

TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Tuesday, 22 November 1949, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. KYROU (Greece).

Referral of certain questions to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The CHAIRMAN proposed to refer the following documents to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for examination and to request it to report thereon to the Fifth Committee: a letter from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning the draft resolution adopted by the Fourth Committee concerning the publication of information from Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/C.5/358); a letter from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning the decision taken by the Third Committee on the subject of refugees and stateless persons (A/C.5/359); a note by the Secretary-General on the same question (A/C.5/357); a report by the Secretary-General on the budget estimates for the United Nations Commission for Indonesia for the financial year 1950 (A/C.5/356); supplementary budget estimates for the financial year 1949 (A/C.5/353); a document relating to the establishment of an Administrative Tribunal and consequent financial commitments (A/C.5/355).

It was so agreed.

Budget estimates for the financial year 1950 (first reading continued)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON SALARY, ALLOWANCE AND LEAVE SYSTEMS

2. The CHAIRMAN invited Mr. Flemming, Chairman of the Committee of Experts on Salary, Allowance and Leave Systems, to take a seat at the Committee table.

3. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) recalled the circumstances in which the report of the Committee of Experts had been drafted. During the third session, the Advisory Committee had noted that the existing salary system was the subject of much criticism and had therefore proposed that a committee of three experts should make a general study of the salary allowance and leave systems.¹ That proposal had met the Secretary-General's wishes as he, too, had been quite aware of the criticisms, often justified, of the existing system. In particular, the Secretary-General had taken note of the comments made by the representative of Belgium who was fully informed on the working of the Secretariat by virtue of his functions as Chairman of the Appeals Board.²

4. Three experts had therefore been selected by the Secretary-General. Even before their arrival at Lake Success they had received a large number of documents which had enabled them to become familiar with the problems which they were about to consider. The Committee of Experts had then entered into consultation with the Secretariat, the Staff Committee and the secretariats of the

specialized agencies. It had drawn certain conclusions from its study of the question; those conclusions had been submitted to the United Nations Secretariat, to the secretariats of the specialized agencies and to the Staff Committee. The Committee of Experts had then held another meeting and had completed its report which had been published on 31 October 1949.

5. It was doubtless difficult to approve all the proposals submitted in the report. The Secretary-General himself did not agree with certain of the suggestions, although he approved of the general outline of the report.

6. The three main points of the report were the simplified system of classification, the social security provisions which were recommended, and the economies which would be made possible by the adoption of the new plan.

7. The Secretary-General hoped that in so far as a decision by the General Assembly was necessary it would be taken at that session. It should be stressed in that respect that both the specialized agencies and the United Nations Secretariat were passing through a formative period. The United Nations Secretariat had tried to ensure a certain uniformity between the secretariats of the different specialized agencies. It would be more difficult to increase that uniformity if the General Assembly's decision were postponed to the following session. Mr. Price recalled that the Secretary-General had very heavy responsibilities among which that of enabling staff members from fifty-nine different countries to work in harmony was a very complex one. The Secretary-General therefore asked the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly to assist him in that task.

8. Mr. FLEMMING (Chairman of the Committee of Experts on Salary, Allowance and Leave Systems) stated that, in making the study which had been requested, the Committee of Experts had been fully aware of the importance of the work accomplished by the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariats of the specialized agencies. The Committee's work had been considerably facilitated by its own secretariat and especially by the Secretary of the Fifth Committee.

9. Mr. Flemming wished to speak about certain characteristics of the Committee of Experts' report which were not reflected in the draft resolution submitted by the Secretary-General.

10. The Committee's proposals with regard to a new system for the classification of posts were contained in paragraph 45 of its report (A/C.5/331) for the internationally recruited staff, and in paragraphs 60 and 61 for the locally recruited staff. The Committee had ascertained the opinion of many staff members on the existing system. No one had felt that it was satisfactory. Furthermore, that viewpoint had been shared in the past by the members of the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee. In view of that fact, the Committee had thought that rather than retain the existing system with certain modifications of

¹ See *Official Records of the third session of the General Assembly*, Supplement No. 7 A, paragraph 24.

