

For a number of reasons it is easier to secure international agreement in technical matters than in the economic field and this difficulty has frequently impeded the work of ICAO. At the Chicago Conference, there was a generally expressed desire to make provision for the extension on a uniform basis of the rights to fly internationally. Because of the difficulties involved, two separate agreements were provided—the International Air Services Transit Agreement and the International Air Transport Agreement. Forty-one States accepted the Transit Agreement but only 17 States (of which five have since denounced) accepted the Transport Agreement. During the life of PICAQ and thereafter in ICAO, studies and discussions were undertaken with a view to the development of a multilateral agreement on commercial rights in international transport. However, discussions in two Assemblies and in a Special Commission, convened at Geneva in November 1947, failed to produce an effective solution. It is generally agreed that the present system of bilateral exchange of routes and rights is not satisfactory but, although the matter has been given a great deal of further study, no complete solution has yet been found. Canada has consistently supported the multilateral principle.

An important achievement of ICAO has been in the development of standards and recommended practices in the field of facilitation of international air transport. In the early stages of international civil aviation, the main advantages of air travel, which are speed and the ability of aircraft to cross natural barriers, were considerably impaired by the great variety of national laws and regulations relating to customs, immigration, health and agricultural quarantine in connection with border clearances. This problem was vigorously attacked by ICAO and, at a Facilitation Division Meeting held at Geneva in May 1948, a comprehensive set of draft standards and recommended practices was prepared to deal with this problem, and these were later adopted by the Council as Annex 9 to the Convention. These standards and recommended practices were accepted by the Member States, including Canada, with relatively few deviations, and, as a consequence, there has been a great simplification and unification of border crossing procedures throughout the world. At the Second Session of the Facilitation Division held early in 1952, a number of proposals were made for additional and improved standards; these should be ready for adoption by the Council before the end of 1952.

Progress has been made with a number of other matters of considerable importance to airlines and to the general public who use them. These include Council recommendations to the Member States directed towards the elimination of double income and property taxation on airlines, certain taxes on fuel and oil and double and other burdensome insurance requirements. The statistical program of ICAO is of great importance to the Member States and invaluable to much of the work of the Council.

Work in the Legal Field.—The Comité International Technique d'Experts Juridiques Aériens (CITEJA), which was created pursuant to a recommendation adopted at the First International Conference on Private Air Law held at Paris in 1925, made considerable progress in the development of a code of private international air law through the preparation of draft international conventions for final adoption at periodic international conferences. The Chicago Conference recommended that Member States give consideration to the desirability of bringing about the resumption, at the earliest possible date, of the work of the CITEJA and of co-ordinating the activities of CITEJA with those of PICAQ and, in due course, ICAO.