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*Chairman : Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand).*

**Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter II) (A/1884<sup>1</sup>, A/C.2/L.134, A/C.2/L.135, A/C.2/L.136, A/C.2/L.137, A/C.2/L.138, A/C.2/L.139, A/C.2/L.140, A/C.2/L.141 and A/C.2/L.143) (continued)**

[Item 11]\*

**GENERAL DEBATE (concluded)**

1. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) observed that the Second Committee had been right in giving priority to the problems of economic development, which it had been discussing for eight weeks. It would, however, be failing in its duty if it did not undertake consideration of the related problems created by the current world economic situation, problems which, owing to the fact that they directly affected the lives of hundreds of millions of people, were of great importance for the maintenance of peace and could have an effect on economic development itself.

2. Hitherto the General Assembly itself had only very rarely held a general debate on the world economic situation, a matter which it had regularly reserved to the Economic and Social Council. If his delegation was proposing to adopt a different method, the reason was that it believed the General Assembly could usefully review the Council's work on that subject. His delegation was also of the opinion that the world economic situation was developing in a direction contrary to the United Nations economic and social purposes as defined in the Charter. The discussion on that matter at the last session of the Economic and Social Council had in fact revealed two different tendencies: the tendency displayed in the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Democracies, which were developing their productive forces and raising the people's standard of living at an increasing rate; and the tendency appearing in the capitalist countries, whose economies were subject to

violent fluctuations and whose economic activities had in recent years been dominated by the preparations for aggression undertaken by the United States and its allies.

3. The United States aggression in Korea had accelerated the process of the militarization of the whole of the American economy as well as of the economy of the United States' western European allies. The result had been the concentration of resources and efforts on military production—a process which had involved a corresponding decrease in production for peaceful purposes. Furthermore increased military expenditure had reduced or suppressed investments that might have served to increase the well-being of the people. The increased taxation resulting from expenditure on armaments had stimulated inflation and reduced the workers' real wages and purchasing power. Military expenditure, however, was still increasing to the detriment of the peoples' standard of living. Thus, in the United States, the military budget absorbed 20 per cent of the national income, while in the countries of Western Europe the proportion varied between 10 and 18 per cent. The capitalist countries which, under United States pressure, had thrown themselves into the armaments race, were encountering increasing economic difficulties: they were not succeeding in meeting their requirements of raw materials, the prices of which had risen as a result of massive purchases by the United States; their foreign currency reserves were dwindling; and the stability of their balance of payments was in danger. They were forced to allocate imported raw materials on a quota basis and reserve them solely for the production of armaments, to the detriment of the production of consumer goods. Furthermore, they were attempting to export at all cost—a circumstance which reduced still further the quantity of goods available for domestic consumption.

4. While the war industry was extremely prosperous, the process of inflation caused its expenses to be borne in the last resort by the working masses. Thus, in Western Europe, between June 1950 and June 1951, the increase in the cost of living had varied among the

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixth Session, Supplement No. 3.*

\* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

different countries from 5 per cent in Switzerland to 21 per cent in France. The increase had continued since June 1951.

5. The working masses of Western Europe, as well as the heads of small business enterprises not engaged in the production of armaments and suffering from the lack of raw materials and from credit restrictions, were increasingly realizing the pernicious consequences of the militarization of the economy. The working masses were asking for the wage increases necessary to maintain their purchasing power and, conscious that the sacrifices imposed upon them were in no way justified by the defence of their real interests, were beginning to struggle for an economic policy calculated to ensure the development of a peaceful economy and a rise in the standard of living.

6. The leaders of the United States who were forcing the countries of Western Europe to participate in the armaments race were not unaware of the fact that the working class in those countries was hostile to that policy. For that reason they had attempted at all costs to break the unity of the working class, particularly in France and Italy. Special agents had been sent to those countries and considerable sums had been assigned for that purpose. Nevertheless, those efforts had completely failed. Consequently, Marshall Plan experts specializing in European trade union matters were now advocating a repressive policy against organizations which continued to defend the interests of the working masses. Thus, one of those experts, Mr. Irving Brown, had recently advocated vigorous measures against the CGT (*Confédération générale du travail*) and an amnesty for trade union leaders who had been convicted of collaboration and who would become the administrators of new trade union associations.

