Those questions may arise in connexion with the preparation of the agenda of a forthcoming conference; they may relate to the general orientation of the work of the organization, which when a change is contemplated will demand careful thought for a considerable time before any specific proposal can be put forward. The general emphasis of ILO activities since the last war, for instance, has been gradually shifted from the negotiation of international standards of social policy to the development of co-operation and mutual assistance among nations with a view to achieving a greater measure of social welfare. Although that shift was in conformity with the resolutions adopted at Philadelphia in 1944, it did not result from any single decision of the Conference or Governing Body, but from a deliberate and gradual change in the broad lines of policy. For all policy decisions and policy development time for reflection as well as debate is essential.

Whatever the special circumstances, experience shows that it is in practice almost always difficult to arrange for a council or board to enjoy sufficient time for reflection and for the gradual ripening of a collective opinion and a sound judgement. To make the best possible arrangement is perhaps the major tactical task of the head of the administration. UNESCO has experimented with the excellent

system of informal week-ends away from headquarters at which the members of the board and the Director General review policy in quite informal discussions. Informal discussions of this sort held in private, ranging over a wide field, unencumbered by documents or an agenda, at which each member can think aloud and off the record, are, granted that the Director General consults with his directors beforehand, much more likely to lead to mutual understanding and a collective opinion and the emergence of a constructive and coherent policy than months of formal debate in public meetings.

When such a procedure proves impossible either on account of the size of the board or for any other reason, time for reflection must be provided. Time may be provided either by cutting down the number of items on the agenda or by delegation and orderly discussion. In the case of an executive board supervising the day-to-day work of a specialized agency the Director General can contribute to the curtailment of the agenda by refraining from raising issues of minor importance and assuming responsibility himself.

When a council attaches importance to its functions as a debating society rather than as a negotiating group or an executive body, if any results other than the record of speeches are to be achieved without a very costly expenditure of time, it must delegate to sub-committees. In such circumstances to refer questions to a 'committee of the whole' meeting in public involves the serious risk that the committee will assume the same complexion as the parent body and also become an embryo parliament. A council may be justified in the belief that it renders a service to the world by ventilating opinion. It can scarcely argue, however, that that service is greatly enhanced by duplicating or triplicating it. ECOSOC, for instance, would be a much more effective body if its sub-committees were working groups meeting in private and producing, for Council's approval, reasoned proposals without any record of individual speeches. Once a speech made in a sub-committee is recorded in that sub-committee's report, the delegate responsible for it is naturally tempted to restate his case in plenary even if he has agreed to the substance of the report.

The need for delegation is more dependent on the *mores* of a council than on its size. For ECOSOC it is indispensable; it is much less necessary for the Governing Body of the ILO, though the Governing Body has forty members and ECOSOC only eighteen. The reason for this is that all the members of the Governing Body do not think it incumbent on them to speak. On the contrary the employers' and

workers' groups each select a spokesman and even government representatives will on occasion select group spokesmen. In fact, however, the Governing Body does work through sub-committees, certain of which have extremely important functions. For instance, no policy proposal can be considered by the Governing Body before it has been agreed by the Finance Sub-committee, a tripartite body on which each member has one vote.

Like the League Council, the Governing Body works on the principle that unless there are special reasons to the contrary, it should accept the recommendations of its sub-committees without further to-do. This excellent principle is rendered easier of application by the tripartite nature of the Governing Body's composition. But no system of delegation can possibly work unless the delegating authority is prepared not only to entrust certain of its members or advisers with the task of studying and reporting on a question, but is prepared, when there are no special reasons to the contrary, to accept the advice it receives without rediscussing the matter itself. The processes by which any body develops a business-like tradition are not only lengthy but obscure. A rigid determination on the part of the administration, however, that such a tradition shall develop should in the end bear fruit.

8. *Negotiating Committees of National Officials*

I argued in Chapter VII that advisory committees are, as a rule, best composed of persons serving in an individual capacity in part because, if they are composed of government representatives they are liable to degenerate into negotiating bodies at a low diplomatic level and be less likely than council itself to break new ice. But for one class of work committees of officials nominated by governments may prove of real value granted one condition. They are useful, indeed indispensable, when governments have agreed a general line of policy the full application of which requires a series of national administrative adjustments over a field wider than council's technical competence. The Air Navigation Commission of ICAO affords a good illustration. Its function is to recommend to Council and through it to governments modifications suggested by experience or necessitated by technical changes in international standards and practices. These recommendations when adopted by Council become annexes to the Convention on Civil Aviation. What is required in this case is not ideas concerning broad lines of policy but proposals

for administrative change. The essential condition for the success of such a committee is that council should be predisposed to accept the recommendations it receives. As the Commission's membership must be a matter of chance, since it is composed of Government nominees, the quality of its work over the years will depend on the quality of the drafts submitted to it by the Secretariat, and the major task of the head of the administration in this connexion is to select competent staff.

In the example I have chosen the line of policy and the procedure are laid down by the Convention and the role of the Secretariat is therefore technical. Administrative negotiating committees may, however, prove of value even when policy is much less well defined provided the problems on which agreement is sought can be broken down into a number of relatively restricted issues which can be settled at the administrative level. In such circumstances success is likely to depend largely on the ability of the Secretariat to work out in advance for consideration by council a logical analysis of the issues and the types of committees required, and on its ability to steer these committees once they meet.

Satisfactory results are most likely to be achieved if the groups can be kept small. This fact renders the work of such bodies as OEEC and the Regional Commissions of ECOSOC much easier than that of the UN. Results are also more easily attained if the range of subjects to be treated is kept narrow. But if narrowed too finely governments are unlikely to send representatives able or willing to assume any considerable degree of responsibility and agreement may be quite seriously impeded by their limitations. Great skill is therefore required in defining the subjects in such a way as to afford a maximum chance for the negotiations to prove effective. If there is no advisory committee the major responsibility for analysing the problems in the first instance falls on the Secretariat. This is a serious responsibility, for in the absence of such a committee the subjects are never likely to be discussed on their merits at all. They will only be discussed by persons who will consider first whether a particular approach or solution will benefit their countries or be acceptable to their governments. The Secretariat alone will represent the world point of view and attempt to find a rational solution. In consequence, when the procedure has been agreed by council and the group has met, only the Secretariat can give a lead to the discussions and this it must do without preaching a doctrine or attempting to impose its ideas. The best procedure is probably to submit an annotated agenda and brief

memoranda setting out the gist of the problem and suggesting, but not more than suggesting, a possible line or possible lines of approach to it. It will rarely perform this task as well as an advisory committee because its range of knowledge and experience is necessarily narrower than that of a well chosen committee. But if monolithic states refuse to seek advice and mistrust any person not under government instructions they must content themselves with a second best.

The Secretariat is also the only body which can watch all the various types of committee at work and has therefore a direct responsibility for suggesting procedure to council. Sometimes a competent Secretariat is able to play a very important role in arranging the discussions. The procedure adopted by ECE's committee on the Development of Trade affords a good example. The purpose of this committee is to promote trade among the Member States. This involves bilateral discussions among the committee members, who come with definite instructions. The Secretariat in the light of its knowledge of the whole picture arranges which pairs of countries shall meet and in what order. This procedure is of advantage to all as no country has to take an initiative other than that of stating after meeting that it does not wish to negotiate. It is of particular value to the smaller states which might otherwise never have an opportunity to meet representatives of some of the countries present. I quote this example because the procedure is well known. But behind the scenes in many organizations this function of bringing the right countries together at the right moment is performed on a more limited scale and on its performance the success of much of a council's work may depend.

Administrative negotiating committees, however, when there is no clear directive, involve two serious risks: the first is that they will produce no constructive results and the second is that whether they produce results or do not, they will waste time and public money. These risks are, or should be, a source of constant concern to the head of any international administration. It is in fact extremely difficult to judge whether a standing committee of this type should be retained when, for instance, the political climate is unfavourable. Contacts are a real asset and it may be worth while to retain it in the expectation that the climate will change. Thus the atmosphere in which ECE had to work during its first eight years fluctuated from zero temperature to what is called 'the atmosphere of Geneva'. The decision to abolish a committee lies with council; but that decision should be taken in

the light of the advice it receives from the head of the administration. The second risk involves for the international official a different type of responsibility. A committee composed of persons serving in an individual capacity is almost certain to wish to complete its work as quickly as possible, for its members are making some sacrifice in attending. Committees composed of civil servants acting as government representatives seldom suffer from any similar sense of urgency.

These committees which I have been considering are negotiating bodies able to do useful work at a relatively low diplomatic level because the issues do not require more, though collectively they may be of the greatest importance. Council relieves itself of undue pressure by dividing up its work and delegating. It may delegate to special committees or to sub-committees of its own members; in either case a major purpose is to give itself more time for other matters.

9. *Rapporteurs*

Whenever a subject is delegated the report of the committee has to be submitted in some manner to council. Practice regarding the manner in which this is done varies widely today. Some councils seem to have no fixed procedure; a report is simply tabled and the chairman either makes a few introductory remarks or catches the eye of some would-be speaker. The practice of the League was to work through *rapporteurs* or committees of three, and then frequently settle outstanding questions in private session where discussions were less formal and a meeting of minds more easy to achieve than in public meetings. Most executive boards do not suffer from great formality even in their public meetings and for that reason as well as because of the nature of their work have less need for sub-committees. In ECOSOC, on the other hand, the tradition of great formality and lengthy speeches that has grown up renders a meeting of minds difficult to secure. In such circumstances there is a clear advantage in referring as many questions as possible to commissions, sub-committees, or working parties, all of which should be held in private. The League Council was no less formal in its public meetings, though less verbose. To confine sub-committees to three members, as it usually did, is only possible when the delegating body is cohesive and accepts common principles of conduct, whatever the difference of national interests may be. To nominate a single *rapporteur* may also imply a certain mutual trust that may be lacking today. But whenever it is practicable this procedure presents great advantages, for in politi-

cal cases the *rapporteur* acts as a diplomat and moderator with the authority of the council added to his own, and in technical questions he constitutes the essential link between the council's advisory bodies and itself. In the League the *rapporteurs* on technical and recurrent questions were appointed for a year to deal with a subject, not for a single meeting to deal with individual reports. Thus there was a *rapporteur* for health questions, another for economic and financial questions, and another for what was in fact a strictly political question, minorities. When a committee had completed its report, the director of the section concerned drafted a brief covering report, and resolutions on it for the approval of the *rapporteur*, and the *rapporteur*, after an agreement on the text had been reached both with the director and when necessary with interested members of Council, submitted it to Council. This procedure presented several advantages. It implied that at least one Council member had considered not only every report before it came up for discussion, but what action should be taken on it. It presented to the Secretariat the great advantage that appropriate action could be discussed at leisure with the *rapporteur* before the meeting, and when occasion arose with other members of the Council.

Whenever there is reason to believe that a subject is likely to give rise to dispute in council there is every advantage in arranging for informal discussions in advance, and the Secretariat is greatly aided in making the necessary arrangements for these discussions if one member of council has a recognized responsibility for submitting the question in the form most likely to ensure agreement. What is important is the final agreement and not the disputation; but even the latter will benefit by these prior consultations, for the members, including the *rapporteur*, will be able to formulate their positions more clearly and more succinctly after they have learnt through these informal conversations about the attitudes of those of their colleagues who are particularly interested.

Rapporteurs present a further advantage. A report of an advisory committee may prove embarrassing to a council. This is most likely to happen when a council or board relies on *ad hoc* rather than standing committees. The advice received may seem to the board to be bad or inopportune, or certain views contained in a report may seem to be unjustified. When it is customary to publish such reports, to suppress one may lead to ill feeling or to awkward questions in the Assembly.

The difficulty can be largely overcome by publishing at the beginning of each committee report the *rapporteur*'s report as approved by the board and the resolutions adopted; for the *rapporteur* can explain briefly the causes and the extent of the disagreement, and the resolutions will make clear the action taken up to that date on the matter dealt with and possibly the line of action proposed later.

Useful as *rapporteurs* are, it is at least open to doubt whether they should be appointed to deal alone with wide questions of principle on which no meeting of minds has been reached. A *rapporteur* who is a member of a council or a 'committee of three' may be able to promote agreement between a couple of states on, for instance, such a question as minorities; he may prove of great value in promoting orderly discussion on a subject which has been thrashed out by some advisory or subsidiary body. But no *rapporteur* can be expected to replace such a body. ECOSOC, for instance, after the question of freedom of information had been discussed for several years by various UN committees without agreement being reached appointed in 1952 a *rapporteur*, who was instructed to prepare 'a substantive report covering major contemporary problems and developments ... together with recommendations regarding practical action which might be taken by the Council'.[1] It is important not to confuse such appointments with the system of *rapporteurs* under discussion. The *rapporteur* in this case was simply an individual serving in a personal capacity as an expert, and there was no reason for assuming that he would be more successful in promoting a meeting of minds than an advisory committee. In fact he was not and the experiment resulted in nothing more than a similar resolution adopted two years later requesting the Secretary General and the specialized agencies concerned to prepare further reports and submit their proposals for action.[2]

An alternative procedure is that adopted by, for instance, the ILO and ICAO of appointing a member of council as the chairman of an advisory committee. It then rests with the chairman to submit the report and as he has participated in the discussions of the committee he is able to present the arguments on which it is based with an intimate knowledge not only of their substance but also of the processes by which they were developed. This procedure, however, is only practicable when council members can be found able to spare the time for possibly lengthy committee meetings.

[1] Resolution 442. C. 2.

[2] Resolution 522. A.

The executive boards of specialized agencies spend a considerable, in certain cases by far the major, proportion of their time in planning and surveying the execution of agreed policies. For such work, especially when the field of activity of the organization is well defined, the head of the administration may prefer to submit his evidence and his proposals directly to the board and not through the mouthpiece of a *rapporteur*. There is a long-standing tradition in the ILO for the Director General to submit a single document to the Governing Body as the basis for a considerable part of their discussions. This practice in no way limits the initiative of the members of that body and it has the great merit of giving from the outset a certain logic and coherence to the decisions finally reached.

10. *Voting*

I argued in Chapter VIII that an advisory committee should never vote; that its function was to form a collective and objective judgement and that to attempt to formulate such a judgement by voting was paradoxical. I want to consider now how far the arguments against voting apply also to councils, and their sub-committees. Councils differ from advisory committees composed of individual experts, not only inasmuch as their members are subject to instructions, but in their functions. For their duty is not or not only to form a judgement, but to reach an agreement which, if it does not formally commit a government (or other delegating authority) to a definite course of action, at least is taken to reflect an attitude towards a question which that government, granted all the circumstances at the moment, is prepared to assume. If the government—or a higher authority in the government than the council representative—later decides not to support the agreement reached, at least an explanation of its change of attitude is expected. How far then do these two characteristics of a council, the fact that it is composed of delegates working under instructions and the fact that it may be called upon to reach agreements implying at least the provisional acceptance by a government of a given course of action or attitude towards a problem, render necessary procedure by vote?

Voting, as we have seen, impedes agreements being reached because it forces members at various points in the proceedings of any meeting to register dissent and commits them to a view which further discussion might have modified; it tends to divide any body into groups and sharpen the lines that separate those groups from one

another; it tends to induce a meeting to divide the subjects it is treating into watertight compartments instead of treating them as a whole; it incites members to log rolling; it wastes time. The more the votes taken the less the chance of reaching a general agreement which is self-contained, logical, and free from reservations. Each dissentient vote is at least a formalized mental reservation. Today when the world is divided into power groups and political blocs, voting has lessened the chances of unanimity being reached on almost any question, for delegates will frequently abstain from voting in favour of a measure they approve for fear of recording a vote against the co-members of their bloc, even when the origin and objectives of that bloc may be wholly disconnected with the subject under discussion.

Voting presents an advantage when it is more important to obtain as formal a commitment as possible by certain governments than a general agreement. For this reason there may be a justification for proceeding to a vote in a meeting composed of delegates with power to commit their governments, when there would be no such justification in a meeting of members without such powers; and the greater the power to commit, the stronger may be the case for demanding a formal vote. The Council of OEEC, for instance, can take decisions on certain matters by unanimous vote, which are accepted as binding by all Member States. In such circumstances a formal vote may not only be a useful but an essential method of procedure. But when recourse to voting for certain important and binding decisions is necessary, it should be confined to such decisions. The whole purpose of the vote is to render a decision as formal as possible, to draw attention to its importance, to render it significant. If a body using the vote for this purpose generalizes it as a procedure at every stage of a discussion, or votes to adjourn for tea or to limit the length of speeches, it deprives its votes of any significant value and impedes agreement being reached on major issues.

It is the power of delegates to commit their delegating authority and not the fact that they negotiate at the end of a string that may justify voting as an occasional procedure. It is their powers and not their limitations. But their limitations are important and do affect procedure. For obviously it is more difficult for a chairman to promote unanimity in a meeting or to take the sense of a meeting when in fact agreement depends not simply on the reactions of the persons present to the arguments heard and the general atmosphere created by the discussions, but on the reactions in a number of distant capitals

to subsequent dispatches and telephonic conversations. That is one reason why almost any sacrifice should be made to ensure that the delegates are men whom their governments are likely to entrust with wide powers of discretion. The limitation to those powers, however great or small, does not prevent agreement being reached without a vote; it does imply formalizing the text when reference home is necessary rather earlier in the course of a debate than might otherwise be expedient; it may imply giving more time for work in the coulisses and when necessary for reference home; some delay in important matters is inevitable whether there is voting or not.

A very large part of the work of specialized agencies is devoted to the execution of programmes which governments have already approved. Even when the members of the boards of these agencies are government representatives their instructions are likely to allow them an ample latitude and their discussions will lead to few if any commitments of political significance. These boards may be constitutional councils and on occasion may have to act as such; but for most of their time they differ from advisory committees only inasmuch as some of their decisions are final. They advise or instruct the Secretariat; but, whatever the formulation of their views on matters affecting secretariat action, the assumption is that those views will be accepted as decisive unless unforeseen circumstances arise. When such decisions are being reached there is again no advantage in voting on them. On the contrary it is rather embarrassing than helpful to the Director General to know that a formal vote against the action which he has been instructed to take has been registered by one delegate or another.

