

Over forty countries, including New Zealand, are participating in the appeal, and, although it is too early to estimate the full results, it is clear that substantial resources will become available to make possible further international action, primarily through the International Children's Emergency Fund, to assist the children of war-devastated countries.

15. INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATION

The Constitution of the International Refugee Organization, approved by the General Assembly of United Nations in December, 1946, and signed by New Zealand on 17 March, 1947, provides that it will come into force when fifteen States whose contributions total 75 per cent. of the first operational budget have signed it without reservation. Up to date, fourteen states, whose contributions total slightly over 75 per cent., have become members. It is anticipated that the Constitution will enter into force in the near future, and the Preparatory Commission, on which New Zealand is represented, has completed all arrangements for that event, including such questions as rules of procedure, privileges and immunities, relations with United Nations, &c.

Although the Constitution has not come into force, the then impending closing down of UNRRA's operations made it imperative that the Preparatory Commission should assume operational functions on 1 July, 1947. On that date the Preparatory Commission took over the functions in respect of refugees and displaced persons of UNRRA and of the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees established in 1938, of which New Zealand had also been a member. The Inter-governmental Committee has now wound up its activities.

The assumption of responsibility, a few months after the first meeting of the Preparatory Commission and a considerable period before the Constitution of IRO came into force, for well over a million refugees and displaced persons presented great problems for the secretariat and the Commission. However, the Organization is now working efficiently and smoothly; this has, however, in view of the failure of all except a small number of countries to ratify the Constitution, been made possible only by cutting all costs to the minimum.

For the first six months of its operational activities the Preparatory Commission cared for an average of six hundred and fifty thousand persons a month in camps in Germany, Austria, Italy, and the Middle East. As far as possible, arrangements have been made for refugees.