7. The way the Marshall Plan had recently evolved showed that it was in no way intended to promote the reconstruction of western European economy. It was nothing but an instrument in the hands of the United States for subjugating the countries of that area and executing the American plan of world domination. Moreover, the assignment of Marshall Plan credits was being completely subordinated to the United States war plans in Europe, and the dominant considerations were strategic and military.

8. With the aim of strengthening their economic hold upon the countries of Western Europe, the ruling circles in the United States were endeavouring to break all the economic ties between those countries and the States which had cast off the capitalist system. The United States was conducting nothing less than a blockade of the USSR and the Peoples' Democracies and sought to impose the same policy upon its allies. The constant violations by the United States of the trade agreements with the USSR and the Peoples' Democracies, and finally the denunciation of those agreements, provided a striking example of international economic co-operation as understood by the United States. Similarly, United States interference in the economic policy of western European countries and the pressure brought to bear on them to compel them to sever their relations with Eastern Europe, showed what respect the United States had for the sovereign rights of other States.

9. The United States representative had declared at a previous meeting (181st meeting) that his country's policy was inspired by the desire to help other countries restore or expand their economies. On the con-

trary, United States policy had been and continued to be dominated by the selfish interests and craving for power of the great American capitalists; in support of these assertions, he quoted the cases of a number of countries, particularly in Latin America, as well as statements by a General of the United States Marine Corps.

10. United States policy with regard to trade with Eastern Europe was contrary to the principles of the Charter and paralyzed all efforts to organize international commercial co-operation. The Polish Government had repeatedly indicated its readiness to expand its trade with all countries, whatever their political and economic system. Such trade, however, must be based on respect for the sovereignty and interests of each contracting party. His country was prepared to export its excess production, on condition that it received in exchange the goods needed to implement its economic plans, but it would never agree to be subjected to a policy of discrimination. Moreover, the efforts made to apply such a policy to Poland had not prevented that country from achieving the objectives on its reconstruction programme, nor from obtaining remarkable results in the implementation of its Six-Year Plan. Those favourable results were due both to the efforts of the Polish people itself and to the generous assistance given by the USSR, as well as to increasingly close co-operation with the other Peoples' Democracies.

11. All the problems to which he had referred had been brought to the Committee's notice in the Czechoslovak draft resolution (A/C.2/L.135). That text brought out the most important aspects of the economic situation of certain countries and, in its final paragraph, made some useful recommendations to the Economic and Social Council on the problem of raising the standard of living of the workers. Approval of that draft resolution, which his delegation recommended, would demonstrate that the United Nations remained faithful to the objectives of the Charter and favoured peaceful co-existence and effective international co-operation between all countries with a view to the welfare of mankind.

12. He reserved the right to speak on the other draft resolutions before the Committee when they were taken up.

13. Mr. MATES (Yugoslavia) expressed gratification that the resolution on financing of economic development he had helped to draft (A/C.2/L.104) had been adopted in the General Assembly<sup>2</sup> by a still larger majority than in the Committee.

14. Introducing his delegation's draft resolution (A/C.2/L.143) on the agenda item under discussion, he said that his delegation had been guided in its preparation by the following considerations: economic development, as he had already pointed out in the general debate at the beginning of the session (148th meeting), was undoubtedly the problem which dominated the overall world economic situation; it was a long-term problem and, despite all the efforts made for its rapid solution, time would be needed before it could be solved. The United Nations could not, therefore, confine itself to that one problem but should take up other problems of which a rapid, albeit partial, solution was possible.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ibid.*, Sixth Session, Plenary Meetings, 360th meeting.

15. He agreed with the Chairman that it was necessary to consider during the current discussion complementary problems which were to some extent corollaries of the questions discussed during the previous debate. The Yugoslav draft resolution should be regarded as complementary to the resolutions already adopted at the current session or at previous sessions of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council. It was confined to the question of standard of living, which offered the best starting point for the consideration of fundamental economic problems. Moreover, the promotion of higher standards of living was, in the final analysis, the purpose of all economic measures; it was no accident that Article 55 of the Charter contained a special reference to that objective. It could even be said that the peoples of the world would judge United Nations achievements in the economic field by its success in dealing with the question of standards of living.