² *Ibid.*, Part I, Fifth Committee, 159th meeting.

its provisions, an entirely new system should be considered.

11. The new system provided for a regrouping of posts and a reduction in the number of grades. The salary scale for each grade would enable the staff to count on regular salary increases without waiting for a vacancy to occur in a higher post or for their own posts to be reclassified.

12. Lack of flexibility had made it difficult to consider the directors of the different services as truly responsible; under the new system their responsibilities were clearly defined, the measures affecting the staff were simplified, they would require less time and a smaller number of staff members.

13. The comments submitted by the United Nations Secretariat, the secretariats of the specialized agencies and the Staff Committee showed that the principles stated in the report met with general approval. The new system should be implemented in such a way that no one received a salary lower than that received at present plus the cost of living allowance.

14. There had been some scepticism about the way in which the new plan would be applied. No matter what plan was adopted, it would always be possible to be sceptical about its application. Mr. Flemming emphasized that, as a result of the close contacts which he had established with the responsible members of the Secretariat, he had come to the conclusion that the new plan would be applied with complete justice and in all equity. It was essential that the plan should be put into effect as soon as possible for the staff should not be left in a position of doubt over a long period.

15. With regard to the children's allowances and education grants, he pointed out that the Committee of Experts' report did not propose any major modifications. Its recommendations were intended to ensure better administration in that field.

16. Turning to the question of the expatriation allowance, Mr. Flemming emphasized that the Committee had recognized the disadvantages for an official of a prolonged stay outside his own country. His home contacts would gradually fall away and sometimes disappear completely. It was often difficult to renew them quickly. For those reasons the Committee had proposed the establishment of a repatriation grant which would enable officials returning home to meet the often considerable expenses arising at that time.

17. He pointed out that the question of salary ceilings was dealt with from paragraph 33 of the report onwards. The Committee of Experts had recommended that the salary ceiling should be raised in view of the heavy responsibilities of high-level officials in the Secretariat. It had taken note of the fact that under prevailing conditions financial considerations might constitute a deterrent to the recruitment of first-class personnel. It had therefore made that recommendation, which would also allow the staff as a whole a better opportunity to make a career in the Secretariat.

18. In proposing that home leave should be granted at three-year intervals, the Committee had had in view the consequential saving and had

understood that the Secretary-General might very well grant special leave if he thought it necessary.

19. In drawing up its report the Committee of Experts had taken note of the desirability for the Secretariat to be in a position to achieve the objectives of the United Nations. The report laid down healthy administrative principles and its adoption would enable the members of a first class international staff to make a career in the Secretariat.

20. The CHAIRMAN opened the general discussion, and pointed out that it should refer to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/331/Add.1) rather than to the report of the Committee of Experts (A/C.5/331).

21. Mr. LEBEAU (Belgium) said that before the Fifth Committee began discussion on a matter which he considered to be of the highest importance, it should settle two preliminary questions.

22. The first related to the exact nature of the decisions it was called upon to take. What were the points on which it should decide in the view of the Secretary-General and within the framework of its terms of reference?

23. Secondly, was the Committee able, at the current stage of the General Assembly, to take a decision on the important matter before it, with full knowledge of all relevant facts?

24. The report of the Committee of Experts was before it, and it was a lucid report. It very reasonably included dozens and even hundreds of questions on which it put forward a series of recommendations. The report of the Secretary-General, however, was not clear, particularly in regard to the first eight paragraphs and the draft resolutions annexed to the report. In the draft resolutions, for example, there appeared to be fundamental contradictions. The Secretary-General seemed to assume that the Fifth Committee would have examined the recommendations of the Committee of Experts as a whole, while the draft resolution related only to subsidiary points of minor interest. In the view of the Belgian representative, that basic discrepancy should be resolved. He considered that the General Assembly was the proper authority to fix the salary scale, allowances, conditions of work, leave etc.

