

69. Mr. TARN (Poland) suggested that at the second reading of the budget the Advisory Committee should submit a report on the figure it had recommended for the Trusteeship Council's sixth session.

70. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) agreed to submit the report requested.

71. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) asked how many meetings the Trusteeship Council expected to hold during its sixth session.

72. Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories) said that the Council would hold about eighty meetings in addition to the various meetings of the sub-committees. The sixth session of the Council would have to examine annual reports on seven large territories and also the report of the 1949 Visiting Mission to West Africa. The Fourth Committee had recently adopted several resolutions which would increase the workload of the Council. He could not say how many sub-committee meetings would be held.

73. Mr. SHANN (Australia) said he would withdraw his motion to reopen the debate on the Trusteeship Council's sixth session if it were understood that in reconsidering the matter at the second reading of the budget estimates, the Fifth Committee would not thereby be creating a precedent.

74. Mr. TARN (Poland) pointed out that at the second reading of the budget estimates the Fifth Committee had the power to revise any figure on which it had voted at first reading.

SECTION 4, chapter II

The Secretary-General's supplementary estimates (78,880 dollars) for the 1950 Visiting Mission as recommended by the Advisory Committee, were unanimously approved.

SECTION 4, chapter III

The Secretary-General's revised estimate of 12,500 dollars for the 1949 Visiting Mission were unanimously approved.

SECTION 3, chapters I, III and XVI

75. Mr. HSIA (China) moved the adjournment of the debate on section 3 until the following meeting.

76. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) and Mr. ASHA (Syria) seconded the motion.

77. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) and Mr. SHANN (Australia) spoke against the motion.

78. The CHAIRMAN put the motion for adjournment to the vote.

The motion was adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

TWO HUNDRED AND TENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Friday, 28 October 1949, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. KYROU (Greece).

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

PART I, SECTION 3 AND PART IV, SECTION 20 (concluded)

1. The CHAIRMAN opened the debate on chapters I, III and XVI of section 3 of the budget estimates for the financial year 1950, concerning, respectively, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, and additional expenses for Geneva sessions.

2. He proposed following the same procedure as on the previous day for the Trusteeship Council; the Committee would first hear a general statement on the reasons for the Economic and Social Council's decision to hold its eleventh session in Geneva. As the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Economic and Social Council were not, for various reasons, available to make that preliminary statement, he would call on Mr. Owen, Assistant Secretary-General, to explain how the Economic and Social Council had arrived at its decision.

3. Mr. OWEN (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Economic Affairs), after explaining that he would not give the Secretariat's views but simply state facts, said that by a majority of 10 to 6, with 2 abstentions, the Economic and Social Council had decided at its ninth session to return to Geneva for its eleventh session in 1950.

4. The reasons on which that decision was based fell into three categories: political, practical and economic. The political reasons, which had been advanced by the representatives of France, the USSR and Lebanon, among others, sprang from the general idea that European public opinion had a special interest in the important problems of economic collaboration.

5. As to the practical reasons, the representatives of Australia, France, the USSR and Denmark had pointed out that during the summer the work of the Economic and Social Council produced better results in Geneva, where the climate and working conditions were more favourable; moreover, in Geneva representatives did not, as in New York, have to waste two or three hours travelling to and from meetings and could thus hold longer meetings than at Lake Success.

6. Lastly, the Belgian representative had submitted the economic argument that, whilst the holding of sessions in Geneva involved higher

expenses for some delegations, it had also the advantage of enabling other delegations to reduce their expenditure.

7. The minority of Economic and Social Council members, on the other hand, had felt that there were some drawbacks in holding a session at Geneva because a certain number of services would have to be moved; the minority had not been convinced by the political reasons advanced by the majority.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that the question having been clearly outlined, the debate was open; he requested representatives to confine their comments strictly to the financial and budgetary implications of the Economic and Social Council's decision.

9. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) hoped that the confusion of the previous day's debate would not be repeated and stressed the fact that certain preliminary considerations had an important bearing on the problem to be solved.

