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Chairman: Mr. G. G. TCHERNOUCHTENKO
 (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic).

AGENDA ITEM 74

Budget estimates for the financial year 1969 (continued)
 (A/7125, A/7205, A/7207, A/7236, A/7255, A/7280,
 A/7304, A/C.5/1169 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1175-1179,
 A/C.5/1182, A/C.5/1183, A/C.5/1185, A/C.5/1186-
 1189, A/C.5/L.943, A/C.5/L.948, A/C.5/L.950)

First reading (continued) (A/C.5/L.943)

SECTION 3. SALARIES AND WAGES (continued)
 (A/7205, A/7207, A/7236, A/7255, A/7280, A/C.5/
 1169 AND CORR.1, A/C.5/L.948, A/C.5/L.950)

1. Mr. STARK (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), replying to certain points raised at the previous meeting concerning the report of the Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat (Committee of Seven), and speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, said that that report was still under consideration by senior officials; only when comments on it had been received from the various offices, some of which were quite far from New York, would the Secretary-General be able to formulate his own observations. It was the Secretary-General's intention that the report of the Committee of Seven, together with his observations, should be made available to the General Assembly by the beginning of December. He himself wished, however, to confirm the statement made at the previous meeting by the representative of India, that the Committee of Seven, according to its terms of reference, was to report to the Secretary-General, and that the recommendations contained in its report were intended primarily for the Secretary-General's consideration.

2. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the previous meeting the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic had submitted a formal proposal to the effect that expenditure under section 3 of the budget estimates for 1969 should be determined on the basis of the maintenance of the Secretariat establish-

ment at the 1968 level. He invited the Secretary of the Committee, as representative of the Secretariat, to explain the financial implications of that proposal.

3. Mr. HOFFMAN (Secretary of the Committee) said that if the proposal was adopted the appropriation of \$66,667,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for section 3 would be reduced by \$2,227,000, bringing the total to \$64,440,000.

4. The CHAIRMAN asked whether, if there was no objection from the representatives of the United States of America and Peru, both of whom had made formal proposals, the Committee would be prepared to vote on the recommended appropriations for section 3, taking into account the reduction proposed by the Ukrainian delegation.

5. Mr. ZIEHL (United States of America) said that his delegation was prepared to vote on section 3 immediately on the understanding that the proposal it had submitted would be considered in connexion with the second reading. It would, however, have to abstain in the vote and reserve the right to change its position following further discussion of the item.

6. Mr. FAURA (Peru) said that his delegation would not insist on postponing the vote if the Chairman thought it inadvisable to do so because of the time factor. His delegation was glad to learn from the statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management that the Fifth Committee would have access to the report of the Committee of Seven. The Fifth Committee should be given all possible guidance in its work, and that report would be most useful.

7. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that at the previous meeting a number of delegations had said that they would like more information to assist them in their consideration of section 3, which was a very important section if only because it represented the greater part of the budget appropriations for 1969. The desire had been expressed, for example, that the Committee should be informed of the Secretariat's views on the possibilities of redistributing the workload of the staff. Further, the proposal made by the representative of Peru deserved careful consideration. Lastly the Ukrainian proposal should likewise be carefully studied before being put to the vote. His delegation therefore requested the Chairman not to ask the Committee to vote on section 3 until a later stage, taking into account the Ukrainian proposal.

8. Mr. STARK (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) agreed with the representative of Peru that the material contained in the

report of the Committee of Seven would be of interest to the Fifth Committee; it had a bearing, for example, on the desk-by-desk survey recommended by the Advisory Committee. The Secretary-General had said in his statement to the Committee (A/C.5/1176) that he hoped the Committee would allow him a little more time before embarking on the survey, especially as that would enable him to take into account the closely related recommendations on that point by the Committee of Seven, which he had just received. There would be ample time for further discussion, however, before section 3 came up for a second reading and before the report of the Fifth Committee was completed; he suggested therefore that there was no real need to postpone the vote on section 3 on first reading.

9. Mr. SANU (Nigeria) supported the views expressed by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Ukrainian proposal implied a reduction of \$2.2 million in the appropriations under section 3. The Advisory Committee in paragraph 142 of its main report (A/7207) gave a detailed breakdown of the proposed staff increases by department; he wondered how and where the reduction proposed by the Ukrainian delegation would be applied and what would be its effect on the programme of activities which had already been approved. His delegation would like to have those questions answered before voting on the proposal. The proposal submitted by the delegation of Peru likewise needed to be examined by the Committee before being put to the vote. He requested the Chairman not to ask the Committee to vote on section 3 at that meeting.

10. Mr. REFSHAL (Norway) said that his delegation was fully aware of the terms of reference of the Committee of Seven and realized that it was for the Secretary-General alone to decide whether or not to make public all or part of that Committee's recommendations. At the same time, his delegation had always assumed that the Fifth Committee would be provided with some information on the recommendations of the Committee of Seven, at least in the form of a report by the Secretary-General himself; and it was therefore very glad to hear from the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management that such a report would indeed be forthcoming early in December.