25. The draft resolution submitted by the Secretary-General should, therefore, state that the General Assembly, having examined the report of the Secretary-General, decided that the salary scale for members of the United Nations Secretariat should be as follows: . . . and it should then detail the figures given in the report of the Committee of Experts or any other figures adopted by the Fifth Committee. In another paragraph of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would provide that officials of the United Nations should receive certain allowances and should enjoy certain privileges regarding leave. Finally, the General Assembly would adopt a new text of the staff regulations codifying those principles.

26. The Committee could not accept the draft resolution as submitted by the Secretary-General.

27. The procedure that had been followed during the first part of the first session of the General Assembly had differed because of the urgency of

the matter, and the Secretary-General had been given general provisional powers. The General Assembly was now seized with a document which was essential for the establishment of definitive staff regulations; it was for the General Assembly to fix the basic principles of those regulations through resolutions.

28. Mr. Lebeau recalled the precedents established by other international organizations, such as the League of Nations and the International Labour Office, in which the salary scale and allowances granted staff had been fixed by the Assembly and the International Labour Conference, respectively. It was only a question of administrative logic, which should be adhered to.

29. With regard to the second question, which was immediately before the Committee, Mr. Lebeau questioned whether the Committee had sufficient time at its disposal to decide in detail on all the recommendations made by the Committee of Experts. In any case, one step in the procedure had not yet been taken, which was the prior consideration of the report of the Committee of Experts by the Advisory Committee. Before any discussion took place on the substance, therefore, the Committee should determine what were the decisions which it should take and whether or not it had sufficient time to take them, assuming that it was provided with a report from the Advisory Committee.

30. The representative of Belgium wished to make it clear that he had no intention of hindering the discussion; he considered that the report of the Committee of Experts contained excellent recommendations. It was a basic document which had been prepared by experts after months of study and the Fifth Committee could obviously not make a thorough study of it in a few days.

31. The representative of Belgium would refrain from making any definite proposal as to procedure at that stage. It seemed to him quite possible that even if the Committee decided to limit itself to settling certain preliminary questions and not to take any substantive decision at that session, the Advisory Committee and the Secretary-General might nevertheless wish to ascertain the first reactions of delegations to the solutions recommended in the report of the Committee of Experts.

32. Sir William MATTHEWS (United Kingdom) reminded the meeting that his delegation had always realized that after a preliminary trial of the system of salaries and allowances, it might become necessary to review the system completely in the light of the experience acquired. He was therefore pleased at the initiative taken by the Advisory Committee in proposing that a Committee of Experts be appointed to revise the whole system. The United Kingdom representative thanked the members of that Committee and all those associated with its complex and difficult task of drawing up a well thought-out and balanced report.

33. The United Kingdom delegation noted with satisfaction that the Committee proposed to simplify the system of classification. Such a proposal would result in more flexibility in the functioning of the Secretariat and would do away with most of the objections called forth by the application of the existing system of nineteen grades, the particular drawback of which was that

it threw an excessive and disproportionate burden on the administrative staff of the Bureau of Personnel. The simplified system of classification would attract more candidates, by providing better opportunities of reaching the top of one of the new categories, whereas in the existing system members of the Secretariat were narrowly restricted to one of numerous grades.

34. Sir William reserved the right to return to the details of the plan later; he was pleased that the recommendations of the Committee of Experts would tend to give Secretariat staff a greater feeling of security. The Committee of Experts also expressed the hope that every possible endeavour would be made to apply the new plan in a spirit of absolute justice. Moreover, the application of the new plan would enable administrative savings to be made, which were both desirable and necessary.

35. The United Kingdom delegation noted the fact that excluding the changes contemplated in the system of home leave, there would result on application of the scheme savings of 300,000 dollars in 1950, 800,000 dollars in 1953 and 1,250,000 dollars in 1956 (A/C.5/331/Add.1, paragraph 5).