10. At its 208th meeting, the Fifth Committee had approved the budget for the United Nations office at Geneva; it had done so with the idea that appropriations granted — amounting to 98 per cent of those requested — would enable the Secretariat to service 1470 meetings in Geneva (or four meetings per day) plus four medium-to-large conferences (A/903, page 177). It was known that the four conferences were those to be held by the World Health Organization, the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the Trusteeship Council and the Economic and Social Council.

11. The Secretariat subsequently stated that it would be unable, if it merely had the appropriations as then granted, to service the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council, forgetting that two days before it had obtained a credit of 4,216,900 dollars on the grounds that it had to service four important conferences. Admittedly, the budget made no provision for the sum of 55,860 dollars necessary for the travelling expenses and *per diem* allowances in respect of the forty-seven officials of the substantive departments and twenty-two interpreters (A/C.5/319), but he failed to understand how the Secretary-General could request an additional sum of 37,500 dollars for temporary assistance and other expenses of the Geneva office when the Director of the Geneva office had also been granted the necessary appropriations, since they were included in the budget that had been approved for the Geneva office.

12. He enquired if the particulars given in document A/903 (page 177) were still valid or if that document had been superseded by document A/C.5/319 which requested supplementary appropriations of 93,360 dollars. That supplement would not, in reality, be 93,360 dollars but rather 128,360 dollars since the Committee had voted 35,000 dollars for temporary assistance in the budget of the Geneva office at the 207th meeting.

13. Accordingly, he asked the Chairman to state the issue, when it was put to the vote, in the following form: "The eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council, to be held in Geneva, will involve for the United Nations an additional expenditure of 128,360 dollars". If the Committee refused to authorize that increased appropria-

tion, it would, *ipso facto*, reduce the Geneva budget by 35,000 dollars, that being the sum which was supposed to cover the additional expenses of one of the four large conferences, such as the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council (A/C.5/319).

14. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, if the Committee endorsed the Economic and Social Council's decision to hold its eleventh session in Geneva, it would have to vote on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/1046) to increase the appropriation for section 3, chapter I (55,860 dollars) independently of the increase in the appropriations under section 20 (37,500 dollars); that meant a total addition of 93,360 dollars. The Secretary-General had stated (A/C.5/322) that, if the Economic and Social Council held its eleventh session at Lake Success, the total amount saved would be 123,360 dollars, the difference being due to an additional saving of 30,000 dollars on article (iii), Temporary Assistance, in chapter I of the Geneva budget.

15. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) thought the explanation for the differences in opinion was that the Economic and Social Council's session could not, because of its importance, be placed on the same footing as the four conferences referred to in the initial budget estimates. If the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council were to be held at Lake Success, the saving on temporary assistance in the Geneva budget would indeed be 30,000 dollars.

16. Sir William MATTHEWS (United Kingdom) said he was against holding the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council at Geneva for the same reasons which had prompted him the previous day to oppose the idea of holding the next session of the Trusteeship Council at Geneva. The situation was slightly different, however, for the Trusteeship Council had never met at Geneva, whilst the Economic and Social Council had recently held its ninth session there.

17. Mr. MONTEL (France) recalled that the day before, the representative of Canada had said it was a luxury to hold meetings at Geneva because of the additional expense that such meetings involved for States with "soft" or not very "hard" currency. The French delegation did not think it was a luxury. Nor did it think that purely budgetary considerations should prevent the decentralization of the United Nations work, for such decentralization, as the Belgian representative had said, could only serve the prestige of the United Nations and enhance the value of its work. Moreover, in Europe also there were countries with "soft" currencies for which the sending of representatives to Lake Success was a considerable financial burden. The United Kingdom representative had said that many sessions had been held at Geneva; but those had mostly been meetings of committees and sub-committees of the Economic Commission for Europe, the International Refugee Organization and the World Health Organization whose headquarters were in Geneva. The main organs of the United Nations accounted for only a very small proportion of those meetings.