16. He pointed out, with regard to that question, that international political tension, the threats to the territorial integrity and independence of various countries, and the consequent need for such countries to expand their armed forces, placed heavy burdens on their economies, hampered the development of trade, and hence impaired world economic stability. That situation had often been exploited for propaganda purposes and the Soviet bloc, for example, had placed before the Committee a draft resolution submitted by the Czechoslovak delegation (A/C.2/L.135) which could have no purpose other than propaganda.

17. He wondered what the sponsors of that draft resolution proposed that his country should do. Was it to stop strengthening its defensive forces and thus leave itself at the mercy of countries which openly threatened it with aggression? Was it, on the contrary, being under the necessity of ensuring, to some extent at least, a balance between its armed forces and those of its neighbours in the Soviet bloc, to renounce all efforts to improve the standard of living of its population?

18. His country had rejected both those solutions. It had endeavoured to increase its means of production and its productivity in every way, to combat inflation and expand its economic output; thanks to the efforts it had made and to the rational use of foreign aid, it had succeeded in going a long way towards stabilizing its economy and had even succeeded in raising the standard of living of its population. For example, the standard of living index of a worker's family, taking 1938 as 100, had risen from 125 in January 1951 to 150 in December 1951; that of a civil servant's family had risen in the same period from 85 to 91. The difference between the increase in those two indices was due to the fact that the standard of living of the workers was particularly low in pre-war Yugoslavia and that all efforts had been directed primarily towards raising the lowest standards of living. The improvement so far achieved had been the result of the efforts made towards economic development.

19. He stated that the retail price level on the free market, taking the year 1938 as 100, had been 1,559 in January 1951, had risen to 1,756 in May 1951 owing to the disastrous drought of the previous year, and had fallen to 1,103 in December 1951. Apart from the abnormal increase caused by the drought, it was obvious that the level of prices had been considerably reduced as a result of the anti-inflationist measures taken by the Yugoslav Government.

20. The representative of Czechoslovakia had referred to an increase in transport charges and the price of medical supplies. He had omitted to mention that new facilities had been provided for Yugoslav workers, so that it was now possible for them, for example, to travel to their work and to make a journey at the old fares when taking their paid holidays, and that all workers were covered by the social security scheme and paid nothing for any medicaments they might need.

21. Following the same method of distorting the facts, the representative of Czechoslovakia had quoted an article from *The Economist* of 20 October 1951 (181st meeting) to prove that standards of living in Yugoslavia were falling steadily. He had made no reference to the end of the article, which stated on the contrary that the standard of living had definitely improved in the last six months.

22. Nor should it be forgotten, when reviewing the standard of living in Yugoslavia, that the country had been in a tragic state at the end of the war and that the enormous difficulties thus created had been increased by the consequences of the unilateral abrogation by the countries of the Soviet bloc, of all agreements concluded with Yugoslavia, and by the effect of the terrible drought of 1950.

23. Those successive setbacks had forced the Yugoslav Government to ask for foreign aid, which had been granted to it under conditions conforming at all points with the principles of the Charter. That aid had enabled Yugoslavia to counteract certain adverse factors in the economic field, but it was none the less true that the need to strengthen the country's defences, coupled with the general economic situation of the world, meant that considerable obstacles still barred the way to an improvement in the standard of living of the Yugoslav people.

24. He then presented his delegation's draft resolution (A/C.2/L.143). Paragraph 1 of the preamble emphasized the adverse effects likely to be exercised upon the living standards of the working population by general developments of the world economic situation. That paragraph was in no way intended to minimize the importance in that connexion of the existing political situation, but was designed to indicate that certain permanent factors, independent of political factors, were exercising an adverse effect which must be combated.

25. Paragraph 3 of the preamble stressed the importance of the influence exercised on living standards by the establishment of normal trade relations among all countries—a factor also not entirely dependent on the political situation.