36. The United Kingdom representative thought that the basic recommendations of the Committee of Experts could be implemented in the near future, the less important recommendations being referred to the Advisory Committee for consideration in 1950. It would be easy to amend the draft resolution submitted by the Secretary-General for that purpose.

37. It should also be taken into consideration that, if the salary ceiling was raised by the Fifth Committee, there would be no reason why the Committee should not also decide to offset the costs by modifications in the conditions now existing for the granting of home leave.

38. The implementation of the recommendations of the Committee of Experts, if approved by the General Assembly, would have repercussions on the salary and allowance scale of the specialized agencies. Since most of those agencies had their headquarters outside the United States of America, in countries where the cost of living was lower, the United Kingdom delegation hoped that they would show great caution in dealing with the recommendations of the Committee of Experts relative to the United Nations staff.

39. In conclusion, the United Kingdom representative stated that, on the whole, the general principles laid down by the Committee of Experts were acceptable to his delegation. The Committee would at a later stage deal with the specific problem of the proposed new salary ceiling and the present practice in respect of home leave. Meanwhile he would remind members of the Committee that in striving after perfection in details, one should not lose sight of the general advantages for both staff and administration which would result from the implementation of the new plan at a not-too-distant date.

40. Mr. TARN (Poland) pointed out that the Secretary-General in his report was not asking the Committee to decide on the report of the Committee of Experts, but on the draft resolution which he had submitted. That draft resolution contained some provisions from the report of

the Committee of Experts. As for its other provisions, the Secretary-General had transmitted them to the members of the Fifth Committee "for their information" (A/C.5/331/Add.1, paragraph 1). The Secretary-General was undoubtedly the responsible head of the Secretariat, but the Polish representative could not agree to those provisions which concerned staff being altered during the current session.

41. Mr. Tarn regretted, along with the Staff Committee (A/C.5/331/Add.1, appendix II, paragraph 29), that the salaries of senior officials should be raised at the expense of the lower grades. If the salaries of those high-ranking officials were considered inadequate, it would have been better to submit the problem to the Fifth Committee in a frank manner and ask for the necessary supplementary appropriations. The Advisory Committee might usefully give its opinion on that problem.

42. When the Committee of Experts stated that the salaries of the lower grades were from 3 to 10 per cent higher than local salaries, it did not appear to be very conversant with the living conditions in the New York area. Nor did it take into account the fact that a secretary working in the Organization was required to know both French and English, to be more than usually well-informed and to have an international outlook. Moreover, if one were to take as example the French shorthand-typists, it would be found that most of them had been recruited in France, that they were in New York on their own with no assistance of their families, and that many of them had, on the contrary, to help their families at home. Under those circumstances, salaries that were from 3 to 10 per cent higher than local salaries could not be considered excessive.

43. Mr. Tarn drew attention to the fact that any member of the Secretariat could be called upon to serve in one of the United Nations missions. He recalled that one official had not wished to go on mission without his wife, whose expenses he himself was ready to pay. The Secretary-General, considering conditions unsuitable for women in the country where the mission was going, had required him to go alone. The official had then refused to go and had been dismissed. Such incidents showed that working conditions of the Secretariat could not be compared with those of employees in the New York area.

44. As regards the repatriation allowance, the Polish representative pointed out that, according to the report of the Committee of Experts, a staff member would be entitled to it only after two years of service with United Nations. But there were persons who would be very glad to gain an experience of the United Nations Secretariat by working there for two or three years; they would then go back to their countries having gained much useful knowledge. Such persons might not be entitled to a repatriation allowance.

45. Officials who had spent twenty or thirty years in the service of United Nations would doubtless benefit from that allowance, but such officials, returning to their own countries, would be entitled to a pension. Their repatriation allowance would thus be in addition to that pension. It would, allowance after a period of ten years or so spent in the Secretariat.

