

TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Tuesday, 15 November 1949, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Carlos E. Stolk (Venezuela).

Refugees and stateless persons (A/971 and A/C.3/527) (continued)

1. Mr. ROCHEFORT (France) asked for the floor to answer the questions put to him at the previous meeting by several representatives, in particular by Mr. Penteadó and Mr. Azkoul.
2. The financial considerations referred to by Mr. Penteadó had been a matter of concern to the French delegation also. The protective machinery outlined in the joint draft resolution proposed by France and the United States (A/C.3/L.29) was of such a nature that it would be easily adapted to whatever budget the Assembly might vote; there was little difference between the proposal to allocate 500,000 dollars or 750,000 dollars for the work of the High Commissioner's Office and the proposal to introduce a certain number of essential provisions which would have to be adapted to the budget.
3. Mr. Rochefort next referred to Mr. Azkoul's remarks concerning first, the divergences of view between the United States and French representatives in connexion with definitions; and secondly, the right to nationality to which reference should be made in the draft resolution.
4. With regard to the first question, the French variant was in accordance with the wording of annex I of the Constitution of IRO, which mentioned "refugees" and "displaced persons", but not categories of such persons.
5. If the word "categories" were used, the IRO definitions would be accepted as final, whereas if a revision of those definitions were proposed it would be possible to introduce new ones. Neither of the proposed texts would prevent the *Ad Hoc* Committee from submitting its own proposals to the General Assembly, which would adopt the definition it considered the most rational. He preferred his own text, however, to that of the United States, in view of the fact that the definitions drawn up by IRO were for the use of an organization which was only temporary.
6. He failed to understand the caution displayed by the United States representative, since in any event the High Commissioner would receive his directives from the General Assembly. There was nothing to prevent the Assembly from adding to the definitions it adopted a clause defining the circumstances in which they should be applied. Moreover, a problem concerning refugees would not automatically become a matter for the High Commissioner, nor would he be empowered to submit it to Governments. He could act only within the limits of his functions, which were not very broad.
7. A further argument for a revision of the IRO definitions was the fact that they applied only in special circumstances and to a wealthy organization. The High Commissioner's Office, which was merely a supervisory body, would find it difficult to apply those definitions. Furthermore, in accordance with the terms of the draft resolution before the Committee, the Governments themselves would actually furnish assistance to the refugees. That situation did not fit in with the IRO provisions under which refugees who refused to be repatriated or resettled, or who did not make an honest effort to earn a living, would cease to be regarded as refugees. It would be impossible for Governments to adopt such criteria.
8. Summing up that part of his statement, Mr. Rochefort said that the IRO definitions were hardly applicable to the new situation and that they had frequently been the cause of unjust decisions. Hence they should only be retained until the proposed reforms had been carried out.
9. He then turned to the question of the functioning of the international organization to be set up after the reform. He recalled that in the declaration of human rights the United Nations had proclaimed the universal right to a nationality and the right of asylum. If it was desired that the High Commissioner should be guided by that principle of universality, the General Assembly, when adopting the new definitions, should instruct him accordingly.
10. The man to be appointed to the post must obviously possess a high degree of judgment and be capable of dealing with very delicate questions. For example, when considering the problem of the Arab refugees, he should bear in mind the special measures which had already been taken on their behalf and the fact that the Arab countries might not wish his Office to interfere with what had already been done.
11. He suggested two hypothetical cases to illustrate the working of the new system. First, assuming that a Government had more refugees than it could cope with, and wished to obtain international assistance in dealing with them, it would not be able to apply directly to the High Commissioner. Nor could the High Commissioner *ex officio* take over the problem. The correct procedure would be to refer the question to the General Assembly, which would give the necessary directives. Secondly, if a Government ill-treated the refugees whom it was supposed to protect, the High Commissioner would not be empowered to take action himself. His duty would be to investigate the situation and to recall the Government concerned to a sense of its international responsibility. Should that Government accept his suggestions, it would have to sign a clause in an international convention pledging itself to give the refugees more liberal treatment. If it did not accept them, the General Assembly, after considering the case, might invite that Government to do its duty.
12. He concluded that the draft resolution submitted to the Committee contained all necessary precautions with regard to the working of the High Commissioner's Office.
13. He thought that the High Commissioner might be appointed either by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or the Secretary-General. He did not consider it advisable, however, that the appointment should be made by the Secretary-General.
14. The Lebanese representative had referred to article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights and to the article relating to the right of asylum. Mr. Rochefort wished to reply, because the question had often been distorted by the Press, which had misinterpreted the claim that the protection of refugees was an international problem. According to certain newspapers, that proposition would be hypocritically argued by a country which was guilty of perpetuating the refugee problem and anxious to obtain financial assistance from the United Nations in order to solve it.