26. The operative part of the draft resolution recommended all Member States to take all possible measures to raise standards of living and, to that end, to pay full attention to the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council. It seemed that such a recommendation was indeed necessary. Member States were also invited to supply the Secretariat with all pertinent data for the preparation of reports on living standards, and to register with the United Nations all treaties and agreements regarding their international economic relations. The United Nations Secretariat could not make any serious studies on the world economic situation if the necessary information was not available. Moreover, certain delegations should not be allowed to manipulate figures and data concerning the economic

situation of other countries for propaganda purposes, while providing no useful information concerning their own.

27. Finally, the draft resolution requested the Economic and Social Council to find ways and means to permit the regular study of changes in living conditions, and to report on the measures taken by governments in application of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in that field. It must not, indeed, be thought that the General Assembly had finished its task when it had adopted a resolution.

28. He reserved the right to speak again later to express his delegation's views on other draft resolutions or to reply to comments that might be made on the Yugoslav draft resolution.

29. Mr. CHAUVET (Haiti) recalled that certain representatives, at the thirteenth session of the Economic and Social Council, had advocated the establishment of a regional economic commission for Africa. Paragraph 165 of the Council's report indicated that the representatives of the governments administering African Territories were not favourable to the establishment of such a commission. Was that a concerted step on the part of all countries responsible for the administration of African territories? His delegation could not understand the reasons for it. Obviously the reports on the African territories, whether produced by the Trusteeship Council or other United Nations organs, did not contain sufficient information or statistical data on the economic situation, on educational or on other services in those territories to enable the United Nations and the official or private bodies concerned to form an exact idea of the position. The establishment of an economic commission for Africa would do away with that difficulty.

30. The Economic and Social Council's report should consist of two parts, one describing the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in their different fields and in the different areas of the world, and the other, directed primarily to economists and experts, reporting the nature of the steps which should be or had already been taken. His delegation, which was greatly interested in the future of the African peoples, particularly as regards economic development and the technical assistance which might be rendered to them, would be glad if the Rapporteur could be authorized to indicate in his report the existence of that rather unsatisfactory state of affairs.

31. Mr. TOBIAS (United States of America) wished to put several questions to the representative of Poland, who had given the impression that the United States economy was crumbling under the weight of military preparations. The replies to those questions would doubtless enlighten the Committee as to the true conditions prevailing in Poland. He wished to know if it was true that meat rationing, instituted in August 1951 for a limited period had had to be extended indefinitely; whether it was true that usual foodstuffs, such as fish, butter, sugar and potatoes, had practically disappeared from the retail shops in Poland; that, in his New Year's message, the President of the Polish Republic had called upon citizens to endure even further privations. Was it not true that, in order to obtain a kilogram of flour, a Polish worker must labour one hour, compared with the nine minutes required by a worker in the United States; that to obtain a quart of milk required 45 minutes' work in Poland,

compared with six minutes in the United States; that to obtain one egg required 23 minutes of work in Poland, compared with 2 minutes in the United States; that to obtain one kilogram of sugar required two hours and 37 minutes of work in Poland, compared with 9 minutes in the United States; that to obtain a kilogram of beef required three hours and 20 minutes' work in Poland, compared with one hour and two minutes in the United States; and that to obtain one man's woollen suit required 240 hours of work in Poland, compared with 25 hours in the United States?

32. Mr. BLUSZTAJN (Poland) thanked the representative of the United States for his interest in the living conditions of the Polish people. He would be glad to reply to questions put for the purpose of establishing the truth. Meat rationing had indeed been introduced on account of certain difficulties of supply, but the purpose was to avoid the rise in prices on a free market which might have operated to the detriment possible to keep prices at the same level as before.

33. It was not true to say that the principal food products had disappeared from the retail shops. Some of those products had been rationed to ensure the population a sufficient supply at stable prices. As for the difficulties mentioned by the United States representative, the reasons were as follows: Polish industry was developing much more quickly than agriculture, and that had resulted in a considerable increase in the urban population as compared with the rural population. Furthermore, the methods used on small Polish farms did not permit advanced agricultural mechanization. The Polish Government, however, was attempting to encourage agricultural production and it hoped to achieve quick results. If in the pre-war years there had been large exportable surpluses, that had been due to the very low consumption levels of the farmers and urban working population. At the present time, the continuously rising standard of living was creating temporary, relative shortages which the Government was trying to overcome by according to the farmers various incentives for the development of food production. Moreover, the standard of living of the workers and farmers had risen considerably as compared with the pre-war period.