46. For those reasons, the Polish representative would oppose the institution of a repatriation allowance to replace the expatriation allowance. He would also oppose the principle of home leave every three years.

47. Mr. Tarn thought that the Committee could not, at the time of speaking, accept the plan suggested by the Committee of Experts as a whole. He formally proposed that the Advisory Committee should study the Secretary-General's draft resolution and report on it to the Fifth Committee at the next session.

48. Mr. Tarn regretted that it had been thought fitting to submit to the Committee in document A/C.5/331/Add.2 the individual views of certain members of the Staff Committee. While his delegation agreed that the Fifth Committee should be informed of the views of the staff as a whole, as it had been in document A/C.5/331/Add.1, appendix II, it did not believe that the opinions of individual members of the Secretariat were a proper concern of the Committee.

49. Mr. FRENCH (United States of America) felt that the Belgian representative had raised very important procedural questions. He agreed with him that certain paragraphs of the draft resolution submitted by the Secretary-General were ambiguous. He also agreed that it would be advisable to decide exactly what were the recommendations which the Secretary-General could apply on his own authority, and which questions should be referred to the General Assembly for a decision. The Committee should also decide which proposals to submit to the Advisory Committee.

50. He could not, however, agree with the Belgian representative's suggestion that the study of the whole question should be postponed to a later session of the General Assembly, nor could he support him in the matter of the number and nature of the recommendations to be covered by General Assembly resolutions.

51. He thanked the eminent members of the Committee of Experts who had devoted several months to a thorough study of the question which had been submitted to the Fifth Committee and who had drafted a clear and constructive report. The United States delegation generally approved the Committee's recommendations, and agreed with the Secretary-General that it had drawn up a well-conceived and balanced plan.

52. He recognized that it would be difficult for the Committee to reach a decision on a report that it had so recently received, but he entirely agreed with the Secretary-General that the General Assembly should reach a decision on the report during the current session.

53. The recommendations made in the report came under two categories: the most complicated ones referred to the organization and classification of the Secretariat. It was clear that the Secretary-General was fully competent to take decisions on those recommendations. The Committee was not in a position to judge whether the classification plan was a good one as that was a purely administrative question which the Secretary-General should

54. In Mr. French's opinion, the Secretary-General should be responsible for the application

of the plan, and the Fifth Committee should examine the results of such application. The current system had not been set up as the result of a General Assembly resolution, and the Assembly should not run the risk of making the structure of the Secretariat more rigid and inflexible by formally adopting the plan recommended. He suggested, therefore, that the Fifth Committee should not go as far as was suggested in the draft resolution submitted by the Secretary-General, and should restrict itself to taking note of the fact that the Secretary-General accepted certain parts of the report and had expressed his intention of putting them into effect as rapidly as possible.

55. It was plain that all members of the Committee should have an opportunity of expressing their opinion as to the advantages and disadvantages of the recommendations regarding reclassification. Their observations could only help the Secretary-General in applying the recommendations of the Committee of Experts.

56. If the Committee were to accept that procedure, and he was sure that it would because of its confidence in the Secretary-General, other recommendations which could not be applied without the formal approval of the General Assembly, or which had financial implications, could then be studied. In this category were recommendations regarding the salaries of Assistant Secretaries-General and top-ranking directors, approval of a more generous rule regarding family allowances, replacement of the expatriation allowance by a repatriation grant, and the increase from two to three years in the period between two home leaves, as well as the abolition of the additional ten days of leave.

57. The United States representative felt that those recommendations should be immediately referred to the Advisory Committee. The Fifth Committee could then, with full knowledge of the facts, take decisions on the first recommendation mentioned.

58. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) fully shared the Belgian representative's opinion. It was for the General Assembly to lay down the general principles of administration which the Secretary-General should then apply.