18. Moreover, it was not for the Fifth Committee to take decisions of principle in the matter.

The decision on the principle had previously been made by the Economic and Social Council itself. The Fifth Committee's function was to say whether, that decision having been taken, the requests for additional appropriations were or were not excessive. Otherwise, if the Fifth Committee could deal with the substances of questions of that kind, it could paralyse the working of all the organs of the United Nations.

19. As a matter of fact, no argument of a political nature had been advanced against the Economic and Social Council's decision, and no argument of a technical nature had been submitted either. On the contrary the work of the organs which had met at Geneva had received much praise. Amongst other examples, he mentioned the remarkable report on technical assistance prepared at Geneva by the Economic and Social Council.

20. The opponents of the Economic and Social Council's decision had submitted only budgetary arguments, and he would like to know what the additional expenditure necessitated by the Economic and Social Council's decision actually was. He wondered whether, should the eleventh session of that Council be held at Lake Success, the Secretariat would not have to face unforeseen expenses owing to part of its staff being on leave or for various other reasons. He would like to know not only the amount of the additional expenditure which would be involved if the session were held at Geneva, but also what additional expenditure would be necessary if it were held at Lake Success.

21. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) replied that, as the Chairman had said, the total figure for additional expenditure, should the session be held at Geneva, would be 93,360 dollars. The 30,000 dollars which would be saved on the Geneva budget should the Economic and Social Council not meet there should also be taken into account (A/C.5/322).

22. As for the additional expenditure that would be involved if the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council were held at Lake Success, he recalled that the original budget estimates had been prepared on the assumption that the session would be held at headquarters. Since then, however, the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction in the appropriations requested (A/934, paragraphs 43 to 46). Quite possibly, therefore, if the eleventh session of the Council were held at headquarters the Secretary-General would find it difficult to service it and might have to apply afresh to the Advisory Committee.

23. Mr. CRISTÓBAL (Philippines) opposed the idea of holding the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council away from headquarters. Some representatives had spoken of the advantages of the Geneva climate during summer, but that was hardly a cogent reason since the meeting rooms at Lake Success were air-conditioned. Nor did he see why the working day should be longer at Geneva than at Lake Success.

24. He was somewhat disturbed at the steady increase in the appropriations requested whilst most States were heavily encumbered financially as a result of the war. First it had been the Trusteeship Council which was going to Geneva; next

the Economic and Social Council; the visiting missions were going abroad. That was a tendency which his delegation did not approve of and accordingly it would vote against the plan to hold the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council at Geneva.

25. Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Economic Affairs had clearly explained the reasons for the Economic and Social Council's decision. His delegation approved the Council's decision for political as well as economic and practical reasons. Public opinion in Europe took a keen interest in important economic problems (agriculture, transport, industry) and of all the continents Europe had suffered most in the war. The additional expenditure which would be caused by holding the Economic and Social Council's eleventh session at Geneva was negligible, and even insignificant if considered in relation to the magnitude of the problems to be dealt with. Moreover, the Economic and Social Council's decision had been by a heavy majority. His delegation would vote in favour of the additional appropriations requested.

26. Mr. WEBSTER (New Zealand) said he did not wish to repeat the arguments he had advanced the day before in connexion with the meeting of the next session of the Trusteeship Council at Geneva. He felt that the additional expenditure involved was excessive. He wondered also whether the Committee had not the day before gone against the solemn decision of principle concerning the headquarters of the United Nations. The number of meetings held at Geneva was amply sufficient to satisfy European public opinion. Decisions of that kind, moreover, were harmful to the interests of small nations. The meetings held at Lake Success were costly as it was; but the expenses involved through meetings being held elsewhere were excessive.

27. Mr. TRANOS (Greece) referred to the two points raised by the representative of France; the first had related to the Fifth Committee's competence to deal with the substance of questions of that kind, and the second concerned the precise figures for the additional expenditure. The Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services had dealt with the second of those two points, but the first was still unanswered.