11. His delegation was intending to raise one question relating to the Secretariat staff. It had not raised the question previously because it had hoped, before doing so, to be able to study the report on the Committee of Seven's recommendations. In view of the assurance given by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, he wished to reserve his delegation's right to raise the question at a later stage, either during the discussion on item 81 (Personnel questions) or during the second reading of the budget estimates.

12. Mr. GANEM (France) said that his delegation, like that of the United States of America, had decided to abstain if a vote was taken on section 3 at that meeting. The vote would have very little significance after so hasty a reading; it could well be postponed for two or three days. He asked the Chairman to ensure that the Committee had time to study all the proposals before the section was considered on second reading.

13. A survey of existing staff and of requirements for further staff in the Secretariat was urgently needed. He suggested that it could be entrusted to the Joint Inspection Unit, perhaps with the aid of representatives of two more Member States, one Asian and one European, known for their recent industrial development.

14. Mr. JAMBO (Sudan) requested that the text of the proposals submitted by Peru and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic be reproduced and circulated to members of the Committee for their consideration before section 3 was put to the vote.

15. Mr. WILTSHIRE (Trinidad and Tobago) supported that request. His delegation would not feel ready to vote before the following Monday at the earliest, and it was clear that many others wanted time to make up their minds about the new proposals.

16. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) agreed with the previous speakers. The paragraph proposed by the United States of America for inclusion in the Committee's report and the text of the proposals submitted by the Ukrainian and Peruvian delegations should be circulated to members of the Committee, and he hoped that each would be accompanied by comments on its financial implications supplied by the Secretariat. The \$2 million reduction that would result from the proposal of the Ukrainian delegation, in particular, was too important to be put to the vote before all relevant information had been made available.

17. Mr. KABORE (Upper Volta) agreed that the vote on section 3 should be postponed to allow time for serious study of the subject. The only alternative would be to take a vote exclusively on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, leaving the proposals until the second reading. However, if a vote was taken on section 3 and the related proposals, his delegation would have to abstain.

18. At the request of the CHAIRMAN Mr. FAURA (Peru) clarified the proposal he had made at the previous meeting. There were two points: first, his delegation proposed that the new posts requested by the Secretary-General under section 3 should be reduced by one half, instead of by one fourth, as proposed by the representative of the United States; secondly, his delegation proposed that, if the Committee's programme of work permitted, the vote on section 3 should be postponed until members had had time to study the report of the Committee of Seven.

19. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the effect of the Ukrainian proposal on section 3 alone—that is to say, excluding the effect it might have on sections 20 and 21—would be to eliminate 135 new Professional posts proposed for 1969, 76 of which had been requested for activities in the economic and social field, 32 for conference servicing and related activities in New York and Geneva, 9 for the Library and 18 for various other activities. If the manning table for 1969 were maintained at the 1968 level the total saving under section 3 would be \$2,227,000.

20. The United States proposal would not have any effect on the level of the appropriation under section

3 for 1969, but would have some important consequences in terms of the approach to be adopted by the Secretary-General in administering the appropriation for 1969 and preparing the estimates for 1970.

21. With regard to the Peruvian proposal, he assumed that the recommendations of the Committee of Seven would indeed have some bearing on the question of manpower utilization in 1969 and 1970. On the other hand, as the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had pointed out, the recommendations of the Committee of Seven were at present being studied by the Secretary-General in consultation with his senior colleagues at Headquarters and other duty stations, and the Secretary-General's report on the recommendations would not be available for another two or three weeks. Thus, though the Committee would have ample opportunity to consider the Secretary-General's report on the recommendations of the Committee of Seven and to take action thereon at the current session, it would not be able to start its consideration of the report until early in December.

22. There remained the question as to when the Committee would wish to vote on the Ukrainian proposal and on section 3 on first reading. It was understandable that delegations wished to have more time to reflect on the Ukrainian proposal, which had important implications. However, he hoped that the vote on section 3 on first reading would not be postponed until December, when the Committee would have many other important items to discuss. Perhaps the best course would be to allow a reasonable time for reflection on the Ukrainian proposal and to resume consideration of section 3 on first reading after a few days, on the understanding that delegations would have ample opportunity to express their views on the United States proposal and on the recommendations of the Committee of Seven before section 3 was put to the vote on second reading.

23. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in view of the importance of the Ukrainian proposal and of the considerations expressed by the United States and other delegations, his own delegation believed that further consideration of proposals relating to section 3 should indeed be deferred, but there was no need for a long deferment which would upset the Committee's programme of work. The representatives of the Sudan and of Trinidad and Tobago had suggested that the vote on the proposals relating to section 3 should be postponed until the beginning of the following week. The Soviet delegation hoped that, when the Committee resumed its consideration of section 3, representatives would be given an opportunity to state their views on the various proposals before the vote. He certainly wished to do so himself.

24. The CHAIRMAN observed that there seemed to be a consensus that the Committee should not proceed to a vote immediately on the proposals relating to section 3. At the same time the Controller had pointed out that, if the vote on section 3 was postponed until December, the Committee's programme of work for the remainder of the session might be seriously upset. Accordingly, if there were no objection, he would

assume that the Committee wished to defer further consideration of section 3 for a few days, and to resume consideration of the estimate under that section at the beginning of the following week.