The responsibility for organizing the discussions of council and gradually developing a traditional system of work falls mainly on the head of the administration and it is no easy responsibility. Once a corporate body has started on the wrong lines changes are difficult to effect and at the outset one strong-minded delegate or another with little experience in international affairs may exercise a predominant and unfortunate influence. Much will depend on the chairman, and for this reason the provision in the Constitution of FAO which lays down that the Conference shall appoint an independent chairman of the Council presents real advantages. Really able chairmen are rare and invaluable. As the number of nations members of any international organization increases, the chances of happening on an able chairman by any simple system of rotation is likely to be reduced and

not increased, for the less politically developed countries can ill spare their best men for international work. At the same time for any body to confine its choice of chairmen to a selected few from among its members may well prove embarrassing. The task of the head of an international organization and of his colleagues in establishing the right traditions of work in its council is therefore probably more difficult today than it was before the war.

11. *Public or Private Meetings*

Councils are forced to meet in public when the bodies they serve are dependent on public opinion and the public's purse for their support. It is natural and logical therefore that the ECOSOC and the Boards of UNESCO or WHO should be held in public and the Board of the International Bank in private. But agreement is more easily reached in private and quarrels may be hot news but bad publicity. There is no more justification therefore for holding the meetings of council's sub-committees in public than there is for holding the meetings of its advisory bodies. Indeed the purpose of the head of the administration should be to render the meetings of these sub-committees as informal as possible. They will benefit rather from the absence than the existence of formal rules of procedure. When an incident arises they can fall back on the rules of their parent body. On all other occasions the tact of their chairman is more important than any written regulations and, if the members of council are inspired by a real spirit of corporate responsibility, they should insist on no fixed rules regarding interpretation. They should be willing to ignore questions of national prestige and to sacrifice personal convenience, and be ready to make shift if necessary by speaking a language they command less readily than their mother tongue. This is important not only to save time, but because the feeling of intimacy on which so much depends is affected by the environment in which the work is done. It is a mistake to place a small group in a large room, even when that large room and it alone is equipped with all the paraphernalia of simultaneous translation. A halting tongue may prove a much less serious impediment than large empty spaces.

When considering the procedure to be adopted in the council or board of an international organization, or indeed the procedure appropriate for any international body, the essential fact to bear in mind is that there is less natural unity of outlook than in a comparable national body. Effort must therefore be concentrated on

promoting a sense of unity and any procedure which exercises a fissiparous influence must be avoided. To endeavour to transplant national usages, however successful they may prove at home, on to the international scene without bearing this fact in mind may well prove disastrous.

12. *Reporting by Councils and Boards*

The third of the six preoccupations of the head of an international administration mentioned on pages 219–20 was how to ensure that proposals regarding policies to be adopted are formulated in such a way as to afford a maximum chance that they will be approved. Policy proposals by councils or boards may be submitted either to Assemblies or direct to governments. They may be submitted to the former either by means of a draft agenda, or in a report or in a programme, or, in so far as they relate to finance, in a draft budget. Budgetary proposals I shall discuss in Chapter XII. With regard to the non-financial documents by which an Assembly may be seized of a proposal, three quite different systems have gradually developed, which seem to reflect three different philosophies.

The philosophy underlying the system of the League and the ILO was that, after a brief general debate on the political or economic and social situation in which delegations should be afforded an opportunity of drawing attention to developments during the preceding year to which they individually attach importance, the Assembly should proceed as quickly as possible to a consideration of a limited number of questions on which effective action might be taken. In consequence the Council of the League and the Governing Body of the ILO confined themselves to proposing items for the Assembly agenda, submitting items when appropriate in the form of draft resolutions or of an *ordre de jour raisonné*. Neither felt under an obligation to submit itself a report on its own work. The records of their meetings were always available, if any Assembly delegate wished to consult them. The report on the activities of the whole organization was made by the Secretary General or Director General and not by the Council or Governing Body. The League Council, however, drew up special reports terminated by its resolution on each subject considered by it; these reports were distributed to governments after each meeting, and were naturally available also to Assembly delegates. The essential characteristics of this system are, first, that its purpose is to direct the Assembly's attention to subjects on which

immediate action might be taken or at least an immediate exchange of views might be fruitful, and secondly that both the Council and the Governing Body felt that sufficient trust should be placed in them to render a formal report from them of their activities supererogatory. The Council was in fact constitutionally a parallel and not a subservient organ; but it was rather the accepted philosophy about the function of the Assembly, than a constitutional point, that determined the procedure. The philosophy persists today in ILO circles and it is interesting to note that, although a resolution has been tabled on more than one occasion in recent years that the Governing Body should submit an annual report to the Conference, it has never found more than the most meagre support.

All the other councils or boards submit in addition to items for the agenda a report or a programme. The Security Council, like the League Council, is a parallel organ; but under the Charter it is under an obligation to submit 'annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration'.[1] The Economic and Social Council is under no such formal obligation and I shall use the procedure it actually adopts therefore to illustrate the second school of philosophy. According to the Charter it 'may make recommendations . . . to the General Assembly',[2] 'may prepare draft conventions for submission to the General Assembly',[3] may obtain reports from specialized agencies, and 'may communicate its observations on these reports to the General Assembly'.[4] In fact it always submits a lengthy report,[5] which is in part a survey of world affairs, and in part a record of its own debates in which it does not confine itself to recording decisions reached, on the contrary its resolutions are printed separately, but sets out views expressed by 'some members' and endeavours to present a picture not only of what it has done but what it has failed to do, and of the evolution of its thought and the division of its opinion. Chapters of this report are taken as items for the Assembly agenda. The underlying philosophy seems to be that ECOSOC itself is an agent of the Assembly limited in its composition to a restricted number of governments, and that therefore the discussions which take place at its meetings should be supplemented by

[1] Art. 24 (3).
[2] Art. 62 (1).
[3] Art. 62 (3).
[4] Art. 64 (2).
[5] The Assembly seems to have interpreted Art. 15, Sec. 2, which reads, 'The General Assembly shall receive and consider reports from the other organs of the United Nations', as implying an obligation on ECOSOC to produce a report, though unlike other Councils it is not instructed by the Charter to do so.

similar discussions by the greater number of governments at the Assembly, and that this more general ventilation of opinion is of value even when it leads to nothing, or to nothing more than renewed discussions at ECOSOC itself, and even when there is little hope that these renewed discussions will lead to any result. The emphasis is not on action or decision, not on the solution of problems, but on the ventilation of opinion, perhaps on mutual education.

A number of the boards of specialized agencies submit items for the Assembly's agenda plus a programme. The philosophy underlying the programme, if there is one, seems to be that the office under the general direction of the board has done a job between the Assembly meetings and that the Assembly should be informed not only of the results obtained and the developments proposed, but of the whole detailed procedure by which those results have been and developments proposed should be attained, because the board is the agent of the Assembly. It feels like ECOSOC that it should render a full account. It feels that the Assembly can reasonably be expected to hold views about administrative procedure as well as about broad issues of policy, and that it is less likely to vote credits required if the procedural details are not given.

The different philosophies have evolved gradually and are partly due to differences in the composition of the councils or boards. The Council of the League and the Governing Body of the ILO, being composed for the most part of responsible representatives, were, and the latter still is, more concerned with the next step to be taken by governments than with rendering an account of their stewardship. ECOSOC and the boards of the specialized agencies under discussion, being composed for the most part of officials, seek in the first place ministerial approval of the work they have done. But there are other causes for the present diversity of practice. Two great changes have occurred in the form of international collaboration. Fifteen European countries were at one time or another members of the League which prior to the autumn of 1955 were not members of the UN. On the other hand there were nine Asiatic states members of the UN which were never members of the League. The fifteen states absent from world councils reflected the same culture; they understood each other even when they did not love each other. The culture of the Asiatic states and also of the Arab states outside Asia differs profoundly from that of the West. There is no comparable automatic mutual understanding between them. There was a greater need therefore for a

ventilation of opinion and for mutual education than before the war. The second change that has taken place is the division of fields of activity among a number of independent organizations, with the result that the Assembly of no single agency can be concerned with broad lines of policy to the same extent as was the Assembly of the League. There is perhaps less need to funnel the discussions of these agency Assemblies in specific directions and less opportunity for any one of them to concentrate attention on major issues. The Assemblies themselves have become technical rather than political bodies, though they are empowered to give a ministerial blessing.

The extent to which any one of these three systems of reporting is satisfactory depends on the object sought. The first is most obviously designed to meet the concern of the head of the administration mentioned at the beginning of this section when major problems of policy arise. If the object is not to formulate a proposal in such a way as to afford a maximum chance that it will be accepted by governments, but to afford an opportunity for the ventilation of opinion, the ECOSOC procedure has perhaps the merit of giving a minimum lead to the Assembly and therefore a maximum scope for spontaneity.

Mutual education is, however, not promoted by confusion, and a report which is at once a world survey, a summary of other reports, a record of speeches made and opinions expressed and of votes taken on resolutions which are not reproduced is superbly confusing; and in fact in order to obtain a ready understanding of what ECOSOC has really done it is necessary to consult the Secretary General's report. As ECOSOC's report is neither written nor approved by it, but is compiled by the Secretariat and approved by the President of the Council, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that time would be saved and minds clarified were it to be suppressed and replaced by the clearer and succincter report of the Secretary General. Those who require more can have recourse to the records of the proceedings.

If the object sought is simply to induce an Assembly to adopt a budget which will enable a board to continue to work in the way it wishes, the programme has merits, for of all forms of literature it is the least readable. Major issues, if there are any, are irretrievably buried in a mass of detail. A programme is in fact either a working document of an office or notes for an annotated budget. This has been recognized by UNESCO and WHO, which now submit their programme and budget as one document. Because it conceals the real issues, however, the programme may compel the Assembly to tinker

with details and restrain it from making any substantial changes in the proposals submitted. While in this sense it may satisfy the preoccupation of the head of the administration which we are considering, it suffers from the defect of failing either to throw light on major issues or to instigate proposals regarding such issues from the floor of the house. This defect is especially serious in the case of those specialized agencies which do not make use of standing advisory committees and have inadequate means for tapping ideas. Neither the report of ECOSOC nor the programmes of specialized agencies are appropriate documents when what is sought of an Assembly is an enlightened and enlightening debate on specific points of policy leading up to the adoption of a, if possible unanimous, resolution. They are not therefore very useful documents to support any specific agenda item that may be submitted by a council or a board to an Assembly. They are no substitute for an annotated agenda, though they are treated as constituting an important item or items of the agenda and are liable to take up a great deal of the Conference's time.

Moreover, these detailed programmes present the positive danger of inducing Conference delegates to discuss, not what should be done, but all the details of how it should be done. The Conferences of specialized agencies are composed largely of civil servants, who naturally turn with relief from the responsibility of taking policy decisions to their professional occupation of elaborating administrative plans. When they give way to this temptation, they hamper the executive organs of the agency, the board and the Director General, and they waste the time of the Conference.

A major reason for submitting detailed programmes to Conferences seems to have been the belief that they were necessary for the adoption of the budget. A simpler and much more satisfactory procedure is to set up an efficient finance committee able to win a Conference's trust. As we shall see in Chapter XII the Council of ICAO having adopted this procedure is able to confine its programme to a few readable pages.

An annotated agenda should be brief, and there is every advantage in rendering the various reports and documents supporting it as short as possible. Whenever the purpose is action and not simply talk the ideal formulation is a brief statement setting out the arguments in favour of the proposal submitted, with when necessary a still briefer statement of the action the council or board has taken to promote its purpose, terminated by a draft resolution. The Assembly is thus

informed clearly and succinctly what is sought of it and why. If it disagrees that disagreement will not be due, or should at any rate not be due, to confusion of thought. If it agrees and accepts the draft resolution with or without amendment, it will benefit from the fact that the basic work on the exposition of the resolution will have been done in advance. The head of the administration will be able to reflect with satisfaction that an exposition which has proved its value in convincing an Assembly is more likely than an untried document to satisfy his next preoccupation, and prove sufficiently convincing to induce governments to act. Although brevity is essential the exposition must be set out in logical terms sufficiently literary to create a real impact on the mind. To the sceptical mind a simple list of *considerant que* is quite unconvincing. Such a list may prove palatable to some as a mayonnaise sauce, but it is never a convincing argument. Generally indeed it is not even a mayonnaise, but a bouillabaisse into which everyone throws his pet herb or crustacean.

The same principles apply when proposals or recommendations are submitted direct to governments. To insert such proposals or recommendations in a hundred-page report dealing with a large number of other subjects is equivalent to burying it. Only a limited number of these lengthy reports are received by any government and this limited number will be thinly distributed among the various departments that may be interested, and parts of it read by a limited number of civil servants. If an international organization is anxious to draw the attention of competent ministers to its recommendation it should not rely on some unknown national official extracting this recommendation from a lot of irrelevant matter; still less should it divorce its recommendation from its supporting argument by printing it in a separate document. This is, however, exactly the procedure which we find quite commonly adopted today.

X

PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DISPERSION

1. *Introductory*

I CONSIDERED in Chapter V certain of the special problems that the international administrator has to face owing to the diversity of the staff. Today to that human diversity is added an institutional diversity, which gives rise to a new complex of problems.

Before the last war there were only three inter-governmental organizations open to all governments which required at all an elaborate administrative machinery, the League of Nations, the International Labour Organisation, and the International Institute of Agriculture. Two of these had their headquarters in the same town; all were in Europe. Today in the UN galaxy alone there are, in addition to UN itself, ten specialized agencies and two embryo agencies; there are three Regional Commissions of UN; there are some half-dozen other official bodies falling within the purview of the Economic and Social Council. At the same time governments conduct part of their international business through the instrumentality of organs independent of the United Nations or but distantly connected with it, such as the Organization of American States, the Council of Europe, the European Coal and Steel Community, NATO, SEATO, or the Arab League.

Today the UN organizations have their headquarters in seven different cities and branch or main offices in as many as sixty-five scattered all over the world.

Although the Charter lays down the principle that the specialized agencies shall be 'brought into relationship with the United Nations' and that the Economic and Social Council may co-ordinate their activities through 'agreements' with them, and through consultation and recommendations, and although such agreements have been drawn up, these agencies possess their own political organs, their own independent budgets and Secretariats. The agreements are based on a recognition of their independence and, while varying in detail, in addition to clauses providing for reciprocal undertakings, about, for instance, the exchange of documents, the attendance at meetings,

consultations regarding policies to be pursued, stipulate only that the agencies should assist the Security and Trusteeship Councils, if required, submit reports to the Economic and Social Council on their activities and, except The Bank and The Fund, should transmit their administrative budgets to the General Assembly for examination and recommendation. The UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions reports on the budgets of the specialized agencies and its reports are discussed by the Assembly, but whereas the budget of the International Labour Organisation before the war was discussed by the Fourth Commission and formally approved by the Assembly of the League before it came into force, the budgets of the specialized agencies are adopted by independent Conferences. The Assembly of the UN can only comment. There are no sanctions. In practice the League's control of the budget of the ILO amounted to little; but at least it afforded a theoretical check. Today there is no firm constitutional basis for the control of centrifugal forces.

2. *The Need for Co-ordination*

The international work of any organization involving the expenditure of funds derived from the contributions of Member States may arise from decisions taken by the Assembly of the UN or any of its three councils or regional commissions, by the Conferences or executive boards of any specialized agency, or subject to approval from requests made by individual governments. Even in pre-war days much of the work of the League and part of that of the ILO originated in requests for help received from national governments. With the development of technical assistance, such requests have become a major source of activity.

At one point or another the work of each international organization is liable to impinge on that of another. Frequently it is far from obvious to which organization an issue should be submitted as the body primarily concerned. Should ICAO or the ILO deal with conditions of employment in aircraft, WHO or FAO with nutrition, ICAO or ITU with aircraft radio communications? There is infinite possibility of overlapping and of contradictory policy decisions being taken; the risk of both dangers is enhanced by the fact that few national governments co-ordinate their own policies adequately. Foreign offices are no longer in control, although some have strengthened their position recently; almost any department of state may be

called upon to conduct international negotiations and may, and in fact all too frequently does, conduct them without formal prior agreements with other national departments.

The risk of overlapping is naturally greatest when the subject is a wide one which concerns more than one international organization. The objectives of the Charter, such as higher standards of living and social progress, necessarily affect the great majority of these organizations; and those objectives cannot be attained by the negative process of preventing overlapping or contradiction; a positive co-ordination of policies is required. The need for such positive co-ordination in fact arises every day, and sometimes it may be more difficult to meet when only two or three organizations are involved than it is for wider issues which are likely to be discussed first by the only bodies constitutionally charged with the function of co-ordination, the Assembly of the UN and the Economic and Social Council.

The objectives of the Charter will only be gradually approached in the course of time by a long process of co-operative effort. Very frequently a close co-operative effort by international organizations is required to attain much more immediate goals. Korean reconstruction or aid to refugees in the Middle East, for instance, involved the combined work and planning of a number of specialized agencies. Before the war two or three departments of the League and the ILO might be concerned in similar work. It might be necessary to arrange a meeting of officials whose offices were on different floors in the same building or perhaps even a mile apart. Today the key men will be divided by the Atlantic Ocean. Before the war the policy for work of this description would have been determined by a single council, or at the most by two—today in theory at least half a dozen executive boards or Conferences may be concerned even when the broad principles of policy are laid down by the Assembly of UN or the Economic and Social Council. In practice, if the work is urgent, the Director General of a specialized agency may have to act before consulting his board, and in fact a major effect of the multiplication of agencies has been to increase the power of the directors of the various international administrations.