28. In his opinion the Fifth Committee's function was to calculate as accurately as possible the expenses of the United Nations, but it was not its task to study the substance of problems. He would like the Fifth Committee's competence in the matter to be clearly established.

29. The CHAIRMAN said the Fifth Committee merely ruled on the financial implications of decisions taken by other organs. He appreciated the soundness of the French representative's arguments; he would not call for a decision on the wider question but asked the Committee to answer the following question: Did the Fifth Committee agree to increase the appropriation under section 3, chapter I by 55,865 dollars and that under section 20, chapter I of the budget estimates for 1950 by 37,500 dollars?

30. In reply to the representative of Brazil, the Chairman pointed out that if the question were

answered in the negative a further 30,000 dollars would be saved on the appropriations already approved for the Geneva office.

31. Mr. TARN (Poland) reiterated his view that if there was to be harmonious co-operation between the various organs of the United Nations, the Fifth Committee could not grant supplementary appropriations to one of its organs and refuse them to another. Such an action would be the more discourteous as the Committee had never given previous notice to that effect. It had never taken a substantive decision as to the meeting place of all organs and, in the past, had always approved the additional estimates consequent upon decisions of the kind.

32. Besides, more than one-third of the members of the Economic and Social Council were European countries and to convene the eleventh session of the Council at Geneva would consequently save many delegations time and money.

33. The Economic and Social Council had valid and pertinent reasons, such as could not be reckoned in terms of dollars, for holding a session at Geneva and the funds asked for should therefore be granted.

34. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) referred to the Secretary-General's statement in the foreword to the budget estimates that the estimates had been compiled "on the assumption that all organs will heed the recommendations of the third session of the General Assembly that the number of formal meetings be held to a minimum, and that such meetings be held at the headquarters of each organ." The General Assembly resolution referred to was resolution 210 (III). It would appear that some organs of the United Nations failed to treat the Assembly's resolutions with the proper respect.

35. Mr. NASS (Venezuela) recalled various cases in which the Fifth Committee had taken decisions amending or reversing decisions of other organs; by those decisions the Fifth Committee had created precedents and a tradition. Accordingly he felt that for budgetary or administrative reasons the Committee had the power to take decisions such as would alter substantive decisions of other organs.

36. Mr. TARN (Poland) explained that he had not implied that the Committee had no right to take decisions on administrative or budgetary grounds. He pointed out, however, that nobody had mentioned resolution 210 (III) of the General Assembly when the question of approving credits for the session of the Trusteeship Council at Geneva had arisen. He failed to understand why the Committee should not treat the Economic and Social Council in the same way as the Trusteeship Council.

37. Mr. VOYNA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) offered an impartial opinion, since his delegation was not a member of the Council. He had always advocated economy and methods of increasing output, but he would oppose any economy measures which might reduce the output of United Nations organs.

38. The work of the Economic and Social Council was of considerable importance to the continent of Europe and the Council's decision regarding its eleventh session was based on political and practical considerations.

39. The Fifth Committee should respect a decision taken by one of the chief organs of the United Nations. Any reversal of it would be a matter for regret, since it would be tantamount to discriminating both against the Economic and Social Council and against Europe.

40. He concluded by expressing his surprise at the attitude of the representative of the United Kingdom. From the budgetary point of view, the Council, far from increasing the financial problems of the United Kingdom, would be lessening them by holding its session at Geneva instead of Lake Success.

41. He would therefore vote for the supplementary credits proposed by the Secretary-General.

42. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) drew the Committee's attention to the fact that the representative of the Union of South Africa had spoken at length during the discussion of General Assembly resolution 210 (III) and referred the representative of Poland to the summary record of that discussion.¹

43. Mr. POLLÖCK (Canada) considered that the saving which would be made if the Economic and Social Council held its eleventh session at New York instead of Geneva could be used to finance other and more important enterprises. The Committee was not dealing with a general decision, but with a specific case. Opinions expressed in the Fifth Committee neither could, nor should, be in any way interpreted as a breach of courtesy to one of the chief organs of the United Nations.