59. The report of the Committee of Experts had been drawn up at the express wish of the General Assembly and on the Advisory Committee's recommendations. The Advisory Committee, which had taken the initiative of proposing that such a study should be made, should at least have an opportunity to comment on the report before the Fifth Committee reached a decision.

60. The Secretary-General felt that the adoption of the plan formulated in the Committee of Experts' report would result in considerable improvement in the administration of the Secretariat itself and would also be of substantial benefit to the staff. The Secretary-General had no doubt thoroughly considered the provisions of that new plan, but most of the delegations had not had the time between 31 October and 20 November 1949 to study so carefully the measures suggested.

61. The Fifth Committee should judge how the plan could achieve its aim. The main objectives of the plan were to improve administrative methods and, in so far as possible, to effect

economies. A comparison between the current system and that of the proposed plan revealed some curious features, however.

62. It appeared from document A/C.5/331/Add.1 that the adoption of the new plan would involve economies amounting to 280,000 dollars in 1950. Those economies would result chiefly from the replacement of the expatriation allowance by a repatriation grant, the budget estimates for that purpose would amount to no more than 32,000 dollars, as opposed to 630,000 dollars. In his opinion, that calculation was inaccurate. It would not be a reduction in the budget, but on the contrary an increase of between 250,000 and 300,000 dollars which the Organization would have to face. In fact, during 1950 the obligations contracted by the United Nations towards the staff would far exceed the amount of the contemplated savings as given in document A/C.5/331/Add.1.

63. The Secretary-General expected that economies for the year 1953 would total 1,190,000 dollars, following cuts effected on expatriation allowance, home leave and rental allowance. As the representative of Brazil had just pointed out, the proposed cuts on expatriation allowance were purely illusory. The proposed economies on rental allowance were due to the fact that that allowance had simply been abolished. As for the economies envisaged with regard to home leave, that would be achieved by granting home leave every three years whereas at the present time it was given every two years.

64. It was essential, furthermore, that the Committee should receive immediate information from the Secretary-General on the question of acquired rights which were nowhere mentioned in the Secretary-General's report. He wished to make a formal request on that point.

65. The majority of staff members had signed contracts which stipulated the amounts of the various allowances they would receive as well as the periods of leave to which they were entitled. He wished to know what factors the Secretary-General would taken into account, should those contracts have to be modified.

66. Mr. Machado wished to emphasize that because the delegations had not been supplied with all the necessary documentation, it had been extremely difficult for his own delegation to arrive at an opinion on the merits of the proposed scheme. It suggested, therefore, that the General Assembly should postpone consideration of that scheme until the next session and request the Advisory Committee to study the question in 1950.

67. In any case, the Brazilian delegation did not agree with the view that the proposed scheme should be accepted or rejected *in toto*. For instance, it did not see the connexion which existed between the abolition of the rental allowance at the beginning of 1952, and the proposed plan for the payment of an allowance to staff members who had suffered disabilities resulting directly from the exercise of their duties. In that connexion, the Brazilian delegation considered that since his report did not approve one of the suggestions made by the Committee of Experts, the Secretary-General had indicated that he did not consider that the proposed plan should be accepted or rejected *in toto*.

68. Mr. Machado wished thereupon to make certain preliminary remarks on the most important questions of principle.

69. With regard to the new grading plan for salaries he believed that the real problem did not lie in the merit of the scheme as such but rather in its implementation. The new scheme was acceptable in principle since it seemed simpler than the one at present in force. Nevertheless, the transition from the present system to the new scheme ran the risk of giving rise to a great deal of injustice. The Brazilian delegation thought, therefore, that there should be staff participation in the implementation of the new scheme.

The Brazilian delegation, of course, had complete confidence in the Secretary-General, but it knew that he could not accomplish that task himself, and that the effect of the necessary delegation of powers would be the progressive nullification of his good intentions.