15. His country approached the problem with a clear conscience. He wished to describe the situation which existed in the various countries of Europe, in order to dispel any misunderstanding. In that way he would show that the French proposal was designed to help the refugees themselves, and not the receiving countries.

16. Declaration of "right to a nationality" did not mean that the receiving countries were to be required to grant their nationality to the refugees. It was rather directed against those States which deprived their subjects of their nationality, or placed them in such a difficult situation that they were obliged to leave their country of origin.

17. The receiving countries could not be required automatically to extend citizenship to those enjoying their hospitality. Indeed, many refugees did not desire to be naturalized. Such, for example, was the case of the 70,000 Spanish Republicans currently in France, who hoped one day to return to Spain. Moreover, such a provision would terminate the right of asylum. It should be remembered that the host countries extended their hospitality to all who needed it without taking any special precautions. They admitted not only those who applied in the regular manner but even those who arrived clandestinely. Their attitude differed greatly from that of countries of immigration which before extending a visa adopted all manner of precautions concerning the age, origin, mentality, political opinions, physical condition and number of dependants of the prospective immigrants.

18. The inference was that not the host countries but the countries of immigration had created the problem before the Committee. He recalled that when France had, in Geneva, brought up the question of the help to be extended, it had not been thinking of the refugees it had admitted but rather of the "hard core" still living in Germany.

19. Turning to the question of naturalization, he thought refugees could not be required to become citizens of the host countries. Any solution to the problem of refugees would therefore have to take into consideration the right of asylum as well as the right to nationality. The stand taken by France showed that it did not fear criticism in the matter of refugees generally.

20. Mr. BEAUFORT (Netherlands) thanked the representatives of the United States and France for having worked on Saturday and Sunday on the joint draft resolution before the Committee.

21. He proceeded to comment on the points on which the two representatives still differed.

22. Regarding the definition of the term "refugee", he preferred the formula submitted by Mr. Rochefort since it offered a more flexible method and enabled the Economic and Social Council to seek its own definition.

23. With regard to paragraph 4, sub-paragraph (e) of the annex, any decision on the matter would depend on how the future was viewed. Some optimists—and he was surprised to see the Director-General of IRO among them—estimated that the problem of refugees would be solved by 1951. But such optimism was not in line with the IRO's memorandum (A/C.3/528) which stated that even after that date a number of refugees would require assistance. It was not, therefore, certain that after the dissolution of IRO the problem of refugees could be reduced to one of mere legal protection. For that reason he was in favour of paragraph 4, sub-paragraph (e) of the annex.

24. With regard to the manner of appointment of the High Commissioner, he thought election by an organ of the United Nations was preferable to mere appointment by the Secretary-General. He preferred election because it would give the High Commissioner greater independence.

25. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) congratulated the representatives of the United States and France on their joint draft resolution. All that remained to be done was to choose two types of High Commissioner: that proposed by France and that envisaged by the United States.

26. In the circumstances he thought the situation was clear and that the Committee could come quickly to the voting stage.

27. Mrs. LIONAES (Norway) commended the IRO staff for the work it had accomplished. Her delegation had always maintained that the problem of refugees was international in character and for that reason her Government had joined IRO. Thanks to the efforts of that organization, the scope of the problem had been reduced.

