

and thereafter both the New Zealand and Australian Governments endeavoured, through diplomatic channels, to hasten ratification by the United States, French, and Netherlands Governments. The United States accepted the Agreement in January, 1948, and assurances were given by the French and Netherlands Governments that ratification could be expected at an early date.

A preparatory Conference of representatives of the signatory Governments was convened in Sydney at the invitation of the Australian and New Zealand Governments in November, 1947. The purpose of this meeting was to exchange information and views on the terms and conditions of appointment of a Secretary-General, to draw up an agenda and rules of procedure for the first meeting of the Commission, and to survey the work of the Interim Organization. As a result of this Conference and of the obvious desire of all Governments to see the Commission functioning as soon as possible, it was arranged that the first session of the Commission should be convened in Sydney from 11-22 May. It is planned that this meeting should set the conditions of appointment of the senior officers, discuss the site for a permanent headquarters of the Commission, draw up the Commission's programme of work and establish priorities for its execution, and set up a Working Committee representative of all member Governments to enable the Commission to carry out its functions between sessions.

## 2. RELATIONS WITH BRITISH SOUTH PACIFIC ADMINISTRATIONS

A continuous exchange of correspondence on a wide variety of subjects is carried on with the Government of Fiji, the Western Pacific High Commission, and the Government of Tonga. Within the limits of the New Zealand Government's resources, an endeavour is made to ensure that assistance is given to these Administrations, many of whose problems have something in common with those of New Zealand's own island dependencies. Co-operation is not lacking on either side, and in matters of aviation, health, immigration, and trade consultation between the New Zealand Government and the Administrations concerned is of frequent occurrence. With the active establishment of the South Pacific Commission, designed to ensure a united and common approach to problems in this area, particularly those of an economic and social nature, the relationship which already exists between New Zealand and the South Pacific Island Administrations should become even closer.