There has been a similar shift in power from the political organs to the civil services of national governments; and the tendency today for international relations to be settled so largely by meetings of national officials dealing with one small point after another enhances the difficulty of co-ordinating policies. Thus GATT, OEEC, ECE, FAO, and

the Regional Commissions of ECOSOC are all directly concerned with commercial policy, and ICAO and the Fund are indirectly concerned. It may well happen that arrangements made at the administrative level by committees convened by one of the organizations run counter to those reached by the committees convened by another. Indeed there is a strong probability that there will be contradictory tendencies if national governments fail to co-ordinate their policies—and they do fail. They fail to co-ordinate them not only among departments, but within departments.

The general objectives of GATT and OEEC, for instance, are widely different, the one aiming to promote world trade, the other to promote Western European Trade. National officials tend, after a certain period, to reflect the spirit of the organization whose meetings they have been attending and there are, or were, to be found in certain departments of commerce two groups of officials—the GATT babies and the OEEC babies—pursuing opposed policies. In consequence the existence of a multiplicity of international organizations intended to promote international unity may give rise to national and even departmental disunity. The international administrators are well aware of this danger; friction at home has its counterpart in friction between the organizations for which they are responsible. Fortunately, the number of these organizations is still less than the number of Member States. If co-ordination is to be achieved it must be achieved largely on their initiative.

When policy springs from the initiative of a single government and not from a council, as it does in a sense when a request for technical assistance is made, there is frequently no less need for inter-agency co-operation before any field work is undertaken. The very fact that assistance is required at all may be due to the government's uncertainty about what its fundamental problems are. A preliminary inquiry by the International Bank or an economist, or a mixed group, may be required and, once the essential issues have been agreed, a joint plan may have to be elaborated, involving for instance an anti-malarial campaign under the aegis of WHO, the draining and utilization of marshes under the aegis of FAO, and the training of local officials and other workers with the help of the UN or UNESCO.

As the political organs of the various international organizations meet at different dates and are attended by delegates representing different departments of governments, and as the policies of national governments are not unified, much less progress has been made in the

co-ordination of policy formulation than in the co-ordination of the execution of policies whatever their origin, and the co-ordination of administrative practices and standards. At the administrative level the need for co-ordination takes five forms.

The first arises at the investigatory stage prior to policy formation. Thus WHO and the Narcotics Division of UN conducted a joint inquiry into synthetic drugs; the UN, the ILO, UNESCO, and WHO appointed a committee of experts to study methods of defining and measuring cost of living.

The second need arises at the next stage of joint study and discussion leading to policy proposals. The joint FAO-ECE timber and joint WHO-FAO nutritional committees are examples of attempts to meet this need.

The third arises in the execution of programmes of work in which more than one organization is concerned, of which I have already given examples.

The fourth is the need on grounds of economy or uniformity for providing, when possible, common services, such as the joint staff pension fund, the joint medical services at Geneva, or the joint external audit.

Finally there is the need for establishing a reasonable degree of uniformity regarding staff regulations, salary scales, standards of conduct.

The very scant illustrations I have given will suffice to indicate the nature of the co-ordination problem that presents itself. So long as governments continue to transact their international business through a multitude of small independent agencies, they must expect limited results, and an enormous loss of effort and waste of money unless these institutions can arrange to knit their piecemeal activities into some sort of coherent whole. The scope for co-ordination, both of policy and of administration, is almost without limit and the need for it is fortunately being increasingly recognized, not only by national governments but by the international organizations themselves. What I want to consider in this chapter is the administrative implications of that need.

3. *The Central Machinery for Co-ordination*

The determinant fact in the whole situation today is the absence of central financial control. If there were a single budget for all organizations, which had to be approved by a single Assembly, that

Assembly could, if it would, determine policy. A very difficult problem of co-ordination would remain regarding the execution of policies, because the administrative and executive machinery would still be scattered; but in the long run policy would spring from a single source. In fact, as we have seen, the UN Assembly can only comment on budgets which have already as a rule been adopted by the Conferences of specialized agencies and express *vœux* regarding the broad lines of policy it would like to see pursued.

Similarly the Economic and Social Council, which is responsible for co-ordination and has drawn up the agreements with specialized agencies mentioned above, tends to co-ordinate policies at rather a late stage of their development. The agencies in accordance with their agreements report to the Council; but those reports relate rather to what they have done or what they have been instructed to do by their own political organs than to what might be done if the Council approved. From time to time the Council has passed resolutions of value regarding for instance the aims of policy or the principles for determining priorities; it has conducted inquiries of general interest to a number of organizations and launched proposals to fill gaps in the world's financial machinery. But in the day-to-day formulation of policy it has followed rather than led. It has sought to establish some order in what is being attempted rather than to decide what should be attempted. Its own defective methods of work discussed in Chapter IX and the absence of ministers at its meetings have limited its powers of leadership. But there are more profound reasons for their limitation. The first and most important reason is the fact that each organization is constitutionally empowered to act independently; the second is the fact that policies today take the form of shifts in administrative practice rather than of legislative change.

Most of the resolutions adopted by the Conferences of specialized agencies relate to action to be taken by the executive boards or the Secretariats of those bodies. Most of the agreements reached among governments are reached by civil servants and require no legislation for their enforcement. This change affords or should afford a greater logic and a smoother sequence to the policies adopted. An international convention requires for its success a long period of preparation and negotiation and a long subsequent period before it is ratified and the implementing legislation passed. Progress is achieved by a series of slow bounds. The course is a hurdle race with the hurdles widely spaced. Today progress is achieved over a flat, if not smooth,

course by an infinite number of small steps. The line of demarcation between administration and policy-making becomes blurred and faint. These facts give the heads of the various international administrations very great powers and incidentally weaken ECOSOC, which is too distant to follow all the detail. Each of them knows better than any government is likely to exactly what ground in his particular field of activity has been effectively covered, and in what direction the next step should be taken to achieve further progress.

Those powers will increase to the extent the advice proffered proves in the test of time to be wise and leads to the results expected. They will increase, if the responsible officials of all the international organizations, with their unique knowledge of the work accomplished in their respective fields and of the terrain before them, concert together and formulate suggestions regarding the next measures to be adopted, which, though submitted to different political organs, constitute a unique and coherent policy.

ECOSOC, conscious of the fact that it is too distant from the scene of action to co-ordinate policies effectively unless those policies come up to it from below in the course of their formulation, with great foresight requested the Secretary General as early as 1946[1] to set up machinery for consultations among the heads of the various organizations. This was done and to the machinery established, now called the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), was later added the Technical Assistance Board (TAB).[2] The former is charged with the duties of implementing the Assembly's resolutions, arranging for consultations between the UN and those agencies, aiding ECOSOC in exercising its co-ordinating functions, and promoting uniformity in administrative and financial practices. But more important than all specific duties is the fact that 'in accordance with the policy endorsed by the Council . . . and the General Assembly' it has concentrated its attention 'on questions of programme co-ordination'.[3] Programme co-ordination is policy making. TAB is exclusively concerned with the Expanded Technical Assistance Programme, financed by extra-budgetary funds voluntarily subscribed by governments.

It is not my intention to describe in detail this machinery for co-ordination at the administrative level. My purpose is rather to consider in this section the principles which are gradually being evolved

[1] Resolution 13. 21 Nov. 1946.

[2] This request was in fact made in response to a recommendation by 'the Secretary General in consultation with the Heads of the specialized agencies'.

[3] Fourth Report of ACC. E/1076.

with a view to meeting the need for co-ordinating the activities of the various UN organizations. But certain features of the constitution and powers of these two bodies should be noted as illustrating that evolutionary process.

The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination meets under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the UN and is serviced by the UN Secretariat. The Technical Assistance Board has its own Executive Chairman and its own Secretariat. It has, in addition, its own resident representatives in different countries or regions who, since technical assistance policy arises out of demands for help received and is now planned on a country basis, may play an important role in policy formulation. Finally and most important, TAB, subject to ECOSOC approval, has, and ACC has not, a large measure of control over the allotment of available funds. It is in consequence a body exercising co-operative control, and logically takes its decisions by majority vote. ACC can co-operate; it cannot control; it must be unanimous. Both report to ECOSOC and require the confirmation by ECOSOC of proposals made though not necessarily of decisions reached, a confirmation which in many cases will require further confirmation by the political organs of specialized agencies.

But TAB is the junior sister of ACC. It is composed, not of the Directors General, but of their deputies or nominees. Although TAB reports direct to ECOSOC through its Technical Assistance Committee (TAC), ACC is insistent on its right of review. Thus in its eighteenth report it remarks that members of ACC have individual responsibility for implementing their part of the expanded programme, but collective responsibility for the programme as a whole. This means that they must be consulted personally and take collective decisions concerning major questions of policy. This they can do only through ACC. Therefore ACC proposes to review every year both the prospective work under the expanded programme and comparable activities under regular budgets. It will also endorse the annual report of TAB to TAC.

It was later explained that endorsement implied that the members of ACC would naturally confirm what their representatives on TAB had done, but as a body reserved the right to comment on the broader aspects of the policies pursued. This claim to power led to some criticism in ECOSOC's Technical Assistance Committee; but the claim made by ACC was logical. The situation was illogical and the fundamental cause of that lack of logic lay in the fact that ECOSOC is at

once the council of a specialized agency and the co-ordinating body of the whole UN family. It had originally requested the Secretary General to set up a Technical Assistance Board composed of the executive heads of the UN and the specialized agencies or their nominees to work under his chairmanship. It authorized him to designate the Executive Secretary of this Board. But the advice given by the Board affected the distribution of funds among the various organizations, and ECOSOC, subjected to an inevitable pressure because the UN was an interested party, agreed to the Board having its own independent chairman and joint Secretariat. The amount of work involved, especially at first, was very great; the chief executive officers could not spare the time to serve themselves, but sent their representatives and, because this was a common fund, it was agreed that decisions should be reached by majority vote. The junior body had acquired special corporate powers in which the senior would only share if it insisted on its right of review and endorsement.

This claim to review and endorse was logical, moreover, because ECOSOC itself has expressed the view that specialized agencies should undertake technical assistance work that could be easily integrated with their normal activities. A very large proportion of the normal activities of the specialized agencies partakes of the character of technical assistance, that is, it is work which consists of services rendered by an international organization to individual states or a group of states and not work designed to influence the behaviour of states to each other. This fact inevitably imposes on the administrations of the international organizations responsibility for suggesting what the next step should be, and in making those suggestions they are forced to view their activities as a whole.

The situation that led ACC to formulate their claim was illogical for the reasons already mentioned and inasmuch as the junior body reported direct to the political organ, TAC, and its Executive Chairman's relationship to the Secretary General was left undefined. It was rendered later more profoundly illogical by the decision to plan expanded technical assistance on a country basis. I have argued that the multiplicity of policy-making bodies should have the effect of leaving the chief administrative officers of the various international organizations working together as the one really knowledgeable source of policy suggestions able to present coherent, and because coherent, economical proposals. But their ability to do this is inevitably limited by the fact that in the work of technical assistance the ultimate deci-

sion regarding what is acceptable must lie with individual governments, and has been further curtailed by the country planning of the expanded programme of such assistance. The effect of this policy is to transfer influence to a not inconsiderable extent to the resident representatives of the Technical Assistance Board and thus to the Board itself. It has led to the accusation, not without foundation, that a new supra-specialized agency is being created. It is open to the objections that the resulting programmes of work may be more spotty and less coherent than a combined programme based on the programmes put forward by each organization after a careful consideration of how the activities subject to review by the Board relate to the normal work of the organization. Unless the resident representative of the Board is a man of exceptional force and wisdom, it increases the risk of assuming too blindly that governments know what type of assistance is likely to prove of most value to them.

Of all these objections to country planning, the belief that it implies the creation of a supra-international agency gives rise to the strongest expressions of feeling. But in fact only by the gradual development of some machinery for the co-ordination of the work of the existing plethora of international organizations at the administrative level can optimum results be achieved by any one of those organizations. The real problem is not whether a supra-organization is being created; but what the form of the co-ordinating and co-operative machinery should be.

ACC, charged as it is to give its attention to 'programming in the UN Family' and composed as it is of the chief administrative officers of the various specialized agencies under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the UN, is the hub to the machinery that has been built. It is the nearest approach to an international cabinet that exists. ECOSOC can never fill that role because none of its members is in charge of a department and because it is a body composed of delegates representing opposed national interests which meets in public. ACC on the contrary is composed of persons with a world outlook, with an intimate knowledge of their respective fields of activity, with the machinery of administration under their control, who meet in private and discuss, not as representatives of great or small powers, but as equals. They and they alone are well placed to formulate a coherent policy to submit to a political authority for approval.

It is true that they are faced by one great difficulty over which they

have no direct control, namely, that unlike a national cabinet there is no single political organ to which they can submit their proposals for approval, but a dozen independent bodies. Any joint programme requires the assent according to its financial implications of the Assembly of the UN and the Conferences of the specialized agencies or of ECOSOC and the various executive boards. Although this has not, I am informed, yet occurred, at one point or another the Secretary General of the UN or the Director General of a specialized agency might, while showing complete loyalty to his co-members on ACC, fail to obtain the approval required, and the whole programme submitted might in consequence be seriously marred.

The constitutional difficulty is rendered more serious by the fact that the membership of the various organizations is not identical, and that the Member States are in widely different stages of development. Consequently, their true needs, even when not directly opposed, vary so widely that they do not constitute a coherent picture. Always today the practical value of what is attempted is diminished because too much is attempted, and what the Conference of any organization will tend to attempt will depend, in part at least, on its membership. Conscious of the fact that there is a genuine diversity of interests, Conference members, often out of courtesy towards the less-developed states, accept proposals which they know will absorb more resources and energy than would be justified on any objective consideration of the programme as a whole. Moreover, even if this predisposition to accept whatever may be demanded did not exist, the fact that decisions are taken by majority vote gives the less-developed countries the power to enforce demands which are not necessarily in the general interests. It gives them the power also to force the richer states to accept a budget to meet those demands in part. But the resistance to additional financial claims is, as a rule, rather more tenacious than the opposition to proposed projects. In consequence resources are strained. The work done is less effective than it would have been had the field of activity been restricted. In consequence also, even the most carefully weighed overall programme may be, indeed is likely to be, spoilt in part by accretions.

These difficulties could only be overcome by far-reaching constitutional changes; but they might be greatly lessened if the authority of ECOSOC were enhanced. ECOSOC cannot be expected to become a wholly effective co-ordinating body speaking with real authority so long as the UN is at once the co-ordinating body and one of the

bodies to be co-ordinated. But its authority could be enhanced were all the specialized agencies anxious and willing to look to it for guidance. ECOSOC and ACC are, in fact, mutually dependent. ECOSOC needs ACC to elaborate and submit collective proposals regarding the whole field of international collaboration. It needs one body not half a dozen. ACC needs an ECOSOC with such authority that the broad lines of policy suggested by it are accepted as guiding principles by the political organs of the bodies ACC's members administer. And those political organs in their turn need both an ECOSOC with authority and an effective ACC because the work of each of the international bodies which they control depends largely for its efficacy on being dovetailed into the work of each other body.

All these needs are being increasingly recognized and ECOSOC, in spite of the incompatibility of its functions, and ACC are both in the process of elaborating a more effective system of work. But progress is inevitably slow.

Progress is necessarily slow because machinery always takes long to perfect, and because progress is dependent on the acceptance by the international administrator not only of new and very difficult responsibilities, but also of objectives and values which the political organs he serves are not likely themselves to admit readily. Above all, a new loyalty is required. The loyalty to the organization in which an international official works and to which he takes the oath mentioned in Chapter VI must be supplemented by a loyalty to the whole family of the United Nations. This loyalty finds its rational basis in a recognition of the fact that much of the work of most of the specialized agencies is dependent for its full success on the work of others. It finds its expression in a willingness to accept the leadership of the United Nations and a genuine desire to strengthen and enhance the authority of ECOSOC. On the other hand, of ECOSOC is required a loyalty not to the United Nations rump specialized agency only, but to all specialized agencies, a willingness to devote its major energies to the work of the whole family viewed as a united effort, and a willingness to make that work its own. In the past it has tended to oscillate between a policy of discussing reports from each agency separately and stamping them with a rubber benediction and a policy of holding a class of the representatives of all the agencies at which reluctant answers are dragged out of overcautious examinees. What has been lacking has been a joint discussion with the agencies of a joint report, and that has been lacking in part because only slowly as new values

are accepted and new loyalties develop can reports expressing a collective will be formulated. That development is in fact taking place. Very naturally it made itself apparent first, not in the planning of the programmes, but in their execution and in the co-ordination of administrative practices and standards. In this work the habit of co-operation has been established, both in ACC and its Preparatory Committee and amongst all levels of the various Secretariats. The Preparatory Committee is authorized to dispose of all current business not involving questions of policy and, in fact, submits recommendations regarding policy to ACC and drafts its agenda. It is only gradually as one point of inter-agency business after another is settled, and the settlement is found satisfactory, that the willingness to co-operate on wider issues of policy formulation can be expected to develop.

For ACC to be effective at what is called the programming level, which is in fact the policy-formulation level, there must be a common review of programmes. This implies the submission of tentative proposals to ACC before they come before executive boards or Conferences. UNESCO has set an example by doing this and has promised to make this procedure a definite practice. Obviously, however, the whole field of work of each agency could not be discussed by ACC without at once so encumbering its agenda as to render it impotent and at the same time rendering the life of the heads of the various administrations intolerable. There must be a choice of subjects and criteria of choice. The major criteria would seem to be two, first, whether a joint programme relating to a particular range of topics has a more valuable effect than the sum of individual programmes, and, secondly, whether the failure to submit a subject for discussion involves the risk of overlapping and a waste of financial and human resources. Both must be taken into consideration, because a certain amount of overlapping and of competition may be salutary and beneficial.