34. It had been said that the re-armament of the western countries had been provoked by the allegedly aggressive policy of the Soviet Union and of the Peoples' Democracies. While military expenditure, however, represented about 70 per cent of the total budget of the United States, it represented only 10 per cent of the Polish budget. Where then was the aggressive tendency? Poland was building large factories and producing consumer goods; it was developing the production of fertilizers and agricultural machinery; it was working towards the re-equipment of its industry on a higher technical level. It was rebuilding its capital and war-shattered cities. Was that the sign of an aggressive policy?

35. Mr. BORIS (France) said he would like to reply to the Haitian representative's criticisms of the countries which during the discussions in the Economic and Social Council had not been in favour of establishing a regional economic commission for Africa. He pointed out that a regional economic commission could be established only with the consent of the countries that were to participate in it. That

had been shown by the example of the Middle East, where the countries concerned had opposed the establishment of a commission; that constituted a precedent. Furthermore, there were very good reasons why an economic commission for Africa should not be established. Those reasons had been expounded at length during the discussion that had taken place on that subject in the Economic and Social Council<sup>3</sup>. One of the main reasons was that among the various regions of that vast continent there was no community of interests, no geographic or economic unity, which would justify the establishment of a regional economic commission. The situation had been different in that respect in the case of Europe, Asia and Latin America. Of the various regions of Africa some looked towards the western Mediterranean basin, others towards the Middle East, yet others to the Atlantic or the Pacific, and they were separated by desert or jungle. Three or four quite different regions could be distinguished in Africa.

36. Moreover, the fact that there was no regional economic commission for Africa by no means meant that the Council was uninterested in African problems. It was only necessary to read the text of the Council's resolution 367 B (XIII) to realize that the economic and social development of the African territories and the provision of technical assistance for those areas would be far from being neglected by the Council. Furthermore, the Secretariat of the United Nations had devoted and would continue to devote, important studies to African territories. Thus, *The Review of Economic Conditions in Africa* (E/1910/Add.1 and Corr.1)<sup>4</sup> contained a mass of statistical and other information on economic conditions in the continent and also on the development plans being carried out there.

37. It could be gathered from that report that the countries administering African territories were making great efforts to develop them, with the result that the under-developed territories of Africa were more privileged than most of the under-developed countries in the rest of the world and were receiving a relatively greater number of investments. Thus France had invested in its African territories sums equivalent to the whole of the assistance it had received under the Marshall Plan.

38. He had given the Committee that explanation because the Rapporteur had indicated his intention of mentioning that matter in his report.

39. Mr. MARINO PEREZ (Cuba) said that even before the representative of France had spoken he had himself intended to ask whether the Second Committee would have the opportunity of considering the question, of the establishment by the Economic and Social Council of a regional economic commission for Africa.

40. The Cuban delegation was keenly interested in the matter. It believed that there were grounds for creating some form of commission responsible for dealing with Africa's economic problems, and that by so doing, the United Nations would manifest to the world its concern for the development of the African continent.

41. While it was true, as the French representative had said, that Africa's economic problems varied from one region to another, it was none the less true that there were problems common to the entire African continent. The establishment of a regional economic commission would therefore be of undoubted benefit to the countries and peoples of Africa, and also to the other countries of the world.

42. Mr. CHAUVET (Haiti) said that he had raised the matter in order to prevent the problem of Africa's economic development being passed over; but his apprehensions had been dispelled by the French representative's remarks.

43. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) thought that the Economic and Social Council had not abandoned the idea of establishing a regional economic commission for Africa, and had not considered that the creation of such an organ was precluded by the very nature of the continent.

44. Some members of the Council, it was true, had invoked that argument to justify their opposition to a draft resolution proposed by the representative of the Philippines; but it was also true that other members had taken a different stand: they had not opposed the actual idea of a regional economic commission, but had said that before setting up such an organ the Secretariat should be given time to make the studies referred to in resolution 367 B (XIII), which the French representative had himself mentioned. Once those studies were completed, the Council could examine the matter with full knowledge of the facts.

