

TWO HUNDRED AND THIRD MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Wednesday, 19 October 1949, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. KYROU (Greece).

Draft report of the Rapporteur

1. Before requesting the Committee to continue the discussion of the budget estimates the CHAIRMAN called the Committee's attention to the draft report concerning the financial implications connected with the problem of the independence of Korea (A/C.5/L.18). He asked members to read through that document during the morning session, and to advise the Rapporteur of any modifications they might wish made in time for the report to be distributed before the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the following day.

Request for information by the representative of Poland

2. Mr. TARN (Poland) wished to ask the representative of the Secretary-General, in connexion with the question he had put the previous day to the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Legal Affairs, whether any denial had been issued by the Secretary-General. He felt obliged to insist that such action should be taken that very day as a denial appearing several days later would be of little use.

3. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) had no further information to give the Polish representative on the subject. He undertook to consult the Secretary-General that day.

Budget estimates for the financial year 1950: (a) budget estimates prepared by the Secretary-General (A/903); (b) reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/934) (*first reading continued*)

PART III

SECTION 15 (*concluded*)

4. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Committee had before it for its consideration a Canadian compromise proposal to increase by a further 130,000 dollars the figure of 8,587,200 dollars recommended for the Department of Conference and General Services by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as well as the Secretary-General's revised proposal for an increase of 310,000 dollars.

5. Mr. MONTEL (France) said that he was satisfied with the explanations which had been given by the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services in connexion with the point he had raised at the previous meeting regarding new posts within the Department, a point which was dealt with in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/311).

6. He wished to express his delegation's appreciation of the valuable work done by Mr. Pelt and his Department, particularly in the work of reorganization which would, he understood, be continued during the following year.

7. He was prepared to support any proposals designed to reconcile the amounts proposed by the Advisory Committee and by the Secretary-General. He considered, however, that the responsibility for specific reductions within the section should be left to the Assistant Secretary-General to effect as he thought fit.

8. Mr. CRISTÓBAL (Philippines) stated that his delegation, after considering the views expressed in the Committee by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and by the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services, wished, before the various proposals were put to the vote, to submit a formal proposal for a compromise figure and to suggest that the Advisory Committee's recommendations should be increased by a further 180,000 dollars, thus making a total sum of 8,767,200 dollars.

9. He wished to express his appreciation of the work achieved by the Advisory Committee in making its recommendations, and of the spirit of co-operation shown by Mr. Pelt throughout the discussion.

10. Mr. GARCÍA (Guatemala) said that, although his delegation did not agree in principle with the procedure followed by the Committee in connexion with the budget estimates, as it felt that the Committee was attempting to avoid any direct responsibility, it had agreed to compromise in the interests of conciliation.

11. As to the estimates for the Department of Conference and General Services, his delegation was prepared to support the highest figure in order to avoid any risk of hampering the Department's work. He would be glad to have the Assistant Secretary-General's views as to the effects the various proposals would have on the running of the Department, particularly in connexion with the work involved in the use of Spanish as a working language.

12. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) said that, since the previous meeting, he, together with his principal advisors, had studied most carefully the proposal made by the Canadian representative, and had consulted the Secretary-General and Mr. Price on the matter.

13. They would have been much happier had the Canadian representative's figure of 130,000 dollars been put forward as the amount to be deducted from the Secretary-General's figure rather than the amount the Canadian delegation proposed to restore, so that the restoration would then have been 180,000 dollars.

14. They believed that an increase of 130,000 dollars on the Advisory Committee's recommendations still involved too great a risk of running the Department's budget on a deficit basis, a policy which, in his opinion, as he had already explained, should be avoided as far as possible in a service department such as his own, even though he had the repeated assurance of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the Department would be able to count on the Committee's assistance to cover deficits from the Working Capital Fund.