44. He agreed with the representative of Belgium that the question of the Fifth Committee's competence had been settled at the third session and asked the members not to raise the point again.

The supplementary budget estimates for sections 3 and 20 of the budget estimates for the financial year 1950 were rejected by 27 votes to 17, with 1 abstention.

45. The CHAIRMAN therefore assumed that the eleventh session of the Economic and Social Council would be held at Lake Success instead of at Geneva. The decision was naturally subject to the approval of the General Assembly and would involve a corresponding reduction of 30,000 dollars in the budget estimates for the Geneva office.

46. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) recalled that the United Nations had decided to buy the former League of Nations buildings at Geneva. At every session the Fifth Committee became a very battlefield on the question of which organs should hold a session at Geneva. The Brazilian delegation was opposed to such extemporary decisions and therefore suggested that the Secretary-General should work out a plan for the best possible use of the Geneva buildings and submit a report on the matter at the following session of the General Assembly.

47. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) said that the report should be drawn up, but that members of the Fifth Committee could not expect it to have any practical effects, since the Secretary-General had no au-

¹ See *Official Records of the third session of the general Assembly, Part I, Fifth Committee, 105th meeting.*

thority to decide where the sessions and meetings of the various organs of the United Nations should be held.

48. The CHAIRMAN put article (i), Local Transportation, of chapter I of section 3 to the vote.

Article (i) of chapter I of section 3 was approved.

49. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee to take up chapter III.

50. Mr. PRICE (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services) pointed out, in connexion with chapter III, that the figure of 8,010 dollars, which was the net amount of additional expenditure if the Commission on Human Rights held its 1950 session at Geneva, would include 1,400 dollars for the hire and upkeep of simultaneous interpretation equipment (A/C.5/319). Since the report had been compiled, it had been decided to buy the equipment and the figure of 8,010 dollars should therefore be adjusted to 6,610 dollars.

The supplementary budget estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for the Commission on Human Rights were rejected by 20 votes to 15.

Chapter III of section 3 was approved.

51. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee to take up chapter V, Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press.

The supplementary budget estimates put forward by the Secretary-General under chapter V were approved.

SECTION 3(b)

Chapter III

The Secretary-General's supplementary budget estimates under chapter III, Economic Commission for Latin America, were approved.

PART V

SECTION 21 (continued)

52. Mr. WITHERSPOON (Liberia) reminded the Committee, with regard to the procedural question raised in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/1047) on the supplementary estimates for the proposed Liberian Information Centre, that recommendation 6 annexed to resolution 13 (I) adopted by the General Assembly on 13 February 1946 advised the Department of Public Information to consider the establishment of branch offices at the earliest practicable date. That recommendation in no way precluded the Fifth Committee from recommending to the Secretary-General the establishment of information centres.

53. The purpose of resolution 13 (I) was to keep peoples in all parts of the world informed about the work of the United Nations. Such was the basis on which the Liberian delegation had submitted its draft resolution (A/C.5/L.19).

54. The Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Public Information had stated at the 204th meeting that he would like to open an Information Centre in Liberia, since that country was a Member of the United Nations; it was also the only sovereign State in West Africa. The Secretary-General had submitted his report on the financial implications of such a step (A/C.5/321). That report had been submitted to the Advisory Committee, which should have proceeded

to examine it, but not to pass judgment on the procedure which the Liberian delegation had followed in submitting its draft resolution; for that resolution in no way infringed upon the authority of the Secretary-General.

55. In its report the Advisory Committee proposed that the examination of that question should be deferred until the fifth session of the General Assembly. The Liberian delegation regarded such a proposal as inexpedient; the Governments administering the territories of West Africa were those of the United Kingdom, France, Belgium and Liberia. All those countries were Members of the United Nations; he was certain that they all approved of the purpose of the draft resolution which he was submitting. He was also convinced that no small country would oppose that resolution, which was of the greatest concern to all minorities in the world. It was important that information about the work of the United Nations should be disseminated throughout the world.