45. The Committee should not therefore insist on the establishment of the regional economic commission for Africa until the Council had examined the question; but it should be noted that many representatives were deeply interested in the creation of such a commission.

46. AHMED RAMZI Bey (Egypt) thanked the representatives of Cuba, Chile and Haiti for having once again emphasized the Economic and Social Council's concern for the future of the peoples of Africa and the development of that continent, known in the past as the "dark continent".

47. He had listened with interest to the representative of France, who had argued a reasonable case. The French representative had said, however, that the difficulties encountered in the establishment of an economic commission for the Middle East should be considered as a warning, and justified to some extent the refusal of the Powers concerned to support the establishment of a commission for Africa. But between these two questions there was a shade of difference which had clearly escaped the French representative.

48. An economic commission for the Middle East did not yet exist because its establishment had met with a number of serious obstacles; that special situation could not therefore be taken as a precedent for refusing to set up an economic commission for Africa. As soon as the obstacles referred to had been eliminated, Egypt would do everything in its power to facilitate the establishment of such a commission. At the same time, it was keenly interested in the creation of a regional economic commission for Africa, since it was not only a Middle-Eastern but also an African country.

49. The representative of France had given an impressive account of the achievements of the coun-

<sup>3</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirteenth Session*, 483rd to 496th meetings.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Publications, Sales No. : 1951. II. C. 2.

tries which had undertaken to develop and civilize the continent of Africa. If they had in fact done all that they claimed to have done, the administering Powers had nothing to fear from the establishment of a regional commission. Participation in such a body would merely commit them to supplying information on the countries of Africa, publishing statistical data, etc. The investments made in Africa were not an obstacle to supplying information.

50. The Egyptian representative added that the ethnic and geographical unity to which Mr. Boris had referred in connexion with other continents also applied in Africa; the question at stake was the need to convert it into an economic unity. Might there not be still another unity in Africa, the unity of the oppressed races? If the administering powers had really carried out the task entrusted to them unselfishly, there was surely nothing to hide concerning the continent of Africa.

51. Mussolini used to say that the African continent should be considered as a complement of Europe. But the times had changed, and Africa must henceforth be the complement of the entire world.

52. It was often maintained that Africa was the democracies' second line of defence. For that line to be really strong, the sincere collaboration of the population of the area must be ensured. The creation of a regional economic commission was one of the best ways to bring about that collaboration.

53. The CHAIRMAN announced that the general debate was closed and invited the Committee to consider each of the various draft resolutions before it.

JOINT DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY CHILE AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (A/C.2/L.134).

54. The CHAIRMAN opened discussion on the joint draft resolution submitted by Chile and the United States of America (A/C.2/L.134) and on the amendments thereto submitted by the USSR (A/C.2/L.137), Burma and Thailand (A/C.2/L.138), and Israel (A/C.2/L.139).

55. U KYIN (Burma) introduced the joint amendment of Burma and Thailand (A/C.2/L.138) which would insert in paragraph 5 (c) of the joint draft resolution, after the words "agricultural services" the words: "increasing the availability of agricultural implements and the fertilizers at a reasonable cost". He said that it was only intended to stress the need to make available to interested countries agricultural implements and fertilizers at reasonable cost.

56. In recent years the lack of those materials had become very acute in Burma and Thailand.

57. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East had adopted two resolutions dealing with the problem at its fourth session<sup>5</sup>: one drew the attention of the governments of that part of the world to the recommendations of a working group of ECAFE on national measures to remedy those conditions; the other recommended that FAO should draw the attention of other parts of the world, in particular countries producing machinery and fertilizers, to the needs of the countries of South-East Asia.

<sup>5</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Eighth Session, Supplement No. 3*.

58. It was not enough, however, to supply those materials; their price must be reduced to place them within reach of the countries which needed them.

59. It was to achieve that dual purpose that the representatives of Burma and Thailand had submitted their amendment, which the authors of the joint draft resolution had declared themselves prepared to accept.