15. On the other hand, he hoped that he had made it clear in his opening statement at the previous day's meeting that the Secretary-General and he himself realized that they had no choice other than to accept whatever figure the Committee might decide to impose since, in the final analysis, the responsibility naturally rested with the Committee. Whatever that decision might be, he wished to repeat his assurance that the Department would do its utmost to give the best possible service and to avoid deficits whenever it could.
16. He wished to remind the Committee of the fact that his Department was a service department and that therefore it had services to render which it was not at liberty to curtail as it wished, and that, moreover, certain of its expenditures were represented by fixed charges. The Department had gained much experience during the four years it had been in operation and it knew what the services cost and what the fixed charges were. He had submitted his estimates on the basis of that knowledge and it was extremely difficult for him to re-compute his entire budget overnight and to arrive at a precise figure.
17. He therefore left it to the Committee to decide what figure they were finally prepared to restore, bearing in mind—and he hoped agreement existed between members and himself on that point—that a deficit operation should be avoided as far as possible.
18. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) wished to stress the fact that he considered it a most unsatisfactory procedure for a technical committee, such as the Fifth Committee, to settle differences by a compromise. Such compromise figures were, moreover, mere approximations and could not be accepted as carefully calculated amounts as were the original estimates prepared by the Advisory Committee and by the Secretary-General.
19. In the particular instance of the Department of Conference and General Services, he could not see why a compromise figure should be necessary. The programme of work for the following year was the same as for 1949, and, in any case, the Advisory Committee's recommendations for 1950 exceeded those for 1949 by 93,400 dollars. The Department had had a very heavy programme during 1949 and had fulfilled its task in a highly praiseworthy manner. It had been able to do so, however, with seventeen posts still vacant. The estimates had been prepared in April on the assumption that all meetings would be held at headquarters. Since, however, it was planned to hold some meetings in Geneva, provision would be made for them in the estimates for the Geneva office. Moreover, he wished to point out that provision was made in section 1 of the budget for temporary assistance.
20. In view of those considerations, his delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations. It would, however, submit a formal proposal that the Secretary-General should be authorized to call upon the Working Capital Fund should that prove necessary.
21. He wished to know the amount of the budget surplus which the Department of Conference and General Services had been able to effect.
22. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services), commenting upon the Brazilian representative's proposal with regard to the Working Capital Fund, pointed out that the General Assembly had been most explicit in laying down that withdrawals from the Working Capital Fund should only be made in the event of unforeseen expenditure. Although he did not in any way intend to discount the assurances given by the Advisory Committee in connexion with demands on the Fund, he emphasized the fact that acceptance of the principle of curtailing the budget in anticipation of withdrawals from the Working Capital Fund would render meaningless the detailed calculations contained in the budget estimates.
23. With regard to the Department's budget surplus for the present financial year, he informed the Brazilian representative that 200,000 dollars had been transferred to other sections of the budget.
24. He wished to make it clear that the following year's programme of work was not the same as for 1949 but that it was an increased programme, as Mr. Pelt had indicated.
25. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) said that since the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services had informed the Committee the previous day that the number of meetings would not be greater in 1949, there was apparently some confusion.
26. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) welcomed the opportunity to comment on the concept of the Working Capital Fund.
27. He agreed with the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services that the Working Capital Fund should only be made available for unforeseen and extraordinary expenditure. Every effort was made to arrive at the closest possible estimates when preparing the budget. Emergencies might, however, arise when the Assembly was not in session and the Working Capital Fund existed to meet such contingencies.
28. He fully appreciated Mr. Pelt's views with regard to the proposed estimate, although the Advisory Committee had, after careful study, arrived at another figure. It was therefore the Fifth Committee's responsibility to assess the situation and to take its decision.
29. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) agreed with the principles expressed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee with regard to the budget estimates as a whole. He wished, however, to emphasize the fact that the Department of Conference and General Services was a service department with known costs. For normal routine work, it had been considered preferable to compute estimates without taking into account the possibility of withdrawals from the Working Capital Fund.
30. In connexion with the sum of 200,000 dollars which had been transferred from section 15, he explained that that surplus had been largely due to unavoidable delay at the beginning of the year in recruiting staff speaking Spanish, Chinese and Russian, and could not have been foreseen.
31. Unless, of course, the Assembly decided to add to the number of meetings, the programme for

the following year was no larger in terms of the number of meetings. However, that criterion had proved to be unreliable when it came to calculating the actual workload. In the light of experience gained over the last three or four years, it had been found possible to develop new and more precise criteria for estimating the Department's anticipated workload. It had been found, for example, that over one-third of the documents were in the nature of studies and working papers, the volume of which had no relation to the number of meetings, that over one-third were devoted to the Economic and Social Council, and that General Assembly meetings, Committee meetings and the like accounted for the remainder. He therefore urged that the workload should be considered in the light of those criteria and not merely according to the number of meetings.