The difficult administrative problem is, who should decide what proposals should be submitted. Should that decision be left to each individual agency and its administrative head to decide or is some co-operative procedure possible? In the case of the Technical Assistance Board, all major undertakings before the system of country planning was adopted were submitted automatically, and the Executive Chairman decided about the others. To render the work of the Board effective, some form of central control was quickly found to be

necessary. In an unlimited field no such simple solution as this is possible. Today every sort of agreement is reached between international organizations at every level. A regional commission appoints joint committees with a specialized agency, or arranges for the exchange of staff or for a mixed staff working on a common subject; an agency makes similar arrangements with another or elaborates a plan for joint field work or interlocking or supplementary undertakings; agencies arrange about the division of work when their constitutional fields overlap, or they fail to do so and quarrel. Those parts of the aggregate of the work undertaken by all organizations which may prove suitable for joint planning at the policy level may only do so because at some other level officials in two or more organizations have had the good sense to collaborate effectively. There is, and should always be, a tangle of arrangements which have their origin in the initiative and the spirit of co-operation of international officials of all grades. That is administratively right, for co-operation can never be vital if it is confined to the heads of the various administrations. But for these entangled roots to bear a satisfactory crop of fruit, some order must be established among the growing plants, and some weeds must be eliminated.

For that order to be established, there must be some centre at which not only the activities, but also the contemplated extension or modification of those activities is studied.

As joint work develops, the centre will no doubt need confidential reports at regular intervals from all co-operating organizations, and will keep itself in constant touch with their liaison officers. By sending its own officials to attend conferences and meetings of executive boards and other bodies, it could, if fully accepted by all organizations, save all both time and expense. In the light of its unique knowledge of the whole picture, it should be in a position to indicate the points at which overlapping was likely to occur, to suggest the lines along which a joint programme or joint programmes could be accomplished. If it were concerned with the whole field of activity, irrespective of the source of funds, it should be able to help to some extent in integrating the Expanded Technical Assistance Programme and the activities of the UN and the specialized agencies. Much of this work is already being done by the Secretariat of the UN and, as regards the expanded programme, by the Secretariat of TAB. The whole field is so vast that no specialized agency could be expected to master it; each must of course master parts for its day-to-day work, and does so; but

there remains much for a common service to do, and the only organization capable of rendering a general common service for ACC is the Secretariat of the United Nations.

For the expanded programme a common Secretariat was set up because, as observed above, the United Nations was at once an interested party and the co-ordinating organization. But for joint work and a new loyalty to develop leadership is indispensable, and the only person whose position carries the authority for such leadership is the Secretary General of the United Nations. The joint Secretariat and the Executive Chairman of TAB are administrative anomalies because they are not clearly responsible to the Secretary General, who is not Chairman of TAB. He is Chairman of ACC. As the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has remarked, effective co-ordination 'can be achieved only if a clear and direct line of authority runs from the Secretary General of the United Nations through whatever Secretariat unit he may require'.[1] Such a direct line is ensured by accepting the principle of unity of responsibility and rendering the ACC responsible at the administrative level for all co-ordination including the expanded programme. The system instituted by ECOSOC broke the line of authority, it created an administrative anomaly. ACC is the only body logically capable of assuming responsibility for giving collective advice, because it and it alone is composed of the heads of the various international administrations. Had the expanded programme been submitted quite simply to it, it would no doubt have established a sub-committee to do the detailed work as it appointed the Preparatory and other committees to do the detailed work on administrative co-ordination.

Once the simple principle that, if an advisory body is created, it should be trusted and trusted to organize its work itself is accepted, the anomalies disappear. If ACC desires to have a common Secretariat either for the expanded programme or for all its work to act as a centre and a clearing house, that Secretariat would work, as the Advisory Committee points out, under the authority of the Secretary General as Chairman of ACC, the body responsible for the whole field of co-ordination at the administrative level. Whether there is need for a common Secretariat is a psychological question. Administratively what is important is to leave full scope for the leadership of the Secretary General. If it affords greater satisfaction to the members

[1] First Report to the Ninth Session of the Assembly, A/2661, para. 54.

of ACC that he should control the staff in his capacity as their Chairman, rather than in his capacity as Secretary General, his leadership will not be affected. The line of authority remains unbroken.

On the other hand, to render ACC directly responsible for giving joint advice on all activities, including the expanded programme, has profound administrative implications. It would enhance the status of the resident representatives, who would become representatives of the Secretary General as Chairman, and at the same time render it easier to fit the wider activities of the various organizations into the country programmes. It would allow the ACC to submit a unique report on all their activities to ECOSOC and reduce the differentiation between the treatment of activities financed from a common fund and those financed by a dozen separate budgets. Today all the specialized agencies are called upon to submit individual reports, sometimes blessed and sometimes ignored by ECOSOC. If instead, it could be agreed that ACC submit a single report setting out first, and briefly, the important features in the work accomplished by each organization, both separately and jointly, and, secondly, policy suggestions regarding the broad lines of future co-operative efforts including the expanded programme, there would be a real basis for discussion. Attention could be concentrated on the essential and all detail relegated to annexes.

Naturally, the major part of the joint efforts recorded or proposed would relate to agreements between two or three organs and not to a general plan of work. In fact, only on rare occasions is there need for a single co-operative effort by a majority of the various organizations. The general picture is necessarily a composite picture, a synthesis of a large number of small-scale co-operative undertakings. This fact at once limits the scope of the service that ECOSOC can render and enhances its value. That service is twofold, to act as a political touchstone for ACC in private, and to issue occasional and authoritative statements regarding guiding principles of policy, statements designed on the one hand to constitute a check on the dissipation of energies on minor or wasteful undertakings, and, on the other, to give logic and coherence to major enterprises.

To do this work effectively, ECOSOC would have to modify in some degree its working methods. Agreements reached among independent bodies, whose fields of activity overlap, always involve delicate adjustments. For the members of ACC the necessary give and take is doubly delicate because each is responsible to his executive

board. In these circumstances, to expect a frank and fruitful discussion of such agreements in public is absurd. ECOSOC can only hope to carry out its work of co-ordination successfully if it holds its substantive discussions with the representatives of the various organizations in private committee meetings or private working parties. As observed in the last chapter, ECOSOC has recently somewhat improved its working methods, and shown somewhat greater willingness to delegate. Its committees are much more effective than its plenary meetings, and its working parties are more effective than its committees. To delegate the substantive discussion on co-ordination to a working party, which should be composed of the full and not of substitute Council members, would have, moreover, the advantage of rendering it easy to omit the representatives of those specialized agencies whose fields of activity are so confined that they are of insignificant importance in the discussion of a general programme. It would allow a frank exchange of views about the political issues and the careful elaboration of the occasional declarations of policy. It would, moreover, render it easier for ACC to draft its report crisply and vigorously.

I have devoted so much space to this question of the machinery and processes of inter-organizational co-operation, because such co-operation today constitutes a major responsibility of the international administrator. The machinery may be set up by political organs, but he is responsible not only for operating the greater part of it, but also for exercising all his influence to ensure that it is efficient in design.

4. *The Institutional Galaxy and Internal Administration*

The parcellation of international work among a number of independent institutions not only creates a need for inter-organizational co-operative machinery, but exercises, or should exercise, an important influence on the internal administration of each office. Indeed this parcellation and the heterogeneity of the staff are the two main factors determining administrative practice in an international organization. Parcellation leads to need for co-operation both in the execution of work, and, as we have seen, in its advance planning. To meet that need, three conditions must be satisfied. First, the directors of operative departments must possess, not only executive ability, but vision and imagination; secondly, they must be given sufficient scope

to exercise their capacities, and thirdly, a system must be created within each office under which a single coherent policy and a smoothly working administrative procedure can be developed.

I have already insisted on the importance of directors possessing a capacity for leadership; equally important is the capacity to sense the needs of governments and to formulate plans to meet them. For lack of a better term, I have called this capacity creative imagination. But in fact what is required is rather a sensitive realism. Behind the plans suggested must be an accurate apprehension of what after all the bickering of the market, governments are likely to agree upon. The imagination must be firmly implanted in political judgement. More is needed of a senior international official, especially today, namely, a capacity to co-operate with others and to adapt the work for which he is responsible to the needs and endeavours of other departments and other organizations.

The selection of directors with these special qualities is therefore one of the most important and the most difficult tasks that falls to the lot of the head of an international administration. It should, as I have said in an earlier chapter, exercise an important influence on his general recruitment policy, for he is less likely to make a serious mistake if he promotes a man whose work and character are well known, than if he selects someone from outside. Moreover, it is damaging to the morale of the staff if they are precluded from the senior posts. But, even if with this thought in mind, he or his predecessor has adopted the policy of recruiting officials on grounds of personality rather than on grounds of fitting a job description, he may, when the occasion arises, be unable to find a suitable candidate within the Secretariat, and he will always find his field limited by the need to maintain a politically acceptable geographical distribution among the senior staff. Political pressure will, however, be less acute, if he promotes a well-known and respected official from the ranks than if he looks beyond them. There is a danger today that directors will be chosen on account of their technical reputation alone, that a man with a world reputation for his contribution to some branch of knowledge will be preferred to a less well-known younger man who in fact possesses to a greater degree the required qualities of leadership, creative imagination, and willingness to co-operate with others. In fact, not erudition but the ability to use the erudite, not a world reputation but the ability to make one are of major value. Obviously, if persons big enough for the posts they have to fit are found, they will demand, and

rightly demand, scope for initiative. But for agreements to be reached among international organizations, there must be agreement within each organization. The head of each administration has to build not only an efficient administrative machine but a machine that formulates coherent policy suggestions, which he can discuss with his political organs and with other international organizations. He must himself follow, co-ordinate, guide, and ultimately defend the activities and suggestions of the various departments in his office, and to be defensible they must be coherent and balanced. The need to ensure coherence and balance determines in large measure the internal structure of the Secretariat.

Each individual international organization is likely to elaborate an administrative structure differing somewhat from those of others, and these differences are desirable, for the structure should be shaped to meet the peculiarities of the work and of the personalities of the senior officials responsible for it. Theoretical structural blue-prints are a mischievous waste of time. It is much wiser to build the structure round the men and the work than to push the men into the cells of a prefabricated honeycomb. Consequently the structure should be flexible. Consequently too, reports of external 'organization and methods experts', who are ill placed to appraise correctly the human factor in international life, are liable to be misleading.

In the circumstances that exist today, especially in the specialized agencies, there must be some system for centralizing and co-ordinating the work done, if there is to be adequate intra-institutional co-operation, and it is vitally important to establish such a system without weakening the dynamism of the departments or threatening the policy of administrative liberalism so necessary for the maintenance of morale.

There are two positive organs of co-ordination, the office of the head of the administration—the 'Cabinet' in the French sense of that term—and the directors' meeting. Before the last war, there was a long-standing controversy between the adherents of the French 'Cabinet' system and the looser British system. Today an efficient central office is indispensable, not only because of the increased need to co-ordinate the activities of each office, but also because the staff is drawn from a wider cultural field than before the war. But this does not imply that the administrative system should on that account be more hierarchical. Indeed, the two delicate problems that present themselves are, first, how to utilize the central office without imposing

an inhibitive central control and, secondly, how to give its members adequate authority without creating a hierarchical oligarchy.

If the head of the administration is directly charged with major political responsibilities, as is the Secretary General of UN, he may well feel the need to appoint a deputy in general charge of administration. The Directors General of the larger specialized agencies, responsible as they are for the general conduct of their offices, for relatively frequent meetings of their executive boards, for relations at the highest level with other organizations, and compelled, as they are, to spend much of their time in travel and in keeping in touch with governments, may feel the need to make a similar appointment. It is sometimes argued that more is needed, and that as the members of the central office must to some extent exercise a certain measure of control over divisional directors, they should not be inferior to them in rank, and that this is particularly important in an international organization in which national as well as hierarchical status may always prove a factor of importance.

In the quite early stages of a new international organization, it may be convenient to have a small group of quite senior officials free from day-to-day administration, who can think out the innumerable organizational and policy problems that any new institution has to face. The Assistant Secretaries General in the League, for instance, probably played a useful role at first. Later they were maintained for political reasons, and although they were never allowed to become a barrier between the Secretary General and the directors, the need to keep them informed proved a waste of the directors' time. But for the chance that most of them happened to be reasonable people, they might have proved a serious menace to efficiency. Once a general pattern of work has been set, the head of an administration may feel compelled to give the senior members of his office a rank higher than that of directors if he attempts to use his office to impose control. If, on the contrary, he seeks to establish the co-ordination he requires by co-operation, the hierarchical difficulty is greatly attenuated.

The Economic Commission for Europe affords an elegant example of how this problem may be solved. There the central office is composed of four officers, none of whom has even director's rank. These officers follow the work of the various divisions and are, at the same time, responsible for the co-ordination of research and for relations with the United Nations headquarters, with specialized agencies, regional organizations, and permanent delegations. There is a meet-

ing every morning of these officers in the rooms of the Executive Secretary to discuss policy and administrative questions. This meeting is attended by the budget officer of the United Nations, and by any director who wishes to be present. There are weekly meetings of directors and section chiefs at which the former give oral reports on their current work, and, in particular, on its policy implications. In addition, there are monthly meetings of senior officials at which monthly divisional reports are discussed.

I quote this as one example of a co-operative system and do not suggest it as a blue print. The right of the directors to attend the morning meetings, at their own discretion, is indicative of the spirit in which the system is operated. What is of vital importance is the spirit and not the blue print. It is much easier to make a success of a co-operative system of this sort in a relatively small office with a limited range of activities than it would be, for instance, in the headquarters of the United Nations. When the interests and occupations of the departments in an international organization are widely different, the problem of general unity of policy may not present itself —and unity between related departments may be better established by meetings confined to them and selected officials of the central office than by larger meetings.

The internal co-ordination of policy formulation has, however, been rendered difficult in a number of organizations by certain tendencies in post-war administration.

5. *Inter-Organizational Co-operation and Certain Characteristics of Post-war Administration*

In the inter-war period, the League suffered from a narrowness of outlook, concentrating too much on European questions, especially in the early years, from a certain meanness in its financial administration, which was forced on it by the political climate in which it lived, in some departments from a lack of adequate research background for the executive work it undertook, and possibly from a certain administrative amateurishness. Post-war organizations have tended to suffer from almost exactly the opposite defects—from a surfeit of activities, ideas, and projects, from extravagance in the expenditure both of funds and human resources, from too much research, or at least from too many documents, some of them from over-administration and, sometimes as a result of that over-administration, from the inflation of certain departments, that is, from kingdom building. The

surfeit of ideas and projects combined with an exaggerated belief in the need for technical experience has resulted in attempts to cover too wide an operational front without adequate administrative depth. With the built-in kingdoms on the one hand, and the narrow lines of attack on the other, a serious unbalance may arise.

These weaknesses are due in part to the changed political climate in the world; in part to the changed membership of international organizations; in part to the abolition of the unanimity rule and the fact that countries which contribute a small proportion of the funds have a majority of the votes and can insist on a multiplicity of undertakings, which they believe will prove beneficial to them. They are due in part also to the application of American principles of administration, which necessitate the employment of a large number of individuals, each engaged on a small field of work and all constituting an elaborate team which, granted there are no gaps, may prove effective in a national administration, but is psychologically quite unsuited to an international administration, and is inevitably costly. Whatever their cause, they have one characteristic in common, namely, that they are all inflationary—a surfeit of ideas, projects, documents, and staff, of rules controlling the staff, turgent departments and consequential high costs. They all render, moreover, the administrative streamlining necessary for effective inter-organizational co-operation more difficult; they all impede intra-secretariat communication.

In so far as the first of these tendencies, the surfeit of ideas and projects, is due to the spontaneous decisions taken by the political organs of the various organizations, it can only be countered by the administrators to the extent that they are able to submit proposals both to their own political bodies and collectively through ACC, which are clearly more reasonable and coherent, and which in the foreseeable future will satisfy the desires of claimant states. The administrators' ability to submit such proposals will depend on their success in overcoming the other weaknesses mentioned above and in internal and inter-organizational co-ordination. In a sense therefore, viewed from the angle of its cure, this first weakness is residual.

The more the head of an international organization can co-ordinate the activities of the departments and the administrative procedures adopted by establishing a system of inter-departmental discussion and co-operation, the less will be the need for an elaborate set of office instructions, for specialized forms, checks and counterchecks, and a large supervisory staff recording and controlling results.

Procedures will be determined by agreement as new problems arise to be settled, and will be modified almost imperceptibly as conditions change. The danger of kingdom building will be greatly lessened. It will not disappear, for kingdoms may spring up anywhere. The budget estimates for the Information Department of the UN at one time amounted to 18 per cent. of the total budget,[1] a sum of nearly $620,000; there is no limit set by nature to research divisions or departments of external relations. Behind the growth of a kingdom is always an individual; but the size of the central administrative departments in certain organizations is due in large part to the system of narrow job specification, the rapid turnover of so-called experts, and the detailed control of their activities. I have already drawn attention to the consequent turgescence of Personnel branches and of Management departments with a capital M.

When on the contrary the recruitment and personnel policy permits the training of competent international officials and the head of the administration adopts the practice of co-operative centralization of at once policy and administrative procedure and action, there is neither the need for, nor the risk of, inflated administrative divisions. What is required under such a policy is not an elaborate administrative manual, which attempts to lay down in advance the precise procedure to be adopted in every imaginable circumstance, but a brief enumeration of general principles, a clear statement of the administrative structure and broadly of the responsibilities of the various key officials, and a clear statement of the purpose of the various regular meetings of the key officials under the chairmanship of the head of the administration or his nominee.

Without the last of these statements, there is always the risk that meetings will be unduly time-consuming. They can in fact only be successful if they are regular and brief, for only by this means can policy within an office evolve smoothly. The popular practice today of elaborating a programme rather than a statement of principles is inimical to this gradual evolution. What is liable to happen in a programming organization is that directors discuss their plans little with their colleagues until some directive has been received about the amount of the total budget for the ensuing period that will be submitted for approval, and then at some final meeting fight for their share of that total. No coherent policy emerges—only an unreadable

[1] *Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Second Report of 1948*, p. 25, A/598.

document reflecting the relative strength of will of individuals. It is only when at regular and brief meetings all can be kept informed by those returning from missions or meetings of changes in governments' attitudes and desires, or of the advice of expert committees and the significance of local events, that an officer can formulate reasoned tentative proposals to discuss with other organizations before submission to its political organs or to ECOSOC.