60. He took the opportunity to ask the representatives of Chile and the United States for a few explanations regarding their text. Specifically, he wanted to know what voluntary agencies and inter-governmental organizations were referred to.

61. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) said that he and the United States representative had decided to submit a revised text of their joint draft resolution at the following meeting. It would take into account the amendments of Burma and Thailand and of Israel, as well as the oral suggestions made by the representatives of France, Bolivia, Australia and Egypt. The authors of the joint draft had not found it feasible, however, to incorporate the amendments submitted by the USSR.

62. Replying to U Kyin, Mr. Santa Cruz said that the voluntary agencies referred to in sub-paragraph (d) of paragraph 5 of the joint draft resolution were organizations like "CARE", national Red Cross organizations and the International Red Cross, which had in the past helped to alleviate food shortages throughout the world.

63. The inter-governmental organizations alluded to in the draft resolution were the organization set up under the Colombo Plan, the OEEC, the Organization of American States and any other organizations of that kind.

64. Mr. HACHEN (Israel) thanked the authors of the joint draft resolution for accepting his amendment (A/C.2/L.139) to add between sub-paragraphs 5 (a) and 5 (b) of the joint draft resolution another sub-paragraph reading as follows:

"Facilitating the transport of food to potential or actual emergency famine areas by the most expeditious means".

65. He was convinced that the other members of the Committee would also agree that shortest routes of transit transport could play a decisive part in saving human lives.

66. Mr. NARIELWALA (India) said that the resolution on food and famine was of special importance for countries like India which suffered from recurrent famines.

67. The prevailing food problem had become worse in India in 1937, when Burma had been detached from that country, cutting national output of cereals by 1,300,000 tons. After the creation of Pakistan, that output had been cut by another 800,000 tons, making a total reduction of 2,100,000 tons.

68. At the same time, the population of India had increased; it had reached 360 millions in 1951. Thus there was a very clear disproportion between supply and demand for foodstuffs. Long-term measures should be taken to solve the problem, taking into account the following factors: (a) annual food requirements and population increases; (b) the system of rationing in force and possibilities of its wider application; (c)

purchases of food on the domestic market by the government to ensure supplies to areas that were being rationed; (d) possibilities of obtaining foodstuffs in other parts of the world; (e) efforts to be made on the domestic and international levels to increase domestic output.

69. The National Planning Commission which had examined the problem in detail had arrived at the following conclusion: according to forecasts based on existing trends, the population of India would reach 383 millions in 1956. If account were taken only of the needs of the adult population, food would have to be found for 330 million persons. In 1950 grain production in India had amounted to 45,500,000 tons; of that total it had been possible to make approximately 40 millions available to consumers. Under those conditions during the preceding few years, India had had to import, between two and three million tons of grain each year. In 1951, owing to the natural disasters which had weakened the country, imports had had to be raised to 5 million tons.

70. At the present time national production and imports of grain combined were only sufficient for an adult ration very slightly exceeding, on the average, three quarters of a pound of grain per inhabitant per day, whereas normally the ration ought not to be less than one pound.

71. If that daily ration of one pound were taken as the objective which it was desirable to reach, it would be necessary to import 16 million tons of grain per year, which greatly exceeded the country's existing capacity.

72. Nevertheless, in those areas where rationing was in force, it was not even possible to provide the adult population with the average daily ration which he had just mentioned. In 1951, while the negotiations with the United States for a loan of 2 million tons of grain, had been in progress, the ration of the urban population had been reduced to half a pound per day. In spite of the seriousness of the situation, the Government had succeeded in providing the whole population of the country with at least that minimum ration, by taking measures ensuring that everyone bore his share of sacrifice. No one had died of hunger.

73. The equitable distribution of grain and the maintenance of prices at a reasonable level were the main preoccupation of the Central Government and of the governments of the various States. The price of grain in India had been kept at a level considerably lower than that obtaining abroad. It was natural under a system of free economy, that foreign suppliers should take advantage of an inadequate domestic supply to raise their prices. Without criticizing them in that respect, the Indian Government was endeavouring to make its purchases of grain abroad through the intermediary of the governments of the supplying countries and at the lowest prices possible, in order to prevent the difference between foreign and home prices from becoming too great.