32. Mr. SHANN (Australia) took Mr. Pelt's first statement to imply acceptance of the Philippine proposal which did in fact increase the Advisory Committee's recommendations by 180,000 dollars. He would therefore vote in favour of that proposal.

33. He wished to emphasize to the Committee that the Department of Conference and General Services did differ from other departments in that its work was forced upon it by the activities of the United Nations and could not be limited by purely financial considerations.

34. He would oppose the Brazilian proposal since he considered it a misinterpretation of the purpose of the Working Capital Fund.

35. Mr. LEBEAU (Belgium) also agreed with the Assistant Secretary-General that the Working Capital Fund was intended to cover only unforeseen expenditure.

36. He supported Mr. Pelt's explanations regarding an estimate of the workload, which was governed by a variety of factors other than the number of meetings. He considered that the quality of the work of the Official Records Division had improved. He hoped that improvement would continue. He would not, therefore, recommend a reduction in that Division's estimates. He also endorsed Mr. Pelt's views on the expenses connected with the transfer to the new headquarters site.

37. He agreed with the Australian representative's interpretation of Mr. Pelt's first statement. His delegation would, therefore, also vote in favour of the compromise figure proposed by the Philippine delegation.

38. The CHAIRMAN asked the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services if, as was the understanding of the representatives of Australia and Belgium, he agreed to the proposal of the Philippine representative.

39. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) referred to his previous statement, and emphasized that although he preferred the Philippine representative's proposal to that of the representative of Canada, the decision lay with the Fifth Committee.

40. Mr. HSIA (China) agreed with the various suggestions made by the Brazilian representative except in so far as the Working Capital Fund was

concerned. If the Fifth Committee felt that the Advisory Committee had been too strict as regards the estimates of the Department of Conference and General Services, then it should support the Canadian proposal. If the Committee wished to be generous then it should adopt the Philippine proposal.

41. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil), explaining why he had suggested that the Working Capital Fund should be used, referred to an earlier General Assembly resolution according to which the word "unforeseen" meant expenses which were already included in the budget but which might be overdrawn. "Extraordinary expenses" were those incurred in connexion with new programmes.

42. To grant the Department of Conference and General Services a sum larger by 100,000 dollars than the sum requested for 1949 when that Department had a surplus of 200,000 dollars for 1949, would mean that in 1950 it would receive 300,000 dollars more than it in fact needed in 1949.

43. Mr. VANER (Turkey) appreciated the spirit of compromise shown by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, and thanked the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services for keeping to the principle of a sound budget. The duty of the Fifth Committee was not to make compromises, but to base itself on the figures for the programme of work to be carried out in 1950. He suggested it would be helpful if the Committee could be furnished with a table of items of fixed expenditures to be met by the Secretariat.

44. Referring to the statement of the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services, he considered that the budget of that Department should be based on the number of meetings, the volume of work, the documents to be prepared and any extra work which might have to be carried out. He suggested, therefore, that future budgets should be drawn up on that basis.

45. He disagreed with the Brazilian representative's conception of the use to be made of the Working Capital Fund and his definition of the words "unforeseen" and "extraordinary". If work was foreseen by any department and was not provided for in the budget, that would be an omission and not an "unforeseen expenditure".

46. Referring to the Canadian representative's proposal, he considered that the addition of the sum of 130,000 dollars would not be sufficient to allow the work programme of the Department of Conference and General Services to be carried out. The proposal of the representative of the Philippines was more acceptable, and he would therefore support it.

47. The CHAIRMAN said the suggestions made by the Turkish representative would be taken into consideration by the Secretariat when making future budget estimates.

48. Mr. WEBSTER (New Zealand) agreed with the representative of Brazil and considered that the budget should not be drawn up by guesswork. The Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services had stated that he was not certain of the number of meetings to be held in 1950, and yet he could not accept the Advisory Committee's recommen-

dations. Although Mr. Webster agreed that the services of the Department had improved, he considered that on a budget of roughly nine million dollars suitable arrangements could be made within the Department to save 3 per cent of that sum.