If administrators are successful in producing coherent and acceptable proposals, in suppressing kingdoms and thus in restricting their fields of activity and eliminating redundant staff, they will have gone a long way to meet the weakness of lack of administrative depth in their operative departments from which some suffer today. But more is required. That lack is in part due to the refusal by the expert official to accept assistance or to train junior officials. The administration suffers in consequence because the senior and expert official wastes his time on work that he should delegate, and because it fails to develop an adequate corps of officials in operative departments with a long experience of international work. It is, however, exactly on officials with such experience that the administrations will be most dependent in the future for their success both in formulating policy proposals and in maintaining close relations with other international organizations. On the other hand, there is always a need for a certain proportion of staff on short-term contracts in order to prevent the permanent staff from losing touch with national governments.

The liberal co-operative administrative policy in favour of which I am arguing, both for reasons of morale and on account of the need for inter-organizational co-operation, will not, however, prevent extravagance though it may result in certain structural economies, nor will it ensure time-saving practices in administration routine. There remains, therefore, under any system an important role for the administrative expert to play.

Two distinct problems present themselves, that of the structure of the whole office, the departmental division of functions, and that of the internal administration of each department and of common services. These problems have in recent years been tackled in widely different ways. In some organizations, a department of Management or Management and Finance with considerable powers of direct control has been set up; in some, a small permanent group of management experts has been employed; by others, outside 'organization and method experts' have been engaged to make a report.

I was, I believe, the first director in the League to request the aid of such outside experts. Their report led to no radical changes, but it did serve a useful purpose. It afforded an occasion for everyone from top to bottom of the department to think about the pure mechanics of his work, and to discuss it with others and with the experts. The inquiry proved beneficial largely because it was made on the request of the department, and was in no way imposed on it. Moreover, it was confined to a single operating unit. A subsequent wider inquiry involving problems of inter-departmental responsibilities was much less successful, and was replaced by an internal co-operative committee composed of the officials primarily concerned.

I quote this experience because I believe it was significant. The outside expert is always greatly handicapped in conducting an inquiry by ignorance of the nature of the work. He may prove valuable within a single department in giving advice about the pure mechanics of administration, statistical analysis, and the duplication, registration, and distribution of documents, and accountancy. He is much less likely to prove helpful about the wider problems of structure, which can only be solved in the light of an intimate knowledge of the nature of the political work, of individual idiosyncrasies, and of national prejudices. A very small internal advisory unit is much more likely to be useful. But in a small office employing only a few hundred persons, such a unit may after a time be rather looking for work than rendering a service. When this happens it should be abolished.

If the ACC ever acquires its own Secretariat and effective co-operation among all the United Nations organizations were established, a small unit attached to it and working (on request) now in one organization, now in another, might prove useful. For it would discover where common or similar tasks were best done, and carry knowledge and experience from one office to another. Nothing has struck me more in the inquiries I have made than the extent to which administrative efficiency in any branch is due to the chance existence of a single individual. But on the wider problems of structure, neither internal nor common management experts can do more than offer tentative and fragmentary suggestions. The head of the administration must take full responsibility and fit the structures to his needs. He is most likely to be successful if he has established a system of inter-departmental meetings, at which discussion is unrestrained, and such as to produce a collective opinion.

XI

RESEARCH

1. *The Subjects Discussed*

I SHALL discuss two subjects in this chapter. The first is the preparation of documents by the Secretariat on subjects other than the activities of the organization in which the work is done. As for much of this work the word research has too learned a connotation, I should perhaps have entitled the chapter research and documentation. But it is difficult to draw a line between the two. The second subject is the planning of research to be conducted by other institutions or by individuals not members of the Secretariat.

2. *The Purpose of Research Done or Promoted by an International Organization*

The head of any international organization has to decide what proportion of his available resources should be devoted to research, and in order to reach a reasonable decision must form a view about its purposes. This question of purpose is in fact too seldom considered. A committee or a political organ feels need for certain information or wishes to avoid the responsibility of doing anything itself and asks the Secretariat to prepare a document which involves research. Alternatively a member of the Secretariat becomes interested in some subject and persuades his superiors to allow him to pursue it. In the absence of any clear notions about purpose work may be undertaken which serves no end other than that of abetting in the postponement of action or satisfying someone's curiosity. On the other hand, research well selected and well directed may be of crucial importance in promoting understanding among states and in determining the course of action which they or the organization conducting it should pursue.

For research to be justified it should, I suggest, satisfy one or more of the four following purposes:

(*a*) Furnish the Secretariat with that basis of knowledge which is essential for its work; in other words supply it with the necessary tools and enable it to make policy suggestions of value to govern-

ments or effective plans for its own operations. Much of the most useful research today is designed to help the Secretariat in organizing technical assistance.

(*b*) Fill some gap in knowledge so as to enable the whole organization to perform its functions more efficiently.

(*c*) Furnish governments with information and lines of thought on which they can take policy decisions.

(*d*) Furnish information to the public in order that that public may act more easily in a way that is compatible with the purpose for which the organization was created.

If we examine the research undertaken or promoted by international institutions we shall find that most of it, though unfortunately not all, satisfies one or another of these criteria. Thus, to take only a few examples, the basic documents produced by offices acting as clearing houses of information such as the statistical yearbooks, the digests of laws, the various directories, UNESCO's World Educational Survey, are indispensable tools for the Secretariats and at the same time valuable reference books for governments when dealing with international affairs. The various Economic Surveys and the World Food Survey, tracing, as they do, trends in economic developments, are of value at once to governments and Secretariats when policies are formulated and to those responsible for the conduct of private business. Nearly all the research organized by WHO and FAO is intended to add to scientific knowledge on questions of immediate practical importance. The development papers published by the FAO are designed to summarize existing knowledge in a convenient form and thus aid the agriculturalist.

What is essential is that the international research should be pragmatic. It is not the function of an international organization to add to knowledge simply for the sake of adding to knowledge. When the field of operations of such an organization is ill defined, however, as is that of UNESCO, this pragmatic test may be difficult to apply. UNESCO was founded to promote education, science, and culture, and almost any subject might be deemed to fall within its purview and to be a legitimate subject for research. In these circumstances the questions of authority, which I discuss later in this chapter, and of financial control, which I discuss in the next, assume special importance.

In other organizations with better defined tasks and also in the UN it sometimes happens that research is undertaken, not for any of the

purposes mentioned above, but rather to occupy the time of executive officials who for some reason beyond their control have little to do. All international organizations suffer from variations in activity owing to changes in the political climate. When a serious lull occurs the head of the administration has to decide whether he should shift the affected officials to other departments, terminate their contracts, or find another solution. One solution is to occupy them on research, which may or may not be useful. He may be justified in adopting this solution if there are good grounds for believing that the lull will be temporary. At least the work done should have some beneficial educational influence on those doing it. But there is a real danger that when the operative work of the department revives the research will be continued and additional staff engaged to do it. This danger is all the greater today when formal authority is not required for Secretariat research.

3. *By Whom Should Research be Conducted?*

Once it has been agreed that some piece of research should be undertaken the administration has to decide whether it should be conducted by the Secretariat or by some other agent. This decision has given rise to a lively discussion of principles in New York in recent years. WHO has adopted as a working principle the doctrine that its Secretariat should undertake no research than can be equally well done outside the office. That doctrine is typical of the good sense that characterizes so much of WHO's work and is an invaluable guide for administrative policy. When put to the test it will be found that there is a wide range of subjects which an international Secretariat is better equipped to tackle than any other body.

First, when the research is required to clarify some controversial issue in the field of human or inter-state relations a trained international staff is the body most likely to handle it with the necessary objectivity and discretion. It follows therefore that as a rule documents required by committees or political organs except those dealing with the natural or applied sciences should be compiled by the Secretariat, though on occasion it may prove useful to supplement the key documents thus prepared by others written by experts or consultants.

Secondly, as a general rule when the work involves the collection, aggregation, and analysis of national data it can best be done by a central administration. Such an administration is less likely to be

subject to local bias than a national research institute and more likely to possess the special competence that such work requires. One of the main difficulties in international research relating to human behaviour and institutions lies in the ascertainment of the real nature of the facts to which the data relate. Gradually an international staff will acquire the specialized knowledge required and, because it is international, will acquire it more easily than can any national staff. The national data may be statistical; or they may consist of laws or facts relating to institutions or practices which are not quantitatively measurable. When they are statistical and the statistics record facts which are clearly definable and similar in all countries, such as births and deaths, granted the studies proposed do not involve controversial political issues, an international organization may be justified in arranging for the work to be done by an independent agency. Similarly when no more is required than a simple synopsis of laws delegation may be advantageous. But most national statistics demand careful interpretation and a specialized knowledge, and all studies relating to institutions and national practices involve acts of judgement which a responsible Secretariat is rarely justified in leaving to others. They may also involve field work from which the Secretariat will obtain the fullest and most lasting benefit if it conducts it itself. However, as we have seen, there are certain classes of international statistical work which can safely be delegated and an international Secretariat will often benefit most from field work if it attaches carefully selected independent experts to its missions of inquiry.

Thirdly, there are certain kinds of documents even in the natural and applied sciences that an international Secretariat may be exceptionally well placed to produce. Thus an international official with the necessary technical knowledge is at an advantage in writing extension pamphlets because he is fully familiar with the intentions of his own organization and should be better able than a national technician to foresee the probable reactions of the international public for whom the document is intended.

On the other hand, a great deal of the research in which an international organization may be interested can best be done outside the office.

Though much judgement based on a specialized knowledge and experience is always required in international research, it is widely held that an international Secretariat should not be made responsible for the publication of documents involving a large measure of

personal valuation. Thus UNESCO prepares and publishes lists of films or books or articles itself, but, if it is asked to publish lists in some order of priority involving a value judgement, prefers to assign the work to some independent person and to publish it with an appropriate disclaimer. This doctrine is, however, not universally recognized. The Council of FAO has on more than one occasion asked the Secretariat to prepare reports suggesting possible lines of policy for governments or even estimating the effects of government policies. Such reports necessarily involve an element of valuation. In fact the Secretariat, while assuming responsibility for publication, has responded to these requests with great discretion and an obviously acute sense of responsibility. The objection to such a procedure lies not so much in the risk of secretariat indiscretion as in the fact that owing to the Secretariat's sense of responsibility the reports are liable to lack pungency. The alternative procedure of asking the Secretariat to submit an analysis of the facts to an advisory committee together with such suggestions regarding policy as may be appropriate in a confidential committee document should assure at once the necessary scientific approach and in the committees' reports clarity and force of expression. Some such procedure as this is indeed essential when the value judgements involved have an important political significance. Governments have been very justifiably reluctant to allow the Secretariat of the UN to delegate such work to national institutions or to individuals. In these circumstances the Secretariat cannot devolve its responsibilities, nor should it preach or be asked to preach a doctrine. Unfortunately, however, as observed in an earlier chapter, governments and their delegations in New York are reluctant to appoint committees of independent experts able to view controversial matters in a spirit of scientific detachment. No doubt, were such committees appointed, some officials attached to Delegations might lose their jobs. As a result of this reluctance much of the research done fails to reach the point at which objective policy conclusions are clearly drawn.

An international Secretariat can only be expert in a limited field and questions constantly arise which demand research outside that field. When they do arise outside help must be sought. The closer the subject is to the normal activities of the organization the stronger is the case for engaging special staff on short-term contracts rather than farming the work out. I shall revert to this point. When the subject involves controversial political issues the research must as a rule be

done within the office and in all circumstances the Secretariat should retain the right to edit and to reject the work done.

The field of competence of an international Secretariat is, however, not determined by chance, but by deliberate administrative policy, and it is by no means easy to decide how wide that field should be. A much disputed point is the extent to which an international organization is justified in undertaking long-term research or devoting itself to pure theory. Both historical and theoretical studies may be of vital importance for policy making. The various studies made by the League into the causes and nature of economic depressions were called for by the Assembly because governments felt the need for further knowledge in order to devise more effective countermeasures. The work done was partly theoretical,[1] partly descriptive,[2] and partly historical analysis;[3] and in the light of this background research the committee appointed to advise was able to make recommendations.[4] But only the work done directly for the committee was carried out by the permanent Secretariat or with funds derived from the contribution of Member States. All the work passed the pragmatic test; it was indeed of vital importance. But much of it was basic research of an experimental nature and for all of it a type of competence was required rather different from that needed for the normal analysis of current data. Such work is relatively rarely needed and it is as a rule impossible to foresee when or for what particular purpose it will be needed. It is very difficult therefore to recruit and retain staff competent to do it. Owing to this fact universities are better able than an international office to provide the type of competence required, and it is for this reason, I suggest, that an international Secretariat should as a rule not attempt to undertake purely theoretical work or the study of long-term trends. When occasion for such work arises the expense may be covered either by a special vote or from outside funds. The League was fortunate enough to be able to rely on the generosity of the Rockefeller Foundation for the ancillary work just mentioned. For such ancillary work to render its full value it must be done in the office, for much of its value lies in the day-to-day exchange of views between the permanent staff and the scholars brought in from outside. To assume that results of equal value can be obtained by simply

[1] *Prosperity and Depression.* G. von Haberler.

[2] *The Course and Phases of the World Economic Depression.* B. Ohlin.

[3] *Statistical Testing of Business-Cycle Theories, and Business Cycles in The United States of America.* J. Tinbergen.

[4] The Reports of the Delegation on Economic Depressions.

farming out a piece of work in the social sciences is a profound mistake.

In certain international organizations the employment of temporary experts is rendered difficult or impossible owing to their personnel policy; in the UN it is rendered difficult owing to the rigidity of their anonymity rule. Both causes reflect an administrative defect. If the best help is to be obtained—and there can be no excuse for not seeking the best—appropriate conditions of service must be offered, and the distinguished scholar must be allowed to sign his work even though the Secretariat retains, as it should, the right to edit or to reject what he produces.

This question of theoretical and long-term research, however, is one on which it would be imprudent to formulate any rigid rules. All research is based on certain assumptions and one of the most important duties of a research group in an international administration is to hammer out some common body of doctrine. This basic doctrine is likely to emerge in a harmonious group, competently led, from the discussions amongst its members of the problems that arise in the course of the daily work. These discussions necessarily involve theory. There is, moreover, a risk in restricting the work of an international Secretariat too narrowly to current events. Often the phenomena of today can only be interpreted intelligently in their historical setting, and how far back into history it may be necessary to go only those engaged on the work can judge. This is not a matter on which a political organ or indeed a political official can be expected to form a well-grounded judgement. The risk in a hurried world is that research will be too superficial. There can, I think, be no doubt that such studies as *The Network of World Trade* prepared by the League Secretariat at a time when more immediate work was curtailed by the war had as great a value for policy formulation as had its current analyses. The practice adopted by ECE of including in its annual survey one chapter dealing with relatively long-term trends is probably a wise one.

I have been dealing up to this point with the social sciences and humanities. For research in the natural and applied sciences an international Secretariat is rarely more competent than a national research unit because only rarely is the work based on the collation of national data over a wide area or does it involve political issues. Disease is best studied where it occurs; pests where they occur; breeds of plants and animals must be adapted to local climatic conditions. It may in

exceptional circumstances prove advantageous to set up an international laboratory to conduct research, especially if the costs involved are so great that very few governments would be able to meet them working alone. This is a much disputed issue on which the layman can scarcely form an opinion. One or two such centres have been founded. As a rule, however, international organizations have preferred to establish a system of collective research under which each national institution specializes in some agreed subject and all co-operating institutions exchange results. What is certain is that specialized agencies with their limited resources can achieve more by such methods than by themselves paying for isolated research workers out of touch with the main university and government centres.

4. *The Organization of Research*

Owing to the nature of their work the technical specialized agencies attach more importance to the collective planning of national research than to what they can do within their own offices. They are largely dependent for their success on spreading scientific knowledge and on filling gaps in that knowledge, and for this purpose on mobilizing the research facilities that exist in such a way as to economize effort and promote co-operation.

The first administrative problem that presents itself is how to create adequate advisory machinery and to tap ideas. I have already discussed this question at some length in Chapters VII and IX, and would only add one observation here. I remarked in Chapter VII that the panel system was particularly appropriate for the consideration of scientific research projects. Its merit in this connexion lies in its elasticity and in the fact that the role of the Secretariat as a policy maker is more positive and more inevitable than it is, for instance, in questions involving the behaviour of governments to each other. Both WHO and the scientific division of UNESCO work largely through panels with rewarding results. The director of a department acting under some general authority received from a Conference or an executive board convenes certain members of a panel to consider either in a general way to what problems attention should be devoted or more specifically what are the gaps in existing knowledge which require to be filled in order to permit the organization to perform one or another of its functions more efficiently. A typical WHO panel will meet and survey briefly the present state of knowledge on a given subject and make suggestions about the further research required in

order to fill significant gaps in knowledge. It may rely on private initiative for the next step; it may recommend that the Secretariat organize parallel studies in various parts of the world; its own members may undertake to conduct or to arrange for part of the research themselves. At a later date the panel will as a rule be reconvened and the progress surveyed. At this stage it may well happen that certain questions will have to be broken down further and smaller panels of more narrowly specialized experts convened. In all this work, in the conception of the original field of study, in the selection of experts, in the drafting of the panel reports so as to give them a unity of purpose, the Secretariat has an important role to play—a role all the more important because the Executive Board and the Assembly with whom the final decisions about the orientation of the work and the provision of funds lie cannot have the technical knowledge required for a rational assessment of all the scientific issues involved. The panel is an appropriate compromise. It permits the Executive Board to exercise some influence over the choice of its advisers and it permits the Secretariat to select the persons best fitted to give an authoritative opinion on specific points.

The FAO has adopted a system of organizing research in many ways similar to that of WHO. But every system must be determined largely by the manner in which and the persons by whom national research is conducted. In agriculture, with its small and scattered units of production, governments play a leading part and this fact has determined the practices adopted. Panels are being increasingly used; but FAO relies more on its various commissions and their specialized working parties both as a source of ideas and as agents for the planning and direction of research. The members of both sets of bodies are appointed by governments.