70. Mr. Machado drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 16 of document A/C.5/331 which stated that there were many posts, the duties and responsibilities of which did not lend themselves to any precise abstract measurement for salary purposes but varied considerably according to the experience, qualifications and potentialities of the incumbent. That paragraph seemed to refer to an outmoded belief which had been respected within the Secretariat and which was at the root of the many flaws in the administration at the present time.

71. Indeed, every time that the experience and qualifications of an individual were stressed in comparison with the experience and qualifications of the anonymous incumbent of a post, favouritism and political considerations might only too often prevail. It was natural to consider one's own compatriots to be the most competent and one's own university to be the best. The Brazilian representative hoped that the Committee would express in one way or another its desire to have a truly international Secretariat, and that it would make it clear that the choice of personnel should be based on considerations as objective in nature as possible, and not on subjective reactions.

72. The Committee of Experts had stated that one of the faults in the present system lay in the frequent reclassifications of personnel. In point of fact, individuals and not posts were reclassified.

73. With regard to the raising of the salary ceiling, the Brazilian representative pointed out that an attempt to justify that step had been made on the basis of the increase of the cost of living since 1946 and on the need for recruiting persons of outstanding ability.

74. In point of fact, however, the increase in the cost of living affected all the personnel; furthermore, those who could best meet that increase were precisely those who received higher salaries. The Fifth Committee had indeed based itself on that reasoning when it had decided that the cost of living allowance should be granted to staff members with a salary of less than or amounting to 7,000 dollars, since those holding higher grades were financially capable to meet the increase in the cost of living.

75. With respect to the second argument for raising the salary ceiling, which was to enable the

Secretariat to retain the services of persons of outstanding ability, the Brazilian representative drew the Committee's attention to a circular issued by the Bureau of Personnel showing that up to 30 September 1949, no director or high-grade official not of United States nationality had had to be replaced.

76. Although he accepted the principles of the new classification of personnel, the Brazilian representative could not approve the proposed scale of salaries. He suggested that new scales applicable to all should be drawn up. He also thought such scales should be based on gross salaries, because the General Assembly had adopted a plan of tax equalization which was tantamount to the staff members paying a tax. The Brazilian representative could approve only with certain reservations the new plan for the classification of staff members, unless he received information regarding the norms used as a base for the classification of the various posts. No manual had been prepared by the Secretary-General up to now giving a description of the posts. It was, in fact, difficult to run an organization without knowing exactly what were the requirements of each post and what salary corresponded to the required tasks.

77. The Committee of Experts had related its recommendation concerning subsistence allowances to the salary levels of the proposed classification. According to that proposal, the daily allowance of 12.50 dollars should be paid to staff members receiving a salary equal to or higher than 5,000 dollars; according to the current system only staff members who received a salary equal to or higher than 7,000 dollars benefited from that allowance. The Brazilian delegation also thought that the duties of the staff members justified granting that allowance to the lower grades.

78. With regard to installation allowances, the Brazilian delegation approved the system proposed, on the understanding that the average allowance payable to staff members should be calculated in such a way as to be no less than the total in force at the present time.

79. The Committee of Experts' reasons for recommending that the expatriation allowance should be replaced by a repatriation allowance seemed reasonable. The Brazilian delegation would readily support that change, if it did not imply an increase in the amount payable to senior officials and a decrease in the allowance payable to the lower grades. Staff members should be able to choose between the two systems. The repatriation allowance would, of course, be payable to staff members recruited after the application of the new plan.

80. With regard to the rental allowance, the Brazilian delegation thought that it was difficult to approve a measure which would be put into effect in two years. It felt that the granting of a rental allowance was a temporary measure; while approving the discontinuance of that allowance, the Brazilian delegation felt some concern over the fact that certain staff members, who were at present living in United Nations housing projects were threatened with having their leases discontinued in 1950. Measures should be taken in that respect.