28. With regard to the future, she preferred a High Commissioner appointed by the Secretary-General. She considered also that the Office of the High Commissioner should be organized to care for the material needs of the refugees since the Director-General of IRO had stated (259th meeting) that the "hard core" problem would not be solved even by 1951.

29. As to the financing of that assistance, she felt that the members of IRO should not be the only ones to bear the cost and that the United Nations as a whole should defray the expenses of the Office of the High Commissioner. She thought that the joint resolution was not sufficiently clear on that point as paragraph 4, sub-paragraph (e) did not specify the source of funds.

30. Mr. JOCKEL (Australia) submitted two amendments (A/C.3/L.31) to the joint draft resolution.

31. He said the discussion had revealed the complex character of the problem of refugees and it was evident that new questions would arise in the future. The representative of France had raised the question of the aged and the infirm, and had submitted a draft resolution on the assistance to be given to those categories of refugees (A/C.3/L.27). His delegation would support that draft resolution. The Greek representatives had spoken of the children of his country, while other representatives had raised the question of the Middle-East refugees. All those questions could be discussed in the future.

32. The United States representative had foreseen that possibility when she had said that new problems might be referred to the General Assembly. That; however; might necessitate the extension of the High Commissioner's powers. For that purpose he was proposing to add to the end of the first paragraph of the operative part of the draft resolution the following phrase:

"To discharge the functions contained therein and such other functions as the General Assembly may from time to time confer upon it".

33. He proposed also to add, at the end of paragraph 4 of the annex, a new sub-paragraph (f), worded as follows:

"(f) Engaging in such additional activities, including repatriation and resettlement activities, as the General Assembly may determine."

34. He pointed out that he was not proposing anything new but he felt the General Assembly ought to be free at any time to extend the High Commissioner's powers; that would be entirely in conformity with the French draft resolution.

35. That solution would enable the General Assembly to take new decisions without touching the basic resolution. For example, the question of financing would be a matter for the General Assembly.

36. With regard to the terms of reference to be given to the Office of the High Commissioner, he considered that for the time being the High Commissioner should be granted limited powers, subject to later extension.

37. In conclusion he said that he would support the new definition of the term "refugee" suggested by the United Kingdom representative.

38. Mrs. CASTLE (United Kingdom) thanked the Australian representative for his support and added that, after further consideration, her delegation had decided not to press for a broader definition at the current session. That being so, she definitely preferred the French formula to the United States text, which might be prejudicial to refugees who, while fulfilling the same conditions as other refugees, might not fall into any particular category which the General Assembly might at any time select for protection.

39. She also supported the French proposal contained in paragraph 4, sub-paragraph (e) of the annex. Her Government would not commit itself to any contribution and the French proposal did not constitute an obligation either for individual Governments or for the General Assembly. She saw no reason why the High Commissioner should not be responsible for the distribution of any relief funds he might be given.

40. Finally, with regard to the appointment of the High Commissioner, she agreed with the Lebanese representative that he should be elected not by the Economic and Social Council but by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General. His election by the supreme organ of the United Nations would invest him with the highest authority.

41. Mr. KATZNELSON (Israel) was glad to note that the representatives of France and the United States of America had succeeded in drawing up a joint draft resolution. He was confident that

they would also be able to resolve the minor differences which still divided them on three points. As a contribution towards such agreement, his delegation wished to suggest a compromise text for the alternative versions of paragraph 3(b), which might be acceptable to both delegations. Paragraph 3 (b) might be worded as follows (A/C.3/L.33):

"(b) To transmit to the General Assembly at its fifth regular session such recommendations as the Council may deem appropriate regarding the extension of categories of refugees entitled to protection to persons not covered by the Constitution of IRO."

42. Should his amendment be adopted, then the Committee should also adopt the United States version of paragraph 3 of the annex, which in the circumstances would be in complete correspondence with the facts.