Commissions and working parties constitute an appropriate mechanism for the scientific side of FAO's work at once because of the important part played by governments in agricultural research and because of the regional character of so much of its work. As suggested in Chapter IX standing advisory committees, and for research in certain cases panels, are more appropriate for an organization such as UNESCO whose major problem is the selection at any moment of the most useful field of activity. It was in fact through the panel system that UNESCO was able in the undefined area of 'Science' to select three major questions of as immediate practical importance as Arid Zones, Humid Tropical Zones, and Oceanography.

One of the major purposes of the organization of research by FAO is to increase production, for instance, by breeding hybrid types of cereals or grasses resistant to disease or suited to particular regions, by discovering means for combating disease, and at another level by spreading existing knowledge. The work is essentially pragmatic. Plans for breeding new stock and for the exchange of information about the experiments are combined with plans for the distribution of the types selected, experiments for combating disease with concerted measures to combat it. FAO can co-ordinate and plan; action lies with governments.

No office confines itself to a single system in the organization of research and I do not propose to examine all the various expedients in detail. What is of interest are the guiding principles which are gradually emerging. On certain of these principles the following quotation from a document describing the work of the agricultural division of FAO throws light.

> The breeding of hybrids [it is remarked] is a long-term undertaking, and it was the experience in North America that no one research station can do the necessary work on an adequate scale. It was only when the breeding material and ideas were exchanged amongst workers in the various states that hybrid maize became a commercial possibility in that country. Few research stations in Europe and the Mediterranean area have the facilities of those in North America and comparable success in breeding of adapted maize hybrids can only be ensured by full cooperation on an international scale. As a result of language and other barriers between countries, such cooperation does not come so easily in Europe as in North America, and the major contribution that an international organization such as FAO can make is to provide the background for the necessary cooperation between countries. In 1949 an attempt was made to transfer the responsibility for such cooperation from FAO to the countries themselves by encouraging the establishment of an independent European Hybrid Maize Association. This was clearly premature and provided a striking demonstration of the inadvisability of attempting to withdraw from a project at too early a stage.[1]

This quotation draws attention to the essential considerations relating to the organization of research in agriculture, considerations certain of which are important in all fields of organized research—the need for spreading the research over a sufficiently wide area and the consequential impossibility of the international organization con-

[1] The Agriculture Division of FAO, (FAO/55/4/2456), p. 76.

ducting it itself; the need for co-operation and a certain concentration of effort by each co-operating party; the function of the international organization in planning and directing the work; and finally the need to maintain that central direction for a sufficiently long time. In at least one other specialized agency there has been a tendency to launch an idea, make an initial plan, abandon responsibility to others, and hope for results. There may be results; there may be little more than a waste of public moneys.

Experience would seem to show that whatever the system of organizing research its success is likely to depend on the satisfaction of certain conditions. The first, as just noted, is that the organization must not abandon its responsibilities until it is certain that the plan it has launched is self sufficient. The second is that it should make haste slowly, guided in its progress at once by the urgency of current needs and by a certain logic; the third, which follows on the second, is that panels and committees should confine their suggestions on each occasion to a strictly limited number of points, especially when they seek not a government but an individual response; the fourth is the need to recognize the fact that basic research is as a rule individual and not institutional.

It is the duty of the Secretariat to try to ensure the necessary logic and restraint. This it may achieve in part by exercising an influence over each commission, committee, and panel that meets. But it can never be wholly successful unless the system of advisory bodies constitutes a logical whole and is directed by a council or executive board able to formulate a logical and well-balanced policy on the advice it receives. If the council is weak, shirks its responsibilities, and hides its head in minor administrative and procedural matters the Secretariat is left insecure and without adequate political backing. It can only find security and be sure of obtaining the funds it requires if it plans the work of the advisory bodies in such a way that council is forced to concentrate its attention on major issues.

UNESCO makes use of scientific and academic associations in addition to panels and other forms of committees at once as a source of ideas and for the conduct of a considerable part of the research it plans. This procedure is in accordance with its policy of doing all in its power to strengthen such professional associations. It does not secure that balance of competence and homogeneity of personalities in the advisory bodies on the importance of which I insisted in Chapters VII and VIII. Moreover, there is always the risk that an inter-

national association may be represented, not by those of its members most versed in the questions on which advice is sought, but by its national secretaries.

When an association is employed, not only to make recommendations about suitable subjects for research, but also to conduct the research, new problems present themselves. There is a danger in such circumstances that too much will be undertaken, the manure spread too thin to be productive. When the Secretariat has no continuing responsibility it has little incentive to exercise restraint; when the advisory body can anticipate that it will receive a subvention for the proposals it puts forward and the work they involve it may have no incentive. Whenever one purpose of a research project is to benefit the research worker to measure its success becomes difficult. It is particularly difficult in the social sciences and humanities, where the results obtained cannot be subjected to the rigorous tests that are employed in the natural and applied sciences.

5 *Authority and Control*

In principle no document was published by the League Secretariat without the authority of the Assembly or the Council. The normal procedure was for the Assembly to approve any proposed piece of research apart from committee documents by a special resolution and to approve in addition a special budgetary item to cover the cost of printing and, if extra staff was required, salaries. On occasion the Council would call for a document not foreseen by the Assembly and in this case the cost would probably be met from the Council's budget. The rule was not infrangible—an occasional report might be added as a supplement to the Secretary General's annual report—but it regulated the normal activities of the Secretariat. It is rarely adopted today and I find a strong and widespread opposition to it. It is argued that committees always call for work by the Secretariat that necessitates research and that when as a result a document of real public interest has been produced it should be published without waiting for the next meeting of the Assembly or even of council. In some organizations documents for committees composed of government representatives are distributed to all Member States. To disallow publication without special authority when so great a waste or cost has already been entailed is felt to be unreasonable. It is argued further that an active and enlightened Secretariat is better placed to judge what research should be undertaken than any political body;

that a political body may refuse to give its approval because one country or another is afraid that the results may prove unfavourable to it; that because all research is experimental a considerable amount of work must be undertaken in any case before a judgement can be formed on whether it is worth while or not, and that, granted this, it is wiser to trust the Secretariat than to delay.

All these arguments have some force and the last argument great force. The Secretariat must be allowed freedom to explore the ground and was in fact allowed such freedom in the League. The real issue therefore is whether, having explored the ground, it should be given general powers to print and publish at its discretion. This is perhaps rather a question of finance than of trust in the intelligence and discretion of the Secretariat, for the Secretariat of every international organization that publishes a review—and most do so—necessarily decides what subjects should be treated in that review.

The practice today is to control by limiting the total printing budget and not to itemize each publication. This procedure is probably adequate granted two conditions are satisfied. The first condition is that the power to publish in so far as it is delegated by the political organs is retained by the Secretariat and is not shared by advisory bodies; the second is that the Secretariat abstains from all political propaganda in its publications. A real danger arises if committees or other advisory bodies are entitled to call for publications without council approval. They are less likely to choose wisely than the Secretariat because they cannot themselves do the preliminary work; they may, if they have been chosen without due care, try to cover their own shortcomings by demanding unnecessary documents and calling for their publication; they may demand publications because certain of their members desire to use them to promote political propaganda; they have no direct financial responsibility and should not be entitled to take decisions involving unforeseen expenditure. The Secretariat on the other hand has direct financial responsibility, but more limited public advisory powers. It may perform a real and continuing service by exploring subjects which it believes to be important and suggesting lines of policy. There should exist some machinery of advisory bodies to which it can submit its findings confidentially. It should as a result of its investigations be able to exercise an influence on the recommendations of these advisory bodies. But if the Secretariat appeals to public opinion over the heads of its political organs with a view to influencing government policy, it arrogates to itself a power which

sooner or later will involve the risk that governments will insist not only on predetermining subjects but on vetting the results of the research. This risk is generally recognized and has induced discretion. It is for this reason that the present system of exercising control only through a general printing budget has worked as smoothly as it has.

If governments do insist on exercising control over the results of research the research itself changes its nature. It ceases to be objective and becomes an expression of the views and the attitudes of governments. It does not necesarily lose its value on that account; but it and its value are profoundly different. Thus the economic surveys of the UN and its Regional Commissions serve a very different purpose from the annual reports of the OEEC. The former are intended to give an objective account of economic events and trends; the latter are intended to express the attitude of the governments of states members of OEEC regarding events and policies. Both serve useful purposes; but those purposes are unlike. In fact the main purpose of the research work done by the Secretariat of OEEC is to afford a basis of fact on which governments can discuss and criticize each others' policies and finally reach a collective opinion. That collective opinion will rarely be identical with the view that might be reached by an objective study of the facts because it will always be influenced in some degree by sectional national interests. It is neither less interesting on that account nor less important. The major value of the research done, however, does not lie in the published document but in the discussions in the committees and Council to which it gives rise.

What is essential is to avoid confusion about the purpose. If the purpose is to publish an objective analysis the Secretariat must be allowed a free hand. If it proves irresponsible it should be changed; but its work should never be controlled by a political organ when objectivity is sought. Science and politics are bad bedfellows.

Both the risk of government interference and the principle that officials should serve their masters and not attempt to overpower them set strict limits to the responsibilities that the Secretariat of an international organization is justified in assuming. It is not their function to criticize governments in a public document or to suggest new lines of policy unless they have been formally requested to do so. Policy suggestions should be made to advisory bodies. If there are none the administration is at fault. Moreover, direct criticism in a public secretariat document almost always indicates an inability to write. The facts and figures on which the research is based should

themselves suffice to suggest when and where policies are at fault. It is almost always possible to make a point perfectly clear by presenting the logic of the data without expressing a value judgement.

In striking contrast to the freedom which the Secretariats of specialized agencies have received in the conduct of their research is the stipulation made by the Assembly of the UN that only official figures should be used. Certain UN research units have fortunately resisted or ignored this wholly unscientific stipulation with impunity.

6. *The Central Organization of Secretariat Research*

If publication is controlled only through the printing budget the head of the administration becomes responsible for every publication that has not been formally called for by the Assembly or council. The administrative implications of this fact are, however, limited. Each office issues a number of regular publications which raise no problem except occasionally as regards length and content; many other publications are included in the general programme of work, which is formally approved. In order to frame a judgement about content and about the fringe of publications not directly or indirectly approved the head of the administration will need the advice of some secretariat publications committee. But the need for such a committee would not be less if he had to make recommendations to the political organs instead of taking the final decisions himself. When, as sometimes happens, there is no such committee each department tends to spend up to the limit of its printing budget and these budgets tend to be based on some traditional ratios, no serious consideration being given to the general programme of publications or to their relevance to the general programme of work. Moreover, when there is no committee the research work will probably lack unity of purpose and impede rather than promote the formulation of a coherent policy the need for which was discussed in the last chapter. In the ILO the publications committee very sensibly insists on its right to demand an outline of any proposed publication for consideration before taking a decision. The head of an administration will strengthen his hand and facilitate unity of policy if he provides for a single printing budget which can be divided among departments by himself or, if he so decides, by the committee.

For a publications committee to be fully effective it must be able to deal with both the intellectual and the administrative issues. It should therefore include among its members representatives of the depart-

ments doing research and of the financial and other central services. To appoint the head of the editorial services as chairman presents the advantages of giving status to those services and of aiding him to establish a unity and balance out of the divergent departmental interests.

The need for a strong central control will depend on the extent to which research is concentrated in a single department or, if spread, concentrated in a research section in each department. There can be little doubt that concentration improves quality. It reduces the risk mentioned in Section 2 of work being undertaken only to occupy the time of executive officers who have little to do. It reduces the difficulties of co-ordination and the risk of overlapping. On the other hand research is of great educational value to a department; a high degree of concentration tends to divide an office into executive officers whose knowledge is superficial and research workers who lack a sense of reality and fail to exercise an influence. If research is to be kept pragmatic, as I believe it should be, there is a balance of advantage in avoiding a high degree of concentration even at some sacrifice of quality. When it is spread over a number of departments, however, it is important to set up strong co-ordinating machinery—an inter-departmental statistical committee and an editorial service in addition to the publications committee. Much benefit may be gained by the practice adopted by WHO and ECE of placing a small group of statistical experts at the disposal of any department that may need technical advice.

An examination of the publications of international organizations today will reveal a somewhat widespread lack of uniformity in the framework on which the research is conducted—the basic years and the historical sequence of the statistics—as well as in the explanations given in footnotes. This is always due to some administrative defect and the defect is as a rule that insufficient power has been given to those responsible for co-ordination. A committee can agree principles, it cannot examine detail. Both the publications committee and the statistical committee therefore require some officer with wide powers to ensure uniformity, subject to final decision of disputed points by the committees themselves. Similarly the editorial services should be allowed to concern themselves with the logic of exposition as well as with linguistic accuracy.

Such central control is always unpopular and power will always drift back to the individual director if the head of the administration

fails to insist on it. He can facilitate his own task by giving those responsible for it adequate status. The ACC has been successful in arranging for a general control over the preparation and dispatch of questionnaires to governments and the system in force has had a striking influence on the inter-departmental co-ordination of part of the research work in some specialized agencies without causing friction. But more might with advantage be done to promote uniformity of methods in work not based on questionnaires. The control system must of course be co-operative and designed to create a common desire to attain and maintain certain recognized standards and to organize the research in such a way as to enable it to make its full contribution to a coherent policy for the whole organization.

7. *The Departmental Organization of Research*

The Assembly approval of all publications presents the great advantage that it facilitates the planning of research. The whole programme apart from committee documents and an occasional council demand is known in advance and can be planned in detail at the beginning of the year. As a rule by far the greater part of the quantitative research done by an international organization is or should be collective and must be planned. When there is only a general budget control it should therefore be the policy of the publications committee and in each department of the director to create similar conditions and to establish a definite programme at the beginning of each year. At the same time the advantage of individual work needs to be preserved to the greatest possible extent. The first concern of the officer in charge of research is therefore to strike the right balance between the contributions to be made by the individual and the group.

Every director will no doubt solve this problem in his own way. I frequently adopted the practice when a new economic publication was called for of thinking through the subject myself, drafting a minute setting out what seemed to be its logical backbone, and asking the official put in charge of the work to do the same. An exchange of minutes would follow, each of us commenting on the proposals of the other and submitting alternative or supplementary suggestions. When the backbone was agreed the future author would be asked to break it down into chapters, and when these were agreed to submit suggestions about tables. Very probably we would not meet to discuss orally until the backbone had been settled on paper. This was a

deliberate policy based on the reflection that it is a sound practice to have two minds working on a subject independently and thinking about it at a level rather more profound than is normally reached in an oral exchange of views. It had the advantage also of greatly facilitating the task of editing when the first draft had been prepared.

Once the whole skeleton had been agreed in this way a meeting would be held of all the interested officials, further comments would be received, further alterations made, and a plan for the division of the statistical and possibly of other parts of the work elaborated with fixed dates for the preparation of the tables and for the completion of each chapter. This plan or rather the combined plan for all the publications would then be sent to the linguistic and printing services. Set out in this way the procedure sounds more mechanical than it was in fact. New work is necessarily experimental and experience showed that about one-third of the tables planned for a new publication would probably prove impossible to complete or uninstructive when completed, while new tables would always be found to be necessary in the course of the work.

The regular annual publications of the Economic Intelligence Service, as it was called, formed a pyramid with a number of statistical and legal documents forming its base, on which was built a layer of special memoranda—on Trade, Balances of Payments, Production, Currency, &c.—capped by the *World Economic Survey*. The structure of the office was similarly pyramidical, built on the foundation of a central statistical group. Statistics were looked upon as a tool employed by the economist and not as an esoteric craft. A number of the statistical clerks moved in and out of the central group, attached to individual officials when the work demanded and returning to the pool when these officials no longer needed them. This centralized and elastic system, which proved most economical, was rendered possible by the careful planning of all publications in advance.

It is less easy today, when economic and social work is divided among half a dozen different organizations, to plan work in this manner, and many directors prefer to begin the collective work not by an exchange of minutes but by round-table discussions. Whatever system best suits the officer in charge of research is probably the best. But a pyramid of some sort there must be and the more carefully the final product is planned in advance the less will it suffer from hurried work and last-minute alterations at the end. These facts have important implications for the administrative organization of the office.

They imply that it is better not to separate statistics from the subjects to which they relate. When they are separated some waste of staff is almost inevitable, for the economist must have statistical clerks at his disposal during certain periods if he is not to waste his own time and cannot borrow them easily from an independent department. Moreover, the statistical services are liable to waste time in preparing tables for the economists because they are not sufficiently versed in the subjects to realize quickly whether useful results are being obtained or not, and thus do work which is unnecessary. This risk may be lessened to some extent by appointing a trained economist in charge of statistics in offices dealing mainly with economic questions. If on account of the amount of routine statistical work separation is inevitable the statistical branch may with advantage be placed under the general direction of the officer in charge of research or of his immediate superior. But in a very large office or an office dealing with many subjects even this degree of concentration may prove impossible.

When for reasons of morale a number of chiefs of section engaged on research are appointed, it is unwise to base these appointments on the number of officials in the section group. To assume that because a chief of section exists he must be in control of a given number of other officials, not only wastes money but breaks the logical flow of work from the bottom to the top. The right criteria for such appointments are the intellectual calibre of the man and the quality of his work.

As a rule it is preferable to divide the office by subject rather than by country, for country studies are necessarily more superficial than subject studies and give less scope for the type of analysis that an international office is best fitted to do. Each national government can and does make its own country studies. There is no surer way of wasting time and money than by demanding that each member of an international staff engaged on economic research should follow developments in a particular country or group of countries. It may be necessary for certain officials to study as distinct problems the general evolution of planned economies, but for the rest, unless special research is required for technical assistance work, all practical purposes will be served if officials specializing in such subjects as production, finance, or trade are required to possess in addition a knowledge of the sources of information for selected countries. In some offices, however, such as the Bank and the Fund and also the agricultural

division of the FAO, so much of the practical work is confined to individual countries as to render country specialists indispensable.

