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ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION

PROPOSAL FOR A PERIODICAL ANALYSIS
OF AND REPORT ON WORLD ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

(Submitted by the Member from Australia as an Additional Item for the Agenda of the First Session of the Economic and Employment Commission, Document E/CN.1/1)

The United Nations (and, in particular, the Economic and Social Council) has the duty of promoting "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development", together with "solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems". More specifically the Economic and Social Council (under Article 62) is permitted to make studies and reports, and recommendations, in these fields. Under Article 56 all members have pledged themselves to take action for the achievement of these purposes.

Moreover, the Organization has the duty of co-ordinating the activities and policies of the specialized inter-governmental agencies. Its role in this matter is beginning to take shape, but so far we have not achieved much more than the basic legal framework.

The first report of the Preparatory Committee of the Conference on Trade and Employment proposes important functions for the Economic and Social Council which may well be emulated in other fields. It is proposed that the Council be a point of reference for judgments on the employment policies and performances of member nations, and, more generally, on any question relating to international economic co-operation.

As the need for this type of activity develops the Council will require information and economic data basically different in nature and style from the generalized studies and recommendations hitherto customary in this field.

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It may be needed in connection with the consideration of a specific "case", referred to the Council by the International Trade Organization, or more generally in connection with action the initiative for which springs from the Council itself. In either case the need for speedy consideration and recommendation will be of the utmost importance.

The Council (and the Commission) must therefore have at all times a comprehensive grasp of the current economic forces at work in the world, and of the economic situation which has been reached at any particular time. This involves regular expert analyses of current trends in the world economic system, and their presentation in readily assimilable form. It seems almost unnecessary to suggest that this work should be brought to a focus under the aegis of this Commission. The basic studies and analyses on which the reports would be founded, however, would naturally be performed by the specialized agencies and the Department of Economic Affairs of the Secretariat, the latter being directly responsible for the material finally submitted for the consideration of the Commission.

It is to be presumed that work looking to such a result has already been commenced by the Secretariat, but the Commission has not as yet had any opportunity of discussing it. I therefore propose that the agenda for this meeting be extended to include:

An examination of the methods and form of reporting to the Economic and Social Council on:

- (a) current world economic trends and conditions; and
- (b) "the probable influence of the policies and activities of other commissions and of specialized agencies" on the various economic issues referred to the Commission.

In the course of discussion of this agenda item, it may be expected that an opportunity would arise to consider the information and services

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which the Commission will require from the Secretariat. The suggestions of the Nuclear Commission on this matter were specially commended to our attention by the former chairman of the Nuclear Commission in the statement made to us at our first meeting.