43. His delegation also proposed (A/C.3/L.33) that in paragraph 3 (a), the word "establishment" should be replaced by the word "functioning," since, if a decision to establish a High Commissioner's Office was taken by the General Assembly in the current session, the Council would be required only to consider the measures necessary for the operation of the new agency.

44. He added that, since the problem of aid would not arise until IRO came to an end in 1951, the Economic and Social Council might still be requested to study the problem more thoroughly and to submit its recommendations to the General Assembly concerning the continuance of material assistance to certain categories of refugees. He therefore proposed the addition to the following new paragraph (c) after paragraph 3 (b) (A/C.3/L.33):

"(c) "To transmit to the General Assembly at its fifth session such recommendations as the Council may deem appropriate regarding the problem of extending material assistance to certain categories of refugees."

45. If its proposals were not accepted by the representatives of France and the United States, the delegation of Israel would vote for the alternative texts submitted by the French delegation, which it considered preferable to those submitted by the United States. It would also vote for the Australian amendment (A/C.3/L.31), which it regarded as sound.

46. Mr. STEPANENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) recalled that his delegation had explained before why the original French proposal was unacceptable to it. The joint draft resolution contained no new features and differed from the first text submitted to the Committee only in points of detail. The position of his delegation therefore remained unchanged.

47. The first paragraph of the preamble of the joint draft resolution stated a principle which his delegation had always upheld and would continue to uphold, that a final solution of the problem of refugees could "be provided only by the voluntary repatriation of the refugees". But regardless of that pious declaration, the operative part of the draft resolution contained no provision likely to encourage and bring about repatriation.

48. The draft resolution on the contrary made express provision for the resettlement of refugees and for their assimilation within new national

communities. His delegation had opposed such a solution in the past. Like the delegations of the Soviet Union and of the peoples' democracies, it had brought evidence to show that the fate of displaced persons was anything but enviable, when attempts had been made to resettle them in other countries. After a year or two of the hard work which they were usually compelled to do, their one desire was to return home and the few who had succeeded in doing so had an illuminating story to tell. In such circumstances it was clear that his delegation must categorically reject a formula, which, in its view, could only spell poverty and death for the unfortunate refugee.

49. He went on to paint a contrasting picture of the life of the displaced persons who had returned to the Soviet Union and to the peoples' democracies. He cited actual cases of refugees from Germany who were earning a good living in factories or collective farms. Despite the post-war difficulties, the national authorities had done everything possible to provide them with a livelihood and satisfactory housing and to ensure them a life free from uncertainty and exploitation.

50. The draft resolution submitted by his delegation (A/C.3/L.25) had been inspired by those facts. It was based on the principle that repatriation provided the only satisfactory solution of the problem of refugees, contrary to the view which those who were waging a campaign of lies and slander in the displaced persons camps, were attempting to spread for their own nefarious purposes.

51. The draft resolution submitted by the Byelorussian SSR also required the Governments concerned and IRO to furnish full particulars regarding the refugees and displaced persons in their territories and camps as well as information regarding their living conditions. Such information was essential if a correct idea of the number of refugees and their precise fate was to be obtained.

52. Finally, the draft resolution submitted by his delegation had the further advantage of avoiding additional expenditure by the United Nations. The same could not be said of the joint draft resolution, which carried heavy financial implications, although attempts were being made to minimize them with a view to making the proposal more acceptable.

53. There was no reason for rejecting his delegation's draft resolution; the discreet silence maintained by its opponents, who were unable to criticize it, bore out that view.

54. For its part, the Byelorussian delegation would vote against the joint draft resolution submitted by the delegations of France and the United States.

55. Mrs. KRIPALANI (India) said that she had followed the debate on the subject of refugees and stateless persons with great interest and attention. The debate had made it clear that the proposed High Commissioner's Office would have the functions, first, of giving material and legal assistance to the remaining refugees under the care of IRO; and secondly, of giving legal protection to all refugees in the categories defined in the Constitution of IRO. The speeches of several representatives, and in particular the United States representative's reply to the representative of Pakistan, had made it abundantly

clear that the new international organization would not be in a position to undertake any greater responsibility. If that conclusion was correct, it was difficult to understand the reasons for setting up a High Commissioner's Office at that stage.