74. He had been very happy to learn that, at its recent Rome Conference, the FAO had adopted a resolution requesting the FAO Council to investigate the possibility of establishing reserves of foodstuffs for the purpose of offsetting the exceptional situations arising in famine-affected areas. The Indian delegation warmly supported that proposal. The establishment of such

reserves would render a very great service to countries such as India which suffered from a chronic lack of foodstuffs. Countries with a surplus production should consider the possibility of putting aside a portion of their exportable surplus every year so that it might be rapidly dispatched to famine-affected areas when need arose. If they could begin such action as from the present year, the world would, in five or six years' time, dispose of a considerable reserve of grain. Those reserves could be put at the disposal of countries requiring assistance in accordance with the data supplied by the FAO.

75. The realization of the plan might encounter one difficulty: it was principally the under-developed countries which produced a surplus of grain. However, those countries lacked capital, and the establishment of reserves of that kind might hinder their exports and so deprive them of the foreign exchange which they needed. To overcome that difficulty it might prove necessary for international finance organizations to grant the countries in question loans to an amount equivalent to the value of the foodstuffs placed in reserve. He was convinced that, in view of the resolution adopted by the FAO, the sponsors of the joint draft resolution would accept the amendment which he proposed to make to their draft. That amendment would approve the FAO's initiative and request the Council of the FAO to submit to the seventh session of the General Assembly concrete proposals for the creation of reserves of foodstuffs, so that the General Assembly might recommend States Members of the United Nations to take measures, in accordance with those proposals, for the establishment of the reserves in question.

76. In that connexion he wished to assure the Committee that India had no intention of relying indefinitely on imports of grain to make good its deficit. During the coming years it would, indeed, have to continue importing approximately 2,500,000 tons of grain per year; however, it was taking measures to reduce the imports in the course of time. Those measures consisted principally of buying from the peasants, under government auspices, a larger proportion of their production, in order to assure more equitable distribution and consumption. Another kind of measure aimed at expanding the network of shops and co-operatives in order to place within reach of the peasants the consumer goods they needed, at prices which would not risk upsetting the balance of rural economy. Finally, a third category of measures aimed at increasing the area of arable land. Thus, by means of large-scale irrigation work and the construction of reservoirs and wells, etc., it was hoped to increase sown areas by approximately 20 million acres by the end of 1956, which would enable grain production to be raised by about 7 million tons per year. If grain imports were maintained at the level of 2,500,000 tons per year, the daily ration of the adult population could be slightly raised in 1956, without however reaching the level of one pound per day per inhabitant.

77. The work which the Indian Government had to do in that field was enormous. It was not a matter merely of mobilizing domestic and foreign resources; neither was it only a matter of gathering the necessary capital and technical knowledge; it was necessary also to overcome the inertia of the peasant masses, a problem of which the importance was only too often underestimated.



78. After quoting a statement which Mr. Duckham had recently made on the subject during a summer course at Oxford University, the representative of India observed that the most difficult operation was to persuade the peasants of the importance of bringing to their work the most modern methods and the most recent scientific discoveries. That was a human problem which could only be solved after long years of effort.

79. He then stated that, throughout Asia, the problem of food was intimately connected with that of the population. Unless the growth of the population was arrested it would be impossible to prevent famines. There again it was necessary to persuade millions of people, most of them uneducated, of the importance of having smaller families and of taking steps to lower the birth-rate. The Indian Government and its social and health services were more and more realizing the importance of the problem and the need to launch a vast campaign of propaganda and education in connexion with it. That, however, demanded long-term

measures, the putting into effect of which would require much time.

80. On 11 January 1952 the United States representative had put forward a number of extremely interesting suggestions (181st meeting) concerning studies which the Secretary-General might undertake in connexion with the question of famines. The representative of India thought that it would be of value to include those suggestions in the joint Chilean-United States draft resolution, in order to give the Secretary-General concrete directives.

81. In conclusion, he wished to thank the governments of the countries which had sent food to India in order to assist it in the struggle against the previous year's famine, and also the voluntary organizations and private persons who had likewise participated in that work. He also thanked the United Nations Secretariat which had collected funds to help the Indian people.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.