49. Mr. JUTRAS (Canada) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Conference and General Services for his helpful statements and for his most co-operative attitude. The Canadian delegation, in submitting its proposal that the Advisory Committee's recommendation should be increased by 130,000 dollars, was fully conscious of its responsibility to the Fifth Committee. It was also aware of the necessity of enabling the Department of Conference and General Services to carry out its work, and at the same time of effecting economies. The figure suggested by the Canadian delegation was not so much a compromise as an adjustment. The Philippine delegation had proposed a somewhat similar reduction, and if the difference between that proposal and the Canadian proposal were considered in the light of the total budget of the Department (approximately nine million dollars), it would be seen that it was very small and could not in fact affect the outcome in the long run. He felt that it would give the impression that an auction sale was being started by the Fifth Committee, and his delegation did not wish to be associated with any such bargaining. The Canadian delegation could not support the proposal made by the Philippine representative.

50. Referring to the suggestions made by the Brazilian representative in connexion with the Working Capital Fund, Mr. Jutras considered that that Fund was strictly for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. It was the responsibility of the Fifth Committee to provide appropriations for 1950 expenditures and the Working Capital Fund should not be relied upon for any part of such appropriations. In that connexion, his delegation concurred with the views expressed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and the Assistant Secretary-General.

51. Mr. SMOLYAR (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) felt that compromise decisions on political questions were in order but should not be made in connexion with the budget estimates, and therefore agreed with the Brazilian representative. The Secretary-General had originally requested 8,928,700 dollars but his revised proposal was for 8,897,200 dollars. Two different proposals had then been made by the Canadian and Philippine delegations. He considered that with a more rational organization of the staff of the Department of Conference and General Services, the Advisory Committee's recommendation could have been accepted by the Secretary-General. The number of meetings proposed for 1950 were the same as for 1949, and therefore the work of the Department was not expected to increase. The Advisory Committee's recommendation could not, therefore, be ignored. That Committee had considered thoroughly all the information placed at its disposal regarding the work of the Department, and the Byelorussian delegation would therefore support its recommendations.

52. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) fully supported the remarks of the Canadian representative. The Fifth Committee should not create the precedent of considering one compromise figure

after another. The Philippine proposal to increase the figure suggested by the Canadian representative by 50,000 dollars seemed such an infinitesimal percentage of the whole amount provided for in section 15 that Mr. Fourie wondered why it had been felt necessary to suggest such a small increase, unless its purpose was to make specific provision for special services. His delegation could not support the Philippine proposal.

53. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) said that the Canadian, Byelorussian SSR and South African delegations seemed to be under the impression that he wished to bargain. That was not so. He had not accepted the increase of 180,000 dollars on the Advisory Committee's recommendation as suggested by the Philippine representative, although, as a practical administrator, when he was offered a sum closer to the figure suggested by the Secretary-General, he felt he would be taking less risks in the administration of his Department if he were to accept that sum, rather than the smaller one suggested.

54. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Secretary-General's revised proposal to increase the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding section 15, Department of Conference and General Services, by 310,000 dollars.

The proposal was rejected by 32 votes to 3, with 8 abstentions.

55. The CHAIRMAN then put to the vote the proposal of the representative of the Philippines that the Advisory Committee's recommendations should be increased by 180,000 dollars.

The proposal was rejected by 24 votes to 15, with 5 abstentions.

The proposal of the Canadian representative that the Advisory Committee's recommendation should be increased by 130,000 dollars was approved by 25 votes to 12, with 4 abstentions.

56. The CHAIRMAN announced that as a result of the vote the Fifth Committee had agreed, in first reading, to increase the Advisory Committee's recommendation regarding section 15, Department of Conference and General Services, by 130,000 dollars, making the total estimates for that section 8,717,200 dollars.

57. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services), in reply to a question by Mr. MACHADO (Brazil), assured him that in accordance with the Secretariat's interpretation of the word "unforeseen" he would not resort to the Working Capital Fund to carry out the Department's 1950 programme as currently foreseen.

58. Mr. TARN (Poland) asked whether in the future the Advisory Committee could submit its recommendations regarding the budgets of various departments in the order of their size, so that certain departments would not always be the victims of decisions arrived at during previous discussions on other departments.

59. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in making its recommendations the Advisory Committee followed the order in which the budget estimates had been drawn up by the Secretariat.

60. The CHAIRMAN suggested that there should be no further discussion on the Working Capital Fund until the item relating to that Fund was taken up.

PART I

SECTION I, CHAPTER I (xvi)

61. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should proceed to consider the overall estimates for contractual printing concerning which the Secretary-General had submitted document A/C.5/316. He drew attention to the Secretary-General's acceptance of the reduction of his original estimate as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, provided the sum was shown as a global deduction from the total estimates made under a single additional section, as had been done in the 1949 budget. That would involve the establishment of a new section 28 in the 1950 estimates and a consequential modification of the draft appropriation resolution.

62. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) accepted the Secretary-General's condition that contractual printing should be treated as a single section, thus enabling him to take advantage of transfer possibilities within the section. He suggested, however, that as the various estimates for contractual printing scattered through the budget had been prepared before recent currency devaluations, there was a possibility of reducing the total appropriation still further than was recommended by the Advisory Committee by arranging for printing to be carried out overseas. He proposed formally that an additional reduction of 100,000 dollars should be made in the Advisory Committee's figure.

63. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) asked whether it was true that the Secretary-General proposed to submit a statement on the over-all effect on the budget of the currency devaluations.

64. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) agreed that such was the case. The paper to be submitted by the Secretary-General on the implications of currency devaluation would contain provisions relating to contractual printing as a separate section, if that proposal was accepted.

65. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) expressed the hope that the reduction on contractual printing in that paper would amount to not less than 100,000 dollars or 5 per cent of the total.

66. Mr. TARN (Poland) said the question of reductions in the cost of contractual printing resulting from currency devaluation appeared to depend largely on the number of documents with sufficiently low priority to allow time for their despatch abroad for printing. He would welcome a detailed statement concerning what publications could be so treated.

67. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services), replying to the representative of Poland, said that the documents which could be printed abroad were those not linked to a time-limit, which include backlog material and studies in particular.

68. Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the estimates before the Committee already provided for expected savings

to be derived from a changed printing format and from the decision to print in monolingual editions.

69. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) answered in the affirmative. He had arranged to reduce the format of documents, thus ensuring a slight reduction in the cost of paper, though not of labour. The Secretariat would also print a great many of its documents in monolingual form, exceptions being the Charter and conventions and other documents where it was important that the reader should be able to make an immediate comparison of texts.

70. Mr. LEBEAU (Belgium) drew attention to paragraph 32 (iii) of the Advisory Committee's report (A/934) containing a recommendation that the majority of publications should be printed in monolingual volumes. He urged a point he had raised previously in the Fifth Committee, which was that certain documents should be printed with the English and French texts side by side. Such documents were the Charter and rules of procedure which delegates frequently found it necessary to quote, the resolutions of the General Assembly and its Councils, and conventions. For the remainder he would not, for reasons of economy, press his preference for juxtaposed texts.

71. It would also be of considerable assistance to representatives if the same texts in the various languages could be printed on pages with identical numbers. In discussing the budget estimates, for example, it would facilitate the work of representatives if a reference could be made simply to the page number in question. The Secretariat had endeavoured to meet that requirement by numbering paragraphs, but many representatives were not in the habit of quoting paragraph numbers and it seemed that identical page numbers would be of the greatest assistance.

72. In connexion with summary records, he noted the recommendation in paragraph 35 (i) of document A/934. While appreciating the view of the Secretariat, he thought there would be certain difficulties in carrying out the suggestions contained therein. Interventions in committees were sometimes improvised but at other times consisted of written speeches which had been prepared by Governments, often with the greatest care for every word. For speeches of the first type the words used in the summary record were not important, provided the idea conveyed was correct; in the case of prepared speeches, however, an attempt to analyse for a summary record could result in considerable departures from the original. In such cases corrections were bound to "constitute lengthy extracts from the verbatim record or from the original texts of set speeches".

73. Mr. WEBSTER (New Zealand) asked if the Chairman of the Advisory Committee would state how it was proposed that the recommendations contained in chapter 3 of the Advisory Committee's report should be implemented.

74. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services), replying to the Belgian representative, said that his point implied a conflict between cost and quality. In the case of monolingual printing, for example, although it was true that there were many advantages to bilingual printing it was the more expensive system. One result was that the Secretariat, because of the greater demand for

a text in one of the two languages, was compelled to issue a bilingual edition in a greater number of copies requiring more paper than would have been necessary if the text had been printed monolingually. While he would do his utmost to provide in bilingual form those documents where two juxtaposed languages were essential for a person using them, he could not promise a large number so treated under the provisions of the budget before the Committee. The fact that Spanish had been made a working language of the General Assembly had been a factor in the decision to concentrate on monolingual printing.

75. The suggestion that paragraphs should be grouped on corresponding pages implied a similar choice between cost and quality. If it were carried out it would entail waste of pages in the document written in the language which required fewest pages, a waste which was not permissible within the limits of the budget proposed. Regarding summary records, the Secretary-General appreciated the difficulties which might be encountered in carrying out the suggestions made in paragraph 35 of document A/934, but hoped that representatives would endeavour to do so in order to ensure faster output and greater economy.

76. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to the recommendation in paragraph 32 (iii) of his Committee's report that the majority of publications should be printed in monolingual volumes. His Committee appreciated that it was necessary that certain documents, such as the resolutions of the General Assembly, should be printed with the texts in the working languages on the same page, and thought it best to leave the selection of the documents to the judgement of the Assistant Secretary-General.

77. In reply to the USSR representative, he said that it had been agreed that a reduced format should be used, as a certain saving would be possible.

78. As to the part of paragraph 35 concerning corrections to summary records, the Advisory Committee believed that the institution of hard and fast rules would not be conducive to the best service. The Secretariat acted on a basis of conservatism and negotiated in difficult cases. Where prepared speeches were involved, it was to be assumed that the Secretariat would accept them as they stood in the written text, and the Committee might consider it wiser not to make any rule on the subject but to leave the Secretariat free to negotiate. He pointed out that he did not oppose the views of the Belgian representative, but thought it wise to make no rule, since some delegations might be prepared to accept an analytical report of a written statement.

79. Mr. TARN (Poland) asked whether the word "documents" in paragraphs 34 and 35 related to both mimeographed and printed documents. It was reasonable that the distribution of printed documents to delegations should be carried out through one central point in the Secretariat and one central point for each delegation. The same would not apply to mimeographed documents, the distribution of which was already sufficiently slow. He himself frequently found it necessary to request a mimeographed document in the Committee room, although the same document had been mailed to the headquarters of the delegation of Poland.

80. With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 32 (ii) that the Secretary-General should be authorized to limit the distribution of certain documents, he pointed out that until such authorization had been made formal it would not be proper to refuse any document to a representative. Recently, for example, he had requested document A/C.5/L.1 and had been told by a Secretariat official that he could not have it without a special authorization from a member of the Bureau of Personnel; he had been able to obtain his copy only through the courtesy of another Secretariat official.

81. With regard to corrections to summary records, he pointed out that it was the practice of the Secretariat to omit discussions on procedure, although those discussions were sometimes extremely important. Recently, he had found it necessary to request the insertion of two paragraphs in a summary record. If the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were accepted, he suggested that each recommendation should be made formally so that the Secretariat should know precisely the limits of its authority to restrict the mailing and distribution of documents.

82. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) wondered how much multiple mailing of documents to governmental destinations actually took place. If the service were extensive it seemed reasonable that it should be centralized in the Secretariat, thus saving handling in individual distribution centres in governmental offices, which would ultimately result in a higher over-all cost for Member States.

83. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) said that the question of multiple mailing was a matter for individual Governments to decide. The great majority of Governments asked for documents to be mailed to various addresses, thus causing unnecessary expenditure for the United Nations which could be eliminated if each Government supplied one address for all documents. Governments often enjoyed facilities, such as diplomatic bags, which would enable them to effect distribution more cheaply than was possible for the United Nations. If each Government reviewed its requirements of documents and established a limited list of the departments which should receive them, a certain amount of economy could certainly be effected. In reply to the Polish representative's enquiry concerning the limitation of distribution, he said that the Secretariat was helpless unless Governments would assist by keeping their requirements of documents as low as possible.