56. The Secretary-General's report (A/C.3/527) indicated, in paragraph 41, that by 30 June 1950, 149,400 refugees would still be eligible for aid in accordance with the IRO Constitution. Of that number, about 20,000 would require institutional care for a long period. Mrs. Roosevelt had said in her reply to the representative of Pakistan at the 260th meeting that IRO had allocated 10 million dollars for those 20,000 refugees up to June 1950 and a further 12 million dollars for the period thereafter. The United Nations would therefore no longer be responsible for their care. A total of 129,400 persons would thus remain. The Secretary-General had also indicated that the life of IRO would probably be prolonged for another nine months, until March 1951. During those nine months it might be hoped that IRO would succeed in settling the majority of the refugees still under its care and that the number of refugees for which the United Nations would then be responsible would be quite insignificant.

57. Hence it would be logical to extend the functions of IRO to enable it to complete the task for which it had been created instead of transferring its responsibilities to a new organization. IRO had been created at a time of emergency to meet a particular need. It had fulfilled its obligation with efficiency. The emergency period being over, it seemed hardly necessary to create a new international body, which, it was to be feared, would in all probability become a permanent, or at least, a semi-permanent organization.

58. The basic duty of the organization would be the legal protection of stateless persons. Mrs. Kripalani wished to recall in that connexion that at its ninth session the Economic and Social Council had set up an *Ad Hoc* Committee to draft a convention for the protection of stateless persons. Under the convention, the signatory States would be bound to protect persons who had taken refuge in their territory. Furthermore, the Secretariat of the United Nations was responsible for supervising the implementation of any convention of that kind. That solution appeared satisfactory and, moreover, would not in any way prejudice the interests of the refugees, as it would be understood that IRO would remain in operation until the proposed convention was concluded.

59. The Indian delegation was grateful to the Brazilian representative for having raised the important question of the financial implications of the proposal under consideration, and fully agreed with his remarks. Merely to establish the administrative machinery necessary to a proper functioning of the High Commissioner's Office would require 750,000 dollars, according to the Secretary-General's estimate. Poor countries, such as India, realized that that was a considerable sum. It would be difficult for India to contribute to a budget to be used only for the legal protection of certain refugees when there were millions of refugees in dire need on its own territory.

60. It was true that those refugees were not stateless: the State ensured their protection. But statelessness was often a lesser hardship than lack of food, clothing, shelter and work. In order to

deal with the tremendous problem before it, the Indian Government had had to create a central ministry for refugees as well as seven refugee ministries in the provinces or states. At the time of partition, the Government had had to provide special camps sheltering as many as 100,000 people, real townships where hospitals, schools, work centres etc. had had to be organized. The first phase of the work having been completed, the Government had to begin the still more difficult task of resettling more than 7 million refugees. To that end it had begun construction of six townships and thousands of houses all over the country. In addition, it was making loans to the refugees to help them to learn or practice a trade. All that was a very heavy burden on national resources.

61. The Indian representative made a moving reference to the innumerable refugees on the roads in all the towns of her country. She was particularly qualified to do so because she had devoted her whole time to them for three years, living and working among them in order to organize the largest non-governmental organization in India. She was afraid that the adoption of a proposal such as that before the Committee might make an unfortunate impression among those homeless people.

62. The Indian Government did not want to shirk any of its international responsibilities, and it wished to take part in any humanitarian work undertaken by the United Nations. In spite of its own difficulties, it would have voted for the establishment of a High Commissioner's Office if it had been convinced that the need for it was imperative. It did not think, however—and the discussion had confirmed that opinion—that there was any great need to set up an elaborate international organization whose sole responsibility would be to give refugees legal protection. At a time when its own refugees were dying of starvation, it would be obliged to vote against all the resolutions submitted, and hoped that the stand it had taken would not be misinterpreted.

