

Between 1 October 1947 and 30 June 1948, ITS received 50,000 requests for the determination of the fate of persons who were "lost" between the years 1939 and 1945. ITS was able to give some information in response to 32,618 of these inquiries, and in 14,631 of these cases it was able to find the individual or to establish proof of his death. The central index, containing information on approximately 2,500,000 individuals, constitutes the most important source of information.

The most difficult of all has been the tracing of children. Nevertheless, on its own initiative, ITS has discovered 641 children who had been placed in German homes during the war. In all, the Service has received a total of 42,631 such requests.

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### PART III

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The decision to create the International Refugee Organization was taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 15 December 1946, when it adopted a Constitution for IRO which had previously been drafted by committees of the Economic and Social Council and approved by the Council itself. Article 18 of that Constitution provided that it should become operative when it had been fully accepted by fifteen Governments Members of the United Nations whose contributions (in accordance with the scale approved at the same time as the Constitution) to the Operational Budget of the Organization would amount to at least 75 per cent thereof.

A Preparatory Commission set up by the General Assembly assumed the international mandate for refugees and displaced persons on 1 July 1947 and continued as the responsible agency for more than a year. On 28 August 1948, in accordance with Article 18 of the Constitution, the Secretary-General of the United Nations announced the entry into force of the Constitution and the formal establishment of IRO, the Constitution having been fully accepted by the following fifteen Governments :

Australia	Dominican Republic	Netherlands
Belgium	France	New Zealand
Canada	Guatemala	Norway
China	Iceland	United Kingdom
Denmark	Luxemburg	United States of America

Venezuela subsequently ratified the Constitution and became a member.

The ultimate policy-making body of IRO is its General Council, composed of one representative of each member nation. The Council met for the first time on 13 September 1948. Under normal circumstances, it will meet twice a year, but it may be called into special session.

The Executive Committee, consisting of representatives of nine members of the Organization, elected by the General Council for terms of two years, meets twice a month, when the volume of work requires, to implement the decisions of the General Council and to take emergency policy decisions if necessary.

The chief administrative officer of IRO is the Director-General. The present incumbent, Mr. William Hallam Tuck, who served also as Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission, is a citizen of the United States of America. His Deputy, Sir Arthur Rucker, is an Englishman. Three Assistant Directors-General in charge of the Departments of Health, Care and Maintenance, of Re-establishment, and of Administration are of United States, French and Dutch citizenship respectively.

From IRO Headquarters in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, they direct a staff of 1,897 persons of thirty-eight different nationalities assigned to field offices in twenty-six countries—the occupied zones of Germany and Austria, Italy, the principal immigrant-receiving countries of Europe and the Americas and in the Middle and Far East. This international staff is assisted by 2,392 other persons recruited locally in the areas of operation.

### Financial Resources

The Constitution voted by the General Assembly made provision for a budget for the first fiscal year of \$155,860,500 and set up a percentage scale of contributions for each Member of the United Nations.

During the first year, however, contributions to be received from those nations which had ratified the Constitution plus residual assets of predecessor agencies totalled \$119,088,320. Of this amount, by far the largest part was contributed by the United States, which for the first fiscal year gave \$71,024,899. The United Kingdom was the next largest contributor with \$22,832,464. France gave \$6,481,481, Canada \$5,440,717, China \$4,064,512, Australia \$2,753,225, Belgium \$1,575,405, the Netherlands \$1,426,740, Norway and New Zealand each \$688,666, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala each \$62,824 and Iceland \$32,132.

These contributions are expressed here in terms of dollars. In practice, it is difficult to obtain payment from a member nation in a currency other than its own. Thus, a large part of IRO's receipts are in non-convertible or "soft" currencies. The search for commodities, shipping and services which can be obtained in exchange for these currencies of limited convertibility has been a constant preoccupation of the IRO financial administration. Thus, Belgian francs are used to repair ships in Belgian docks, English pounds to buy English ships, and Dutch guilder credits are used to purchase food for refugees in the camps. A financial administration has been established which is capable of supervising expenditures in 38 different currencies.

A fund of \$5,000,000 for large-scale resettlement schemes (in effect, colonization schemes), to which Governments were to contribute voluntarily, was also proposed by the General Assembly, but few such contributions were received.

By far the heaviest demand on IRO's resources during its first year of operation was for the programme of Health, Care and Maintenance. The Organization's major effort has been to free sufficient funds from this form of expenditure, which supports a mere "holding" action, for use in the programme of repatriation and resettlement, which alone can solve the problem. In its first fiscal year, IRO was forced to spend 75 per cent of its funds merely to keep refugees alive. Only 18 per cent was available to help them begin new lives. In its second year, increased opportunities for resettlement and greater availability of shipping will permit IRO to reverse this emphasis. In its third year, IRO hopes to complete its task.

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## A NOTE IN CONCLUSION

The International Refugee Organization represents the United Nations in vigorous, effective action towards solution of a concrete operational problem.

Because of IRO's efforts in its first, difficult year of operation, 256,000 people have exchanged the twilight existence of the refugee for hopeful, productive citizenship either in their old country or in a new land. Many more will follow them in the next two years. Each of them, through the most direct personal experience, will have acquired renewed faith in the ability of the United Nations to overcome international problems through international co-operation.