One important purpose of international economic and social research is to trace world and regional trends against which national trends may be measured. It is therefore of great importance to plan the work in such a way that the sequence of the figures is not broken. When an office publishes a series of specialized memoranda year by year these trends can be shown in them. When it publishes a Survey only and certain other documents which are not structurally connected with it, then the Survey must be built round a more or less permanent skeleton. To secure this it may prove desirable to give the statisticians responsible for calculating the various index numbers a position of some authority when the Survey is planned.

But however authority is distributed along the line, the official in charge must keep the final authority in his own hands. He should exercise his influence at the outset when each publication is planned. When a draft is completed it remains for him to examine, edit, and modify it in such a way as to permit him in all intellectual honesty to take full responsibility for it. If it is criticized he cannot shift that responsibility on to others. Only on this condition of the unreserved acceptance of responsibility by its chief can a department work together harmoniously and can that uniformity of method and general standard of quality be ensured on which its reputation will depend.

The most glaring weakness in certain offices today is the lack of editorial courage and decision. Certain editors seem to believe that they can perform their functions by circulating all drafts for comment to all officials of professional status working under them. They seek a weak and flabby compromise between the divergent views of politically minded social scientists rather than scientific objectivity. As a result each document is liable to lack substance and to reflect somewhat dimly a number of preconceived views instead of views based on ascertained facts, and the whole documentation is liable to lack unity of design. An international research group will never acquire the rigour of thought and lucidity of expression necessary for work of high quality in the absence of firm and incisive editorial control.

In some international organizations it is the practice to issue publications over the names of the authors most directly responsible for them. The arguments for and against this procedure are very delicately balanced. The arguments in favour are, I believe, four: first it

seems ethically right to acknowledge in this way what an official has done; secondly what is ethically right is administratively sound; thirdly a name helps sales and helps to make the organization known; finally, when an author acquires a reputation, he establishes contacts of value both to himself and to his office. On the other hand the type of research I have been considering is very rarely strictly individual. The so-called author is aided throughout by others, who collate the data, make the calculations, and in some cases prepare drafts. To name him alone may be invidious and may damage morale. Some documents are so clearly collective efforts that even in an organization which publishes names they remain anonymous. To decide which should receive this treatment, however, is sometimes by no means easy. Furthermore, the editor may be embarrassed in playing the role he should play by the thought that he should not insist on a change in a document for which someone else is bearing such responsibility as the name implies.

When the principle of anonymity is preferred partial satisfaction may be afforded by making an exception of the office review or reviews and allowing the staff to write signed articles for them. This solution has the merit of inducing officials to complete their thought on certain points which cannot be fully elaborated in other publications and benefits morale without involving any problem of joint authorship.

More important for morale than the publishing of names, however, is the distribution of functions in such a way that the research worker is not isolated, but can take an active part in committee work, in field inquiries, and in policy formulation. If research fails to lead to valuable policy suggestions within the office it can scarcely be expected to exercise an influence elsewhere.

On the other hand it is undesirable to allow those responsible for preparing important publications to be harrassed by constant demands for committee documents. The officials closest to the committees are as a rule better able to judge exactly what a committee requires than the research worker and should be charged with this work except when an exhaustive study is needed. Moreover, if they know that the work demanded will have to be done by themselves, they are more likely to induce committees to exercise restraint in their demands. The pure research, however, will benefit if the research worker is given the right within reason to attend the meetings of committees working in the same field as himself.

8. *Administrative Dispersion and Research*

The administrative dispersion discussed in the last chapter has given rise to new difficulties in the organization of research. Certain specialized agencies are inclined to stake claims to monopolistic rights in their own territories, rights which, if fully recognized, would render it impossible for the UN to make any general survey of economic and social conditions and for other organizations to conduct their work with scientific freedom. The interplay of economic and social forces does not stop at the frontiers of these chance institutional territories and respect for these monopolistic claims has no scientific justification. In fact too much respect is paid to them and the standard of some of the research done has suffered in consequence. Occasionally an attempt is made to overcome this difficulty by arranging for joint studies conducted by several institutions working together. This procedure may prove useful to all parties when two or more offices are equally and genuinely interested in a problem. But when joint studies are undertaken simply out of respect for theoretical monopolistic rights failure is almost certain, for if an organization claiming such rights has no lively interest it will not designate competent officials to undertake the work. The only rational means by which the difficulty of dispersion can be overcome is for all parties to accept the fact that all data relevant to the problems they have to tackle should always be used with complete freedom, and to endeavour by the methods discussed in the last chapter to avoid in so far as possible duplication of effort.

9. *The Size of Research Groups*

The smaller an international research group the more efficiently it will work so long as it is large enough to create an intellectually stimulating atmosphere. In international research there is seldom need for a large staff because the number of returns on which such research is based is limited by the number of states or statistical areas. The enormous growth in international activity since the last war has necessitated a great increase in the demand for research workers. The total number of persons employed by international organizations, however, would seem to have grown during this period out of all proportion to either the increase in the available data or the increase in the output or the quality of the documents produced. This phenomenon is due in part to the dispersion of work among so many

scattered institutions and in part to the fact that special importance is attached today to backward areas whose problems can only be effectively studied on the spot owing to the lack of published data. Field studies are always expensive in time and staff. But the growth in the number of officials employed on research today is due largely to bad recruitment policies, especially in the early days of the UN, to lack of editorial courage, to time wasted on the circulation of drafts to officials to whom semi-editorial powers have been inappropriately granted, and to unnecessary country studies. It is due in part to the fact that when a staff is large it inevitably wastes time owing to its size. Most of these causes reflect some administrative fault or weakness and there are no doubt others of like origin. They can be overcome if governments insist on economy and those responsible for the administration accept the fact that the best results will be obtained by a staff that is rather too small than too large, reinforced as circumstances demand by experts engaged for specific tasks on short-term contracts and, if necessary, on special conditions of service. In the size of its research staff the Bank for International Settlements sets an example which might with advantage be followed by other institutions.

XII

FINANCE

1. *Introductory*

IN this chapter I propose to limit myself to a consideration of certain of the problems that present themselves in connexion with the fifth of the six points of concern to the head of any international administration mentioned in Chapter IX, namely, how to obtain from governments the necessary funds, and how to expend those funds as fruitfully as possible. This fifth point raises the questions of budgeting and financial control. I shall not, however, discuss those principles of Treasury control which are equally applicable to national and international administrations, but only certain of the problems that are peculiar to the latter. Nor in connexion with revenue shall I discuss fiscal problems, for there is little likelihood that the system for determining the contributions of Member States will be seriously modified in the foreseeable future. That system the international administrator is forced to accept as a datum. What are of concern to him are the manner in which the budget is prepared and the responsibility for its preparation.

2. *Budgeting*

The determinant fact which distinguishes international from national budgeting is that there is no finance minister. This may place the head of the international administration, unless some protective mechanism is established constitutionally or by the financial regulations, in the extremely awkward position of being his own finance minister compelled to face alone a parliament, which may be composed wholly of the opposition. The Covenant of the League had no provision about responsibility for preparing the budget, but in fact the Secretary General had to face the early Assemblies unprotected. In 1921, however, the Assembly requested the Council to appoint a committee, later called the Supervisory Commission, to which the draft budget should be submitted by the Secretary General. Although under the financial regulations the Commission was instructed to examine the budget estimates submitted to it by the Secretary General

and, if it saw good, to propose modifications but not to amend them, in fact the Secretary General elaborated his final proposals in discussion with the Commission, and always reached agreement with it before facing the Assembly. Indeed, as early as 1923, the Commission remarked in its report that: 'after submitting his draft estimates the Secretary General continued to study the possibility of further reductions. . . . Some of these reductions, however, could not have been effected by the Secretary General had his responsibilities not been shared and assumed by the Commission.'[1] Gradually, as the Commission won the respect and trust of the Assembly it assumed ever-increasing responsibility for steering the estimates through that body.

The situation today is widely different from that before the war. First, the constitutions of several of the post-war international organizations, including the Charter of the United Nations, contain a clause, which has been unfortunately interpreted, that the Director General (Secretary General) shall 'prepare and submit to the Board' (or Assembly) 'the annual budget estimates' and that 'the Board shall consider and submit to the . . . Assembly such budget estimates, together with any recommendations the Board may deem advisable'.[2] This formulation, plus the accident that the first Secretary General of the United Nations interpreted this to mean that what was required was a substantive document from himself plus an ancillary gloss, has led to the widespread belief that the whole responsibility for the budget estimates must lie with the head of each organization alone, and that it was his duty and the duty of no one else to battle the budget estimates through the Assembly. At the same time, responsibility should be divided in the sense that some other body or bodies should submit independent criticisms on the work of the head of the administration.

Secondly, the Conferences of certain of the specialized agencies are composed of delegates who have a much keener interest in defending or promoting the cause of the organization with which they are concerned than they are in finance. In consequence, they are inclined at home to defend any budget estimates submitted against Treasury criticism and reluctant during a Conference to proffer criticism themselves.

Thirdly, budgets are as a rule today voted by a two-thirds majority,

[1] Second Report, II, para. 8.
[2] I quote from Art. 55 of the Constitution of WHO.

and states paying small contributions, especially when they receive from the organization direct or indirect subventions, are frequently not interested in restricting expenditure. They press for additional work of special advantage to themselves to be undertaken, and additional sums to be voted.

Owing to the second and third of these three changes, the Directors General of certain of the specialized agencies have had no strong incentive to shift responsibility for the budget estimates on to other shoulders. However illogical the actual system of presenting the Assembly with variant opinions, it has the advantage that the Assembly itself is as likely to prove malleable as an executive board, and a good deal more likely than an efficient finance committee.

Executive boards, for their part, have as a rule shown little anxiety to increase their financial responsibilities, and indeed little interest in finance. But if a board is responsible for deciding the programme of work, for determining the procedure to be adopted in its execution, for supervising the general administration of its office, it cannot logically divest itself of responsibility for the costs involved. If it accepts that responsibility, it must make those estimates its own, and its members must be prepared to defend the budget estimates when they come up for discussion at a Conference. To render the Director General of any specialized agency responsible for more than the initial preparation of a budget is therefore illogical, and leads to a divided responsibility which has most unfortunate results. In ICAO the system is completely logical. The Secretary General prepares a draft budget and a draft programme, which he sends to Council. The Council submits the first to its financial committee, and the second to its advisory technical committees for comment and, in the light of the comments received, decides and is uniquely responsible for both to the Conference. This, I suggest, is *mutatis mutandis* the sort of procedure which would benefit any international organization, whatever its constitutional provisions. It is not dissimilar from the procedure adopted by the ILO, although that body prefers a presentation of policy simpler than a programme.

In certain cases, however, these boards have been compelled to work under instructions or constitutional provisions which would have proved embarrassing had they shown financial ardour. Thus so long as the members of the Executive Board of UNESCO represented, not their governments, but the Conference, even those coming from countries which favoured budgetary reduction should logically have

advocated not their governments' views, but the more expansive views of the Conference. They could not do so, however, without the consciousness that if they later represented their governments at the Conference, they would be compelled to sing a different song. Similarly, the Executive Board of WHO was afforded little incentive to demonstrate financial ardour, for the major instruction it received from its Assembly was to ensure that the budget estimates were 'adequate to enable WHO to carry out its constitutional functions'.

In fact, in spite of this lack of incentive to assume serious financial responsibilities, executive boards have been in the habit of appointing finance committees to aid them in compiling their comments; some members have brought Treasury officials as substitutes to serve on such committees, and on occasion the chairman of a board has signed a joint preface to the estimates with the Director General. But in no United Nations' organization, except the United Nations itself, has any body comparable with the Supervisory Commission of the League been established, and neither in the United Nations, nor in those specialized agencies in which joint responsibility for submitting agreed estimates to the Assembly or Conference might have been established as a working principle, has it been established. I have already indicated certain of the reasons for these facts, reasons which imply as a rule no criticism.

I happen to have attended the Committee of the League Assembly concerned with budgetary questions throughout the inter-war period, and watched the extraordinary change in the general attitude of that Committee once the Supervisory Commission had assumed responsibility for agreeing the estimates with the Secretary General, and defended them as agreed proposals at the Assembly. Its members were repeatedly reappointed; they acquired a unique knowledge of the working of the League and of the relative competence and value of the various departments; they were men whose views carried weight in the Assembly and who, especially after 1929 when they were chosen by the Assembly, were wholly prepared to fight for what they had approved. The Commission was, in fact, the strongest defence against unreasonable attack at the disposal of the Secretary General. It was, it is true, anxious to avoid unnecessary expenses, and the directors had to use all their powers of persuasion if they had occasion to increase their staff or other costs. But it was always a body with which the directors could discuss with complete frankness, and I personally cannot remember a single occasion on which I felt

that it had been unreasonable in its decisions regarding my Department, or had done other than reflect with justice the general climate of opinion in which the League had to function. It had further the great merit of adopting the practice of appointing a *rapporteur* who would make an intensive advance study of the estimates and the various financial problems that arose. The Commission would then pay particular attention to the points he raised and, while never neglecting detail, thus gave itself the time to discuss wider issues fully. This system rendered it possible for the Secretary General to elaborate the estimates with the aid of the *rapporteur*. It may be true that the States Members of the League were financially mean; but their meanness was lessened not enhanced by the Commission. The Commission acquired an intimate knowledge of and a respect for the Secretariat, and through its influence the Secretariat was able to win the confidence of the Assembly. Thus we find the Finance Committee to the Fifth Assembly reporting: 'It is no longer necessary to engage in fiercely discussed campaigns for economy; the departments themselves endeavour by well considered financial planning to exercise the utmost economy, in close co-operation with the Supervisory Commission. . . .'[1]

Although I am therefore not in agreement with the attacks which have been directed against this body, I am somewhat reluctantly forced by other considerations to the conclusion that its example is not one that can be copied in detail by those specialized agencies that suffer today from divided responsibility. The crucial fact about the Supervisory Commission was that it was possible to find persons of sufficient authority to serve on it. It was not composed of Treasury officials. Only one of its members had to be a financial expert. What gave it its special value was a small group of persons who with a certain rotation served on it for many years, and always held a prominent position in their national delegations to the Assembly. It is possible to find persons of the required calibre and politico-financial sense for a political institution—for the United Nations today—but much more difficult for a specialized agency. Moreover, the executive boards of these agencies should be the main channel linking the administration to the political Conferences.

The problem of the United Nations, in so far as there still is a problem, is much more easy to solve than that of some of the new agencies. It presented itself starkly in 1952 when the first Secretary

[1] *Assembly Records*, p. 329.

General submitted[1] a suggestion to the Assembly that the members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions should not be allowed to serve on the Assembly Committee dealing with the budget. The proposal was based on the argument that the members of this advisory committee served in a personal capacity as financial experts, and that as delegates they might be instructed to oppose its views. In fact there is no provision that they should all be financial experts; nor are they. But had the proposal been adopted, which it was not, it would have had the effect of removing from the Assembly Committee critics of the Secretary General's estimates if agreement with the advisory committee had not been reached. Had agreement been reached it would have had the effect of removing the very persons to whom the administration should look for support. The position of the Secretary General is necessarily weakened if he is unable to meet the Assembly with the full backing of its advisory committee. He may be unable to do so, if the committee itself does not seek agreement. There can, however, be no doubt that the interests of the Secretary General and of the whole organization will be best served if all the issues are thrashed out in advance. A common responsibility is shared by both parties honestly to seek and finally to reach agreement.

The Secretary General of UN, however, is in one way in a more difficult position than a Director General of a specialized agency or theoretically than the Secretary General of the League inasmuch as there is no political organ to which an issue can be referred prior to the Assembly meeting. Even granted the firmest intention by both parties to create a joint front, occasions may arise when it is necessary to leave a point of principle for arbitrage by the Assembly.

There would seem to be little evidence to support the view that the power of Directors General of specialized agencies to get their estimates adopted has been gravely weakened by the lack of an effective budgetary committee, or by the scant comments that executive boards occasionally make on their figures. Nevertheless, divided responsibility for the estimates presents serious disadvantages and is incompatible with sound administration.

As already remarked, it is at least illogical for executive boards to submit programmes without assuming direct responsibility for estimating and for defending their costs. One effect of the failure to arrange for the adequate predigestion of budget estimates by any

[1] A/2214.

responsible political organ seems to have been the submission of estimates or draft budgets and programmes, sometimes on the request of a Conference, in such detail as to render them almost incomprehensible. Thus the programme and budget estimates of WHO for 1952 amounted to 571 pages, and although subsequent documents were reduced in size, partly, as the Board remarked, as the result of using smaller print, that for 1956 amounted to 323 pages, and the Board, having revived on the instructions of the Conference the Finance Committee it had previously abolished, submitted for its part 137 pages of comments on the estimates and on the Finance Committee's observations and circulated the latter, which were lengthy, to governments. Similarly, UNESCO's programme and budget for 1953 and 1954 amounted to as much as 613 pages with estimates for sums as small as $200 for freight charge or $60 'other items of expenditure' two years hence. Detail of this nature for a harried and hurried Conference is rather obfuscating than illuminating. It is also costly. It becomes quite meaningless when owing to biennial Conferences it has to be preconceived two and a half years in advance. In the welter of figures and comments and counter comments it is difficult for a Conference to do more than adopt a budget ceiling as a political compromise. The Council of ICAO, which is constitutionally responsible for submitting the budget estimates, and has a strong finance committee to advise it, finds it possible to confine its whole budget and programme to about fifty pages containing summary tables only.

Another reason for the brevity and clarity of the ICAO budget is that like, for instance, those of the ILO and GATT it is not based on the 'project' principle, but on the general activities of the office, the committees, and the political organs. The project system of budgeting is the financial counterpart of the narrow job specification system in personnel policy. Theoretically, if each member of a staff is engaged to do one job and one job only, it might be possible to preconceive how the time of such a staff would be divided a year hence between different proposed undertakings. Whenever such a system is enforced costs must be high because there is no flexibility. When such a system is not enforced, the project budget becomes a work of fiction, except for such items of expenditure as missions of experts specially engaged for a specific purpose or the purchase of demonstration equipment.