56. His Government would assist the United Nations in setting up a new information centre in Liberia. He suggested the establishment in 1950 of a centre with a limited staff, which would involve only small expenditure, approximately 20,000 dollars per year. If the Committee thought it possible to fulfil the purpose of his draft resolution by other means during the current session, he would be satisfied.

57. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) observed that the Advisory Committee had in the first three years of the existence of the United Nations adopted certain methods and certain principles which had since become traditional, and that it had applied them in the study of the problem under discussion. In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, it was for the Secretary-General to recommend the establishment of a new information centre, for the Secretary-General alone knew all the technical difficulties involved in such a step, and it was he who must undertake the appropriate negotiations with the Government concerned.

58. Recommendation 6 of the Technical Advisory Committee on Information annexed to resolution 13 (I) of the General Assembly was not mandatory on the Secretary-General.

59. In conclusion, Mr. Aghnides stated that the procedure recommended by the Advisory Committee was correct, for it did not prejudice in any way the question of establishing a new information centre. The only problem which arose was under what conditions and on what date establishment should take place. The Advisory Committee was in no way opposed to its establishment.

60. Mr. LEVONTIN (Israel) said that the Advisory Committee, instead of studying in its report (A/1047) the financial implications of the establishment of a new information centre, was requesting the Secretary-General to submit estimates in that respect. The Fifth Committee had, in fact, already made the same request to the Secretary-General who had stated the results of his investigations in document A/C.5/321. The Secretary-General seemed to believe that the centre would be established before the following session of the General Assembly. In document A/C.5/321, he said that the figures submitted for a period of ten months were based on the assumption that "the centre would be opened on 1 March 1950."

¹ See *Official Records of the third session of the General Assembly, Part I, Fifth Committee, 105th meeting.*

61. Mr. Levontin was therefore surprised at the following passage also appearing in document A/C.5/321: "Expenses in connexion with these new centres cannot be absorbed within the amounts approved by the Fifth Committee on the first reading of the budget estimates for section 21 on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as agreed upon by the Secretary-General."

62. That passage justified the Israel delegation's apprehensions with regard to the result of voting on the allocations for the information centres; that vote had been taken in the 204th meeting before any decision had been reached with respect to the new information centre proposed by the Liberian representative. The Israel delegation had at that time advocated an over-all allocation to include the Liberian centre. Furthermore, the Chairman of the Committee had stated that a vote on the first reading of the budget for information centres would not in any way prejudice the Committee's right to take a decision at the current session on the Liberian draft resolution, which indeed seemed to have been favourably received by members of the Committee.

63. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that it was the Secretary-General's responsibility to establish new information centres. In the case under consideration by the Committee, the Secretary-General had not taken any initiative. Nothing, however, prevented a member of the Committee, if he wished to do so, from proposing the establishment of a new centre which would disseminate information in a particular area. The Israel delegation was pleased to note that the question of the establishment of such a centre had not been the subject of any disagreement between the Secretary-General and the Liberian delegation. On the contrary, the Assistant Secretary-General had expressed his agreement; moreover, the Committee would not be in any way infringing upon the Secretary-General's authority.

64. Mr. Levontin had expected the Advisory Committee to investigate the financial implications of the draft resolution since it was the Fifth Committee's responsibility to take a decision on the establishment of such a centre. His delegation considered that there was no reason for a decision of that kind to be deferred until the fifth session of the General Assembly, and it requested the Committee to vote upon the matter at the current session.

65. In conclusion, he submitted the two following amendments to the Liberian draft resolution (A/C.5/L.19): he proposed that the words "that an information centre shall be established in Liberia, West Africa" in the operative part should be replaced by the words "to request the Secretary-General to establish an information centre for the area of West Africa". That amendment was suggested in order to maintain the Secretary-General's authority intact.

66. The second amendment was to replace the words "The Republic of Liberia . . . in which area" in the second paragraph by the words "the area of West Africa is one in which".