63. Mr. LAUGIER (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Social Affairs) clarified the budgetary aspect of the question. The Secretary-General's report (A/C.3/527) had given details only with regard to the administrative expenditure entailed by the creation of a High Commissioner's Office. The expenditure required for material assistance to refugees was quite another question, to which no satisfactory reply could be given before the General Assembly's decisions on certain fundamental points were known. It was essential first of all to know whether the Assembly intended to make the new organ responsible for supplying such material assistance. If that were so, it would have to be made clear whether the High Commissioner would distribute the aid directly or whether relief would be distributed through Governments. Furthermore, it was necessary to know whether the funds for such assistance were to be provided by voluntary contributions or taken from the regular budget of the United Nations. Finally, there would have to be agreement on a definition of refugees qualified to receive the assistance in question so that an approximate estimate of their number could be made. Unless those details were known, it would be useless to attempt to make any budget estimate. In so far as the General Assembly defined the scope of the High Com-

missioner's work, the relevant services of the Secretariat would be able to give a detailed opinion on the consequences of such a decision.

64. Replying to a question from the Lebanese representative, Mr. Laugier said that the structure of the High Commissioner's Office, as contemplated in the joint French and United States draft resolution, (A/C.3/L.29), was not such as to entail expenditure above that foreseen in the Secretary-General's report. In the event of the General Assembly adopting the French delegation's proposal in item 4, sub-paragraph (e) of the annex to the joint draft resolution, the High Commissioner would be called upon to distribute among private and, as appropriate, official agencies which he deemed best qualified to administer such assistance, any funds, public or private, which he might receive for that purpose. Such operations would not imply the creation of large services which would strain the budget of the new organization. On the whole, there was no reason to foresee any expenditure in addition to that indicated by the Secretary-General in his report. It might even be that actual expenditure would be somewhat less.

65. Mr. CONTOUMAS (Greece) found some difficulty in understanding the extent of the differences between the French and the United States proposals. Some of the distinctions it was proposed to make might be justified if material assistance to the refugees was being contemplated. But both the French and the United States delegations had agreed to limit the High Commissioner's competence to the legal protection of refugees. It was therefore difficult to see why such protection should be restricted to certain categories of refugees.

66. In reply to the Greek representative, Mr. ROCHEFORT (France) observed that the expression "legal protection" did not appear in the operative part of the joint draft resolution. The need to ensure such protection was, moreover, only one of the aspects of the refugee problem.

67. In 1933, there had been an international convention for the protection of stateless persons, under which persons deprived of nationality enjoyed the most extensive rights and the most formal guarantees. There had, however, been only eight signatories of that convention. Some of the signatory States had adhered to it with such considerable reservations that the convention had been practically nullified. Every effort should be made to prevent the recurrence of such a situation. The High Commissioner should be the bearer of the United Nations message to the various Governments; he should be the guardian of international morality in the matter.

68. The French delegation believed that anyone who had been deprived of his nationality and who did not intend to request nationality from another State had the right to international protection. France desired the adoption of a broader definition not in order to make the Governments' task easier, but in the interest of stateless persons. It was not demanding any privilege when it proposed to set up international supervision.

69. There was no question of approving a cancellation of the definition adopted by IRO. That organization had a provisional character. It had been created in 1946 to meet the demands of the moment. The definition of the term refugees in its Constitution also corresponded to the cir-

cumstances of the moment when the organization was set up. The definition of the term refugees in its Constitution also corresponded to the circumstances of the moment when the organization was set up. The definition would cease to be valid at the same time as the IRO Constitution, that is, at the moment when that body's competence ended. Even if the General Assembly decided to adopt the same definition for the High

Commissioner's use, it would be a text independent of that incorporated in the IRO Constitution, which would automatically have ceased to be part of positive law. It would, however, be only logical to take advantage of the opportunity to adopt a fairer definition and one better adapted to the permanent realities of the problem of statelessness.