81. The Brazilian delegation approved the proposals of the Committee of Experts with regard

to the system of contracts, their duration and the indemnities payable on separation. It was desirable that the Organization should establish a system enabling staff members to make a career in the Secretariat. He stressed the fact that the review of permanent contracts every five years was unnecessary, and that it constituted a serious source of anxiety for the staff members concerned. If disciplinary action had to be taken against a staff member, it should be taken immediately and not at the time when the staff member's contract was to be reviewed.

82. Mr. Machado recalled that his delegation had always approved the principle of home leave. That step made it possible to maintain the international character of the Secretariat, and should not be considered a favour. The Brazilian delegation approved the Secretary-General's recommendation to continue to grant home leave every two years. It felt, nevertheless, that such leave should be granted only after the staff member concerned had spent two years away from his country and that that measure should not be interpreted in too generous a manner.

83. The Brazilian delegation felt that ten additional days should continue to be granted to a staff member going on home leave. A member of the staff going on home leave should not do so for a very short period, and it should be definitely indicated that staff members should have at least twenty-five working days to spend in their own countries.

84. The Brazilian delegation felt that it was not necessary to continue to grant home leave to staff members working in their own countries.

85. With regard to family allowances, the report of the Committee of Experts had proposed a modification in the conditions governing their entitlement. The Brazilian delegation agreed with those suggestions.

86. The Committee of Experts proposed no change in the education allowances, which were based on a fair principle. Nevertheless, the Brazilian delegation did not think that a staff member should be able to send his child to any country but his own. On the other hand, it thought that the Advisory Committee should obtain information concerning the organization of the international school at the United Nations headquarters.

87. Mr. Machado formally proposed that the Committee should adopt a resolution, which would refer the study of the report of the Committee of Experts to the next session of the General Assembly. In the terms of that resolution, it would invite the Advisory Committee to undertake a detailed analysis of the proposed plan and to make a report to the Committee. It would also ask the Secretary-General to furnish the material which would make this study possible, such as a manual describing the various posts in the Secretariat, for instance.

88. The Secretary-General's plea that the postponement for a year of all decisions on the proposed plan would have serious effects on the morale of the staff members was not convincing. In fact, the adoption of a defective plan would have much more serious results.

89. If the Committee did not adopt the proposal submitted by the Brazilian representative, he would request that the proposed plan should be examined point by point and not as a whole. Finally, if the whole or part of the plan was adopted at the current session, the Brazilian delegation felt that staff members should take part in the future studies, particularly in regard to the reclassification of posts.

The meeting rose at 1. p.m.

TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Tuesday, 22 November 1949, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. KYROU (Greece).

Budget estimates for the financial year 1950 (*first reading continued*)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON SALARY, ALLOWANCE AND LEAVE SYSTEMS (*concluded*)

1. Mr. GANEM (France) warmly congratulated the Committee of Experts on Salary, Allowance and Leave Systems, and especially its Chairman, and stressed that, although some of the conclusions reached by that Committee in its report (A/C.5/331) could not be accepted by the French delegation, most of them were fair and reasonable. The French delegation realized that it was difficult to carry out reforms such as those suggested, and was glad that the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/331/Add.1), and the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services in his statement, had both adopted a firm stand in that connexion.

2. The statement made at the previous meeting by the Chairman of the Committee of Experts that those persons who had appeared before the

Committee had not been in favour of the maintenance of the *status quo* so far as the Secretariat was concerned, was an important one, and the French delegation considered that the new system advocated by the Committee of Experts was a definite improvement. It would enable the staff to become more flexible, would simplify administration, and would thus enable the personnel of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to be reduced considerably.

3. He realized that even if the Fifth Committee approved in principle the main provisions of the experts' plan to reclassify the staff, the administration might meet with great difficulties, and he agreed, therefore, with the Brazilian representative who had suggested that such reclassification should be carried out in 1950 by the Secretary-General in consultation with the staff, and that it should not be done in a hasty manner.

4. The French delegation supported the experts' opinion that the salaries of certain high-ranking members of the staff should be increased, as it was a fact that some important officials who had