

of the United Nations Organization to secure world economic co-operation through the establishment of an International Trade Organization. As the questions to be considered are deemed to have fundamental bearing on future world peace and are to involve the examination of trade policies in general and in detail in so far as they have international effect, study of what is involved and preparation of data are major tasks now being undertaken by the Department.

These questions are of much more than academic interest to New Zealand because of the high volume of our overseas trade in relation to our population and because there appear to be favourable opportunities for us to extend the field of our exports beyond a narrow range of agricultural and pastoral products. Thus any changes in international policy are of profound significance to this country, and what is of equal importance is that New Zealand should be equipped to make its contribution in moulding international economic policy.

The second world war intensified changes which were already evolving in the sphere of international trade to cause national agencies to be concerned in trade transactions. Purchases by Governments from Governments of commodities during the war and the practices of permitting the movement of goods between countries under approvals signified by export and import licenses directly involved the State in commerce in wider spheres than had hitherto been the case. Since hostilities ceased, Governments have continued to provide the agency through which goods are obtained for such organizations as are instanced by UNRRA (the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) and NIGEO (the Netherlands Indies Government Import and Export Organization). What future developments will be in connection with the direct participation by Governments in international trade is not yet clear, but what is clear is that most of the leading exporting countries of the world have entered the post-war period with a very marked consciousness of the tremendous scope now offering for the development of their overseas trade. Each day brings fresh evidence of the energy and drive with which these nations are directing their efforts to exploit new markets. In most cases the Departments which administer the trade and commerce activities of these countries have been noticeably strengthened both at home and in their representation overseas. One British Commonwealth country with forty-seven Trade Commissioners abroad and with thirty new Assistant Trade Commissioners selected for training recently announced that it intended to station a Trade Commissioner in every major trading centre in the world. That this reinforcement and expansion is being achieved so rapidly would appear to result from the fact that the diversification of trading interests in those countries even before the war had necessitated their providing a much wider coverage in trade intelligence services than was necessary for New Zealand, whose exports were mainly confined to narrow groups with only two or three principal destinations.

Official representation abroad requires careful thought, for what suits the requirements of one country does not necessarily apply in the case of another. The whole question of our overseas trade representation is at present under review, and it is hoped that as soon as possible an adequate trade-representation service will be provided in all localities which offer reasonable prospects for the development of our trade. Existing overseas offices of the Department are :—

United Kingdom : Representative in the United Kingdom of the New Zealand Industries and Commerce Department, London.

Canada : New Zealand Trade Commissioner, Montreal.

Australia : New Zealand Senior Trade Commissioner, Sydney, and New Zealand Trade Commissioner, Melbourne.

India : New Zealand Supply Liaison Officer, Bombay.

U.S.A. : New Zealand Supply Mission, Washington, D.C.