The meeting rose at 12.55 a.m.

TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Tuesday, 15 November 1949, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Carlos E. STOLK (Venezuela).

Refugees and stateless persons (A/971 and A/C.3/527) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN called attention to the amendments submitted by Lebanon (A/C.3/L.30), Australia (A/C.3/L.31), the United Kingdom (A/C.3/L.32) and Israel (A/C.3/L.33), to the joint French and United States draft resolution (A/C.3/L.29).

2. Mr. JOCKEL (Australia) suggested that the French-sponsored paragraph 4 (e) of the annex to the joint draft resolution should be made a separate paragraph 5, beginning with the words "The High Commissioner should distribute . . ."

3. If that suggestion were adopted, the text he had suggested as a further sub-paragraph (263rd meeting, paragraph 33) would become paragraph 6, beginning with the words "The High Commissioner should engage in . . ."

4. Mr. ROCHEFORT (France) agreed to the Australian representative's suggestion.

5. Mr. BOKHARI (Pakistan) said that the debate so far could be divided into two clearly distinct parts. The first had taken a very long time and had mainly consisted of charges and replies regarding the conduct of IRO and even of its constituent members. For his part, he had nothing to say on that subject because he did not have all the necessary information and also because his Government had not been a member of the organization. From that part of the debate, however, he had gathered the unfortunate impression that some delegations entertained serious doubts as to the purely humanitarian aspect of the problem of refugees and also that politics had perhaps made an unwelcome intrusion into the question. Furthermore, he deplored a situation in which refugees might find themselves mere pawns on the international chess-board. Such considerations could not fail to influence the approach of some delegations to the problem under discussion.

6. The second part of the debate had finally found its concrete expression in the joint French and United States draft resolution before the Committee. Not unnaturally that part of the debate had been taken up mainly by the statements of the French and the United States representatives. No vigorous support had been expressed for the joint proposal which seemed to have met with lukewarm acquiescence only because of the humanitarian considerations which it involved. The only firm stands taken had been those of the Indian delegation, which had opposed the draft

resolution, and the Mexican and Brazilian delegations, which had expressed grave misgivings about its ultimate implications. Although many had asked very pertinent and relevant questions, no definite answer had been received and the situation was extremely confused. Indeed, never before had the Committee been faced with a proposal which was so vague both in its text and in its implications.

7. It had been asked during the debate whether the future definition of refugees would include people whose plight was much worse than that of the refugees defined in the IRO Constitution. The answer had been both "yes" and "no". It had been said that the High Commissioner would first be concerned with the refugees covered by the IRO Constitution, but that other categories might be added at some later stage. What the other categories were, or when and how they might so be added had never been made clear. Statements as to whether IRO had completed its task had also been contradictory in the extreme. Nor had it ever been clearly stated whether IRO could continue; apparently it could, although it required a higher international status than that conferred by a membership of only eighteen States. It had also been asked whether the High Commissioner would be concerned with legal protection only or whether he might also provide some form of material assistance to refugees. Again the answer had been both "yes" and "no". He would at first provide only legal protection, but that would not exclude material assistance in the future. As to the financial implications of the proposal, the Secretariat itself had been unable to provide estimates for the whole scheme. The general impression was one of utter confusion.

8. The position, as he saw it, was that the United Nations had received a memorandum from (A/C.3/528) which made it clear that IRO proposed to bring its operations to an end on 30 June 1950. The same paragraph of the memorandum, however, also stated that the problem facing the organization "may never be completely resolved". Indeed, it was stated that about 292,000 refugees would still be in need of assistance after IRO had ceased operation and that, in addition, there would be a very large number of refugees requiring legal protection. Clearly, the proposal under discussion would saddle the United Nations with all the unfinished tasks of IRO because the organization had apparently come to the conclusion that it was time its work was taken over by another body. Yet, although paragraph 8