It was so decided.

SECTION 7. BUILDINGS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO PREMISES (A/7205, A/7207)

25. The CHAIRMAN observed that the appropriation initially requested by the Secretary-General under section 7, in the budget estimates for the financial year 1969 (A/7205), amounted to \$4,492,200. The Advisory Committee, in its main report (A/7207), had recommended a provision in the amount of \$4,372,400, a reduction of \$119,800. At the same time, the Committee should bear in mind that revised estimates under section 7 might be forthcoming before the end of the session in connexion with the Secretary-General's proposals on accommodation at Headquarters.

26. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the initial estimate under section 7 included the annual amortization of the Headquarters construction loan—currently \$2.5 million—and the cost of alterations, improvement and major maintenance of premises and facilities at Headquarters and at Geneva.

27. As the estimate for the maintenance and improvement of the Headquarters premises under chapter II, part (1), provided for normal items, reasonably and realistically calculated, the Advisory Committee concurred with the proposed figure of \$260,400. It should, however, be recognized that a *pro memoria* provision was included for the possible installation of additional mechanical voting systems after the relevant item on the General Assembly's agenda had been discussed in the plenary.

28. With regard to the premises at Geneva, the estimates under chapter II, part (2) A, included an instalment in the amount of \$1 million for the extension of conference facilities in the Palais des Nations, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2246 (XXI)—that is, for the extension of the Palais according to the original plans. On the other hand, as delegations would be aware, a revised plan had been submitted to the General Assembly at the current session, and the Advisory Committee would submit its report and recommendations on the revised plan (A/C.5/1179) in a few days. No changes would be proposed in the financial provision for 1969. For major maintenance and improvement of the Palais des Nations, a long-term programme had been approved by the General Assembly at its twentieth session. Since the estimate under part (2) B, amounting to \$612,000, was among the items approved by the Assembly the Advisory Committee concurred in that provision.

29. New in chapter II was an estimate of \$119,800 under part (2) C for "additional major maintenance requirements at Geneva. The Advisory Committee took the view that the seven items included in that additional request lent themselves to incorporation in the long-term programme, assuming that that programme was well-conceived and realistic, and it

therefore recommended that the amount of \$119,800 should be deleted from the initial estimate, pending the submission by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its current session of a detailed report which would update and integrate the major maintenance requirements in the Palais de Nations and indicate priorities. He understood that in that report, which would be available to Member States very shortly, the Secretary-General was for the time being withdrawing his request for additional major maintenance requirements for the Palais. Accordingly, the reduction of \$119,800 under section 7, which had been recommended conditionally in paragraph 197 of the Advisory Committee's report, could now be considered as final.

30. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) said that his delegation was prepared to vote on first reading in favour of the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7. On the other hand, it would wish to point out that the Advisory Committee had not in fact recommended a reduction in the Secretary-General's original estimate, but had merely observed that the expenditures listed in paragraph 194, item C, of its report lent themselves to inclusion in the long-term programme of major maintenance. Expenditures of that kind should logically be considered in relation to the report on the major maintenance programme at Geneva which was to be submitted during the current session. All that could be said at that stage was that the Advisory Committee's observation suggested that the long-term programme of major maintenance and improvement at Geneva had not been conceived with sufficient foresight and care.

31. With regard to the revised plan for the extension of conference facilities at Geneva and the plans for the construction of new buildings in New York, which would together cost much more than \$119,800, the Committee had as yet received only the reports of the Secretary-General and not the comments of the Advisory Committee. In his delegation's view, Member States should not be asked to approve construction plans at short notice in which costs

had been underestimated, or, even worse, not even approximated. Submissions of that kind should be incorporated in the initial budget estimates, and Member States should be given enough time to reflect on them.

32. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the request for \$119,800 for additional major maintenance requirements at Geneva had not been withdrawn but had been deferred, since the revised plan for the extension of conference facilities at the Palais des Nations would, if it were adopted, require a reassessment of the major maintenance programme as it related to the extended premises.

33. He assured the Hungarian representative that the revised plan for the extension of conference facilities at Geneva would have no financial implications in 1969 or for several years to come. Some of the cost of the revised plan, if it was approved, would have to be defrayed from the regular budget, but not in the immediate future.

34. Mr. VAUGHAN (Assistant Secretary-General for General Services) wished to correct an error in paragraph 189, heading A item (vi), in the Advisory Committee's main report (A/7207). The estimate of \$45,000 was for the replacement of sound amplification and interpretation equipment in conference room 5 or conference room 6, not in both conference rooms. In accordance with a programme which had been initiated in 1964, sound amplification and interpretation equipment was being replaced in one conference room each year.

35. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on first reading on the appropriation under section 7, on the understanding that revised estimates under that section might be submitted later in the session.

The recommendation of the Advisory Committee (A/7207, para. 198) for an appropriation of \$4,372,400 under section 7 was approved on first reading by 86 votes to none.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.