Conferences faced by a mass of undigested material have adopted one procedure after another to deal with it, and on more than one

occasion instead of remedying the fundamental defect of divided responsibility have increased their own difficulties by calling for more information—'madder music, stronger wine'—to be laid before them in the future. Whatever their own committee mechanism and procedure, however, in the end they vote a budget ceiling, which as a rule is about the figure suggested by the Director General. When it is not and a crisis occurs, the Director General, left without the full support of any preparatory or supervisory body, has to meet the full brunt of it. He has made a political miscalculation and alone is responsible. Even when he has calculated right, however, he may be left defenceless and preoccupied until the ceiling has been adopted.

When there is no firm proposal submitted by a political organ that can express an authoritative financial opinion, the risk that interested states, commanding a large number of votes and paying small contributions, will press for additional and expensive undertakings is increased. The administrator suffers, for the ceiling finally voted is often inadequate. Indeed, sometimes the Conference, conscious of this fact, throws all the responsibility on the Director General, requesting him to do his best. This, as we have seen, is one cause of the narrow operative front discussed in Chapter X. When, on the contrary, the budget has been stabilized, as was that of the FAO for a number of years, the risk of pressure for supplementary ventures is greatly diminished.

Sound budgeting demands at once a just appreciation of what is politically acceptable and wise, and an accurate estimate of items of cost. A budget may prove acceptable in the sense that it will command a majority of votes and still be unwise because it creates hostility to the institution among the more important contributors to its budget, and a critical public opinion. This duality of the art of budgeting determines in large measure the form of financial mechanism required. As a rule, though there have been occasional temporary lapses, all specialized agencies have some sort of advisory financial committee, some members of which at least have had Treasury experience. These committees have, however, failed to play the same role as did, for instance, the Supervisory Commission of the League, partly on account of divided responsibility. They have failed also to play the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, although the UN also suffers from divided responsibility. The reasons for their failure other than divided responsibility have, I believe, been first that they have as a rule not been

composed of persons of adequate authority, secondly that their membership has been too impermanent, and thirdly that those with financial experience have not necessarily participated at the Conferences or, when participating, had adequate standing. Moreover, the fashionable system of thinking in terms of a detailed—even if partly imaginary—programme of work tends to reduce the budget to the status of a troublesome by-product.

If the weaknesses in the existing machinery and procedure of certain of the specialized agencies are to be overcome, the obvious conditions are that the budgets should be presented jointly by the Directors General and the executive boards, that the latter should be prepared to make the draft estimates their own and give them their whole-hearted support at the Conference, and that they should have at the Conference and in the intervals between sessions the support of a body of men able to give sound advice about what is technically and politically reasonable. A small committee composed of half a dozen persons, serving in a personal capacity, selected by a board, might prove of value provided that the selection was made with great care and the best members continually re-elected. Permanence of membership is of major importance for only gradually can any committee acquire that intimate knowledge of the working of an institution essential for sound advice, only gradually will the members of such a committee acquire authority in a Conference, only gradually will they acquire the art of reaching a reasonable and genuine agreement with the board. The best method of selection is therefore the method most likely to lead to the long-term service of members, and to their attendance at Conferences as full members of national delegations. The committee would work most effectively if it appointed one of its members *rapporteur*.

FAO has such a committee, but it is formally stipulated that its members should serve for a year only. This may be a wise provision during a period of trial and error, but to ensure both real competence and authority a long period of service is indispensable.

The functions of an advisory financial committee are two, to give advice to the head of the administration regarding costs and financial and administrative procedures, and to give advice to him and the board regarding the budget total. On the detail agreement should always be reached, granted good sense and good will. Occasions may arise on which the committee demands economies which involve a change, not of administrative procedure, but in the objectives of

policy, on which there is disagreement regarding the total figure. On such occasions the Director General may feel under an obligation to reserve his position, and refer the matter to the board, and the board will have to consider very carefully whether the committee is accurately forecasting the probable political climate at the Conference. The major concern of the head of the administration is that agreement should be reached, not only for the reasons I have given above, but also because the Conference itself is likely to do more constructive and valuable work, if its debates are conducted in harmony and not in discord. It is frequently observed that Conferences which have exhausted themselves in a budget ceiling struggle fail to take any active or helpful interest in the programme. In practice a Director General bent on securing agreement can almost always attain it by arranging for a meeting between a sub-committee of the board and the advisory financial committee, once the latter has become an integral part of the whole mechanism.

The united front is so important that every effort should be made to attain it. But an efficient and respected financial committee can render great services, not only to Member States but to the administration, even when its advice is not always accepted. The Council of ICAO has on more than one occasion rejected the views of its Financial Committee. Nevertheless, owing to the fact that it is known that that Committee is in the habit of scrutinizing the estimates with great care, it is possible for the Council to submit a brief summary budget to the Conference with confidence that it will not be radically modified.

The need for a strong financial committee and for agreement between it and an executive board is increased by the growing practice of holding Conferences biennially or at longer intervals, rather than annually. To do so presents a number of financial advantages in addition to the obvious administrative advantage of allowing the administration to get on with its work without losing a couple of months every year in preparing for and servicing a Conference. First it renders lengthy and over-detailed budgets patently absurd; secondly it forces executive boards to take a more direct financial responsibility, and thirdly it forces boards to rely more on the advice of their advisory committees. It should in addition act as an inducement to whatever body is responsible for selecting the committee to select the strongest possible candidates. Finally, it gives financial stability during a period longer than twelve months, and involves the execu-

tive board or its committee to a greater extent in the control of the expenditure voted.

3. *Economy in the Use of Funds*

The second point of major concern to the international administrator mentioned at the beginning of this chapter was how to ensure the economical or fruitful use of the funds voted. As I stated, I do not propose to discuss in this connexion principles of Treasury control which, as a rule, are equally applicable to national and international administrations, but only certain causes of possible waste of resources peculiar to the latter. These causes fall into three groups, first those arising from the political system, secondly those arising from the financial system, and thirdly those arising from the administrative system. On the first two groups the administrator can only exercise an indirect influence.

4. *Political Causes of Waste*

The Assembly of UN and ECOSOC constantly insist on the need for concentration of effort and the avoidance of minor or unfruitful undertakings, and this insistence has exercised a salutory influence. The dispersion of effort from which post-war organizations have so greatly suffered has, as we have seen, been largely due to the voting power of countries which contribute little, log-rolling among political blocs, the practice of direct or indirect subventions, the weakening on the home front of Foreign Office and Treasury control and possibly the fact that the system of contributions implies for some Member States regressive taxation. All these factors have contributed to higher budgets being voted. But the administrator has not benefited. On the contrary, it is extremely difficult to conduct an office economically when it has to deal with a miscellany of minor subjects requiring different types of competence and a wide variety of expert advice. It may be necessary in these circumstances to engage special staff unversed in the art of international administration; it will certainly be necessary to have more advisory committees than when the work is concentrated. Moreover, a director cannot have the same grip on the work when it consists of crumbs rather than of chunks.

To control this form of extravagance adequately when it originates in the political organs of an international institution, is not easy. In the early post-war days the Secretariats themselves, however, were in

no small measure responsible for the dispersion of effort. They produced a cornucopia of ideas, partly with a view to 'vote-catching', partly as a result of the policy of turning over the staff rapidly. Each new recruit sought to hatch his own egg. To suppress this nuisance presents no administrative difficulty. No more is required than a firm hand and common sense. The political danger can, moreover, be greatly reduced, though never eliminated. I have already insisted on the value of standing advisory committees in this connexion. Whether they are employed or not, the growing influence of the administrator in the drafting of programmes constitutes an important check, and this check can be and is being reinforced by inter-organizational co-operation and the ACC. It would be further reinforced by the development of joint programmes and the strengthening of ACC and ECOSOC in some such manner as that discussed in Chapter X.

5. *The Financial Causes of Waste*

The finances of most international organizations[1] present, as they did before the war, four peculiarities which collectively may exercise an adverse influence on the administrator and act as a contributory cause of waste. These are the facts, that

(i) the administration has no control over the taxpayer; it cannot sue or imprison a Member State which has failed to pay its dues;
(ii) it cannot make a low estimate of receipts but, on the contrary, has to assume that receipts will exactly equal budget appropriations;
(iii) it cannot borrow;
(iv) when there is a surplus, that surplus is as a rule refunded in one form or another to the taxpayer.

These four facts are inimical to the frugal use of resources both positively or negatively. If the Member States fail to pay or to pay promptly, arrears accumulate, and the official responsible for carrying out a programme may be impeded in planning his work efficiently. be tempted to go slow at one moment when receipts are dribbling in and rush at another if there is a sudden influx of funds. If receipts are seriously in arrears, the administrator may become nervous about his ability to carry out the instructions he has received from his Con-

[1] The International Bank and the Monetary Fund are exceptions, being self-supporting.

ference at all. In such circumstances, the head of an international administration may be induced to notify his office about May or June, instructing all directors to curtail expenditure because funds are not available, and in the autumn, if they have been received in the meantime, to send out another urgent office circular requesting directors to think out plans for additional expenditure, so as to obviate the risk of a budgetary surplus and consequential cut in the following year's estimates. When this happens, it follows that on the one hand the original programme has been skimped, on the other that undigested, and sometimes unauthorized, plans for additional work are rushed through and executed with an extravagance which is in part deliberate. A national Treasury may be anxious to obtain a budgetary surplus for the repayment of debt. An international officer is not likely to be anxious to refund monies to Member States, and will be most anxious to avoid doing so if the surplus has arisen because, owing to failure of some of those states to meet their obligations, he has been prevented from carrying out his instructions fully or efficiently. He may feel himself therefore forced to pursue a policy towards the end of the year which entails extravagance and waste, although such a policy runs counter to the principles of sound administration he would wish to enforce. What in fact can he do?

The root of the ill lies in the non-payment or late payment of contributions. The constitutions or financial regulations of most international organizations contain today some provision for imposing sanctions on countries in arrears. The right to serve on committees, and voting rights or services rendered by the organization may be suspended, the fact of failure to pay may be publicized, interest may be charged as it is by UPU. Unfortunately there is frequently failure to impose these sanctions, though the ILO, the FAO, and ICAO have all enforced one or another of them on occasion. Sometimes they are difficult or even dangerous to enforce. Thus for WHO to suspend, for instance, its epidemiological service in a state in arrears might endanger other countries. For any organization to refuse services to a state which it was anxious should become party to an international convention would be foolish. But some international officials seem to be nervous that even the least of all sanctions, namely publicity about countries in arrears, may be damaging to the reputation of their organizations and lead to exaggerated ideas about their solvency. Their reputation is in fact much more likely to be adversely affected by the harmful effect of arrears on their administration. Timidity in

such circumstances is always unwise. The head of an international administration is, I suggest, fully justified in taking a very strong line about arrears and doing all in his power to persuade his Conference at least to suspend voting rights and the right to serve on committees. Incidentally such a firm line occasionally produces immediate results. There was an occasion when a delegate who had been elected President to the Assembly of the League, informed that his country was in arrears, took out his cheque book and paid its contribution for several years himself from his own account.

Because international organizations cannot borrow on the market, they have established working capital funds to meet cash needs until subscriptions come in. These funds are the international substitute for treasury bills. In theory they should obviate the administrative difficulties discussed above, and they would do so if contributions were paid regularly, but at different dates throughout the course of the year. Unfortunately, they are not. There are indeed three types of arrears: arrears of countries which pay late, arrears of countries which cannot be relied on to pay at all, and arrears of countries which have become inactive members.

The insurance value of a working capital fund to an international official against administrative risk depends on its size and the manner in which it is operated. Obviously a large fund will ease the life of the official; it will probably also benefit the Member States which are regular in their payments because it will reduce the risk of administrative waste. Equally important is the manner in which this fund is operated. It is fed by initial contributions and, as required, by supplementary contributions. Generally under their financial regulations organizations provide that any money received from a country in arrears should go first to the fund to make up its deficit. Some regulations further provide that any budget surplus should be used to reduce the assessment of countries not in arrears, and to reduce the arrears of a country which is behind in its payments. Such arrears take the form of a deficit in the fund. As the surplus must have arisen out of the monies paid by those not in arrears, these other countries are in effect required to finance the delinquent taxpayer. Such a system is equivalent to a refund of income tax to taxpayers in default. It affords an inducement to states to fall into arrears in their payments and, because arrears are a serious administrative menace, no inducement to the international administrator to show a surplus.

What is essential is to distinguish between the three classes of

arrears mentioned above. Various schemes to do this have been discussed. The real purpose of a working capital fund is to replace borrowing power by cash. Cash to be cash must be there. As soon as there is a deficit in the fund at the end of the year, the administration is threatened. What is required, therefore, is a system under which any deficit in the fund at the end of the year, or if the fund is large possibly at the end of two years, is automatically made good by adding it to expenses in the budget and any surplus in the fund produced by the payment of contributions in arrears is employed to reduce budget assessments by repayment to states of the sums they had been compelled to pay owing to the existence of the deficit. Under such a system, the country causing the original deficit would receive no refund.

Occasionally a country may, owing to some calamity, have a genuine excuse for failure to pay. In such circumstances it lies with the Assembly to write off the debt and the Member States to waive their right to a refund when the country in question resumes its contributions.

Both Assemblies and international officials have been reluctant to pursue a rigorous financial policy, largely it would seem from fear of instigating resignations. Too high a price can be paid for the ideal of universality. Most of the states which are irregular in their payments are a political and financial liability in any case, and those which do not pay because for political reasons they are becoming inactive members will not be affected by financial leniency.

The League Subcommittee on Contributions in Arrears drew attention in 1933 to the inequity of distributing the benefits of a surplus to countries which had not contributed to it. The Supervisory Commission, however, contended that as the surplus was used to reduce assessments and not repaid as cash no country could benefit until the arrears were paid off. It was unwilling to impose a sanction. But a sanction is required. All taxpayers other than Member States of international organizations are liable to sanctions, if they fail to pay.

6. *Incentives to Economy*

Economy may be promoted by four means. The first is control of expenditure. With internal control and external audit I shall not deal because they involve few problems peculiar to international administrations. To external control through finance committees I have had

occasion to refer earlier. The second means of promoting economy is to remove the incentives to extravagance and waste. The Working Capital Fund, if rigorously administered, is one method of removing one incentive, namely arrears, and that is why I have devoted so much space to it. The third means is to create a positive inducement to economy. This is a much more difficult problem.

Nearly all international administrators are anxious to do more than they are able to do with the finances at their disposal. Nearly all would like to ask for a larger budget than they dare. Any system under which they were allowed to benefit in some degree by economies effected would, therefore, constitute a real incentive to economy. They have no incentive if all the surplus is refunded to the taxpayer, a negative incentive if part is used to the benefit of those in arrears. The contracting parties of GATT adopt the practice of allowing the Executive Secretary to put any surplus earned into reserve, and GATT is administered with almost parsimonious economy. Under the financial regulations of the FAO the Assembly has reserved the right to transfer any savings that accrue to a contingency fund. The League pursued a similar policy from time to time of allocating surpluses to special reserves, which in fact proved most valuable, especially after the outbreak of war. But a system to be really effective as an inducement would have to be automatic and not dependent on the casual vote of an Assembly. It might, I suggest, prove in certain cases to the benefit of all concerned to allow the head of an international administration to put aside part of any surplus earned during a financial year to a special reserve, on which he might draw freely with the approval of the executive board. Owing to the nature of the work, it is often extremely difficult for a Director General to foresee exactly how his programme will work out and what finance will be required to make a real success of it. A crisis may be met by drawing on some sort of unforeseen expenditure reserve or appropriation. But frequently occasions arise when some supplementary expenditure not important enough to justify recourse to such a reserve might, were it permitted, make it possible to convert a moderate into a striking success. For such a system to prove worth while a number of conditions would have to be satisfied. A part only and not the whole of the savings should be used; the budget would have to be carefully overhauled by a finance committee, not by a board only, to prevent overbudgeting; the Assembly would have to resist the temptation to cut the budget because in any year a surplus had been eked out, and

resist the temptation to raid the fund; it would have to give the Director General a right to a part of the surplus not dependent on an annual vote; the executive board would have to ensure that the special fund was not used to avoid drawing on the Working Capital Fund and was not used frivolously. If all these conditions were fulfilled, it is conceivable that there might over the years be a net saving to the Member States and that sound administration would be facilitated. But the main advantage of such a scheme would be a moral one.

7. *Sound Administrative Practices*

The last of the four means for promoting economy mentioned above is, of course, the application of sound administrative practices. This is the subject under discussion in this book, and there is little I need add. It is obvious that if you recruit with discretion, if you keep your staff long enough to learn their job and, once learnt, do it, if you inspire them with a belief in the value of their work and maintain a good morale, output per man will be high and cost proportionally low. If, on the other hand, you give way to political pressure about candidates, or employ little men to do little jobs, turn them over rapidly so that they cannot learn the rudiments of international administration, if you employ a large personnel department to deal with your rapid turnover of staff, if you fail to inspire the staff you do engage with a faith in the work they do or in your powers of leadership and sense of justice, or allow Member States to dictate to you about administrative practices, if you create a rigid hierarchy or a narrow oligarchy, if you grade officials on the basis of the number of persons working under them, if you hold conferences or seminars which are ill prepared, if you produce an infinity of documents because the Secretariat has not the prestige to persuade committees that they are not required, if you allow the documents to be long because no one has the guts to cut the woolly-minded author, if you aid the political organs of your institution to grant subventions to governments because you want to win favour, then it is certain that the administration will be expensive. But there is no high road to economy. The way has to be found by courageous common sense. There is no theoretical structure of an international administration that will ensure economy. There is no justification for assuming that cost output studies applied to such an administration will promote efficiency and reduce costs.

All the causes of the unthrifty use of resources just mentioned have led to avoidable costs since the last world war; some are operative still in one organization or another. But most of them are being gradually overcome. There has been during this period, not only a tremendous growth of international activity, but a steady improvement in administrative methods.

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