84. He endorsed the recommendations of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee concerning corrections to summary records. Rigid rules should be avoided and a working relation developed between permanent delegations and the Secretariat, bearing in mind the importance of economy in all cases except where important prepared statements were involved.

85. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) understood that most Governments had requested that documents should be mailed to various addresses, and presumably that was the system they preferred. The sum of 10,000 dollars involved was not too high to ensure satisfactory distribution, which might cost more if Governments had to ensure it themselves.

86. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) said that the question at issue was one of the division of cost between Governments and the United Nations. From the United Nations' point of view it was certainly cheaper to carry out centralized mailing, and he noted with pleasure that several delegations had found the system advantageous.

87. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that his Committee was bound to regard the question from the angle of the United Nations budget. Long experience had convinced him that centralization was the best way of dealing with the distribution of documents. Many Foreign Offices had their own distribution sections and there was little justification for requiring the United Nations to be responsible for the distribution of documents between government offices.

88. Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of only 10 per cent on the Secretary-General's original estimate. In view of all the factors by which economy could be ensured, such as currency devaluations, mailing to a limited number of addresses, reduced printing formats, monolingual editions of documents and the proposed increase in the sales of publications, the reduction might be increased to 15 or 20 per cent. He asked if the Chairman of the Advisory Committee could say whether, in the light of recent currency devaluations, it seemed pos-

sible to make a more substantial reduction than had been contemplated the previous July.

89. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) explained that the sale of publications related to a different section of the budget and that the Secretary-General was going to submit a separate report relating to the consequences of current devaluations. He would require notice before answering the broader question.

90. Mr. HSIA (China) did not believe that very great savings would result from collective mailing of documents since mailing charges related to weight. As the sum involved was not large it might be wiser to continue the prevailing practice pending further investigation.

91. Mr. TARN (Poland) noted that the estimate for contractual printing connected with the General Assembly Commissions and Committees in 1950 was higher than the estimate for 1949. As he understood that much of the printing for the third regular session of the General Assembly had been carried out in France at a lower cost than would have been required in the United States, was it not possible that the saving effected might be transferred to the same item for the following year, so reducing the estimate below the 1949 appropriation?

92. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Assistant Secretary-General should be asked to reply to the various questions at the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.

TWO HUNDRED AND FOURTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Wednesday, 19 October 1949, at 3.00 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. KYROU (Greece).

Budget estimates for the financial year 1950: (a) budget estimates prepared by the Secretary-General (A/903); (b) reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/934) (first reading, continued)

PART I

CHAPTER I (xvi) (concluded)

1. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) said he presumed that in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the sub-paragraph regarding the mailing of documents (A/934, paragraph 34 (i)) concerned the mailing of documents from Lake Success only and not the mailing of documents from the Geneva office.

2. Mr. PELT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Conference and General Services) said in reply that the sub-paragraph did in fact apply to documents mailed from Lake Success only. A similar problem arose in the case of the Geneva office, but did not present itself in exactly the same way; it would be studied at a later date.

3. Mr. VANER (Turkey) said he agreed with the representative of the Union of South Africa with regard to paragraph 34 (i) of the Advisory

Committee's report. Efficiency should be the primary consideration. The saving effected would be slight; by contrast mailing all the documents to a single destination would involve a considerable loss of time. Hence he opposed the adoption of the Advisory Committee's suggestion because he felt that the initiative for such a proposal should be left with the Governments concerned. In that way, Governments which wished to do so could receive documents at a single address, and the rest would continue to avail themselves of the practice adopted hitherto.

4. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should not vote on the question, but that instead the Rapporteur's report should contain a paragraph indicating that the Fifth Committee had taken note of the contents of chapter III of the Advisory Committee's report, and in particular of the recommendations appearing in paragraph 35.

5. Miss WITTEVEEN (Netherlands), Rapporteur, thought it would be preferable if the Fifth Committee took a decision, since otherwise the Secretary-General would not have a sufficiently clear idea of the opinion of the members of the Committee.

6. Mr. LEBEAU (Belgium) said he did not agree with the Rapporteur and supported the Chairman's proposal. The Fifth Committee was not bound to approve all the Advisory Committee's