67. Mr. TARN (Poland) pointed out that the first amendment submitted by the representative

of Israel was identical with the one he himself had proposed at the 205th meeting.

68. He added that the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/321) had emphasized the fact that "it was mentioned in the Fifth Committee that expenses could be met out of the savings that may result from devaluation in existing Centres." It would seem that the Secretary-General had not considered the representative of Poland's suggestion for establishing a new information centre on the saving that could be effected by cutting down the number of staff in such existing centres as those in London and Paris. He had further pointed out that there was no need to have large information centres in London or Paris, since the United Kingdom and France had a very great number of press and information agencies.

69. He expressed surprise at the size of the Secretary-General's estimate for the establishment of an information centre in Liberia. The Secretary-General was estimating an expenditure of 37,660 dollars, whereas the estimated budget for such centres as Teheran and Buenos Aires amounted to only 11,710 and 11,870 dollars, respectively. Moreover, the Secretary-General's estimates allowed for a staff which would include two information officers, though in the beginning one only would be sufficient.

70. In its report (A/1047) the Advisory Committee had stated that it was for the Secretary-General, after consultation with the national authorities concerned, to recommend the establishment of an information centre in a particular area. In the case under consideration it seemed unlikely that consultation with the national authorities concerned would give rise to any great difficulties, since it was the delegation of Liberia itself which had taken the initiative in proposing the establishment of a new centre. The Advisory Committee also gave it as its opinion that "The practice hitherto followed is a correct one, and that a departure in the present instance might, by constituting a precedent, have extensive financial consequences." Mr. TARN was not sure that he fully understood the meaning of that sentence; the establishment of a new centre was bound to have financial implications, but when the Fifth Committee took a decision, whether on the initiative of the Secretary-General or of a member of the Committee, the financial implications were the same, whoever the author of the proposal.

71. To sum up, he could not support the proposal for referring any decision on the establishment of a new information centre to the following session of the General Assembly. He thought that a decision on the Liberian draft resolution should be taken at the current session.

72. Mr. GARCÍA (Guatemala) considered that the United Nations should supply the necessary funds for the establishment of a new information centre. For that reason he had supported the Liberian proposal as soon as it had been submitted to the Committee. The populations of Non-Self-Governing Territories ought to be kept informed of the work of the United Nations and that consideration should prevail over all financial arguments. Finally, the amendments submitted by the delegation of Israel clarified the Liberian draft resolution.

DOMINIQUE (Haiti) supported the draft resolution. He hoped that it would go with the Fifth Committee. The fact that the Committee had just undertaken certain

savings would make it easier to grant the necessary credits for the establishment of the new centre.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

TWO HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Friday, 28 October 1949, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. KYROU (Greece).

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

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the members of the Committee to a letter dated 21 October 1949 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee regarding technical assistance in connexion with the economic development of under-developed countries (A/C.5/327), and to the two resolutions adopted on that letter which had been adopted on 15 October 1949 by the Second Committee. He also called attention to a note by the Secretary-General on the financial implications of technical assistance (A/C.5/328), and stated that if the Fifth Committee agreed to the statement he would ask the Rapporteur to prepare a draft report on the subject for presentation to the General Assembly.

so agreed.

PART V

SECTION 21 (*continued*)

JOHN COHEN (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Public Information) referred to the Polish representative's statement at the previous meeting that in document A/C.5/328 the Secretary-General had failed to mention the possibility of financial savings which might be effected through a reduction in the size and expenses of existing information centres such as those in London and Paris. He drew the Polish representative's attention to the paragraph in document A/903 which stated that "expenses in connexion with the establishment of new centres cannot be absorbed within the budget approved by the Fifth Committee on the basis of the budget estimates for section 21." The Secretary-General had therefore responded to the request of the Fifth Committee.

The Department of Public Information had a plan to the Secretary-General in 1947 for the establishment of information centres which should be set up, and had included a centre in Liberia to serve the West African area. At that time, the Secretary-General stated that, for budgetary reasons, he could not proceed with the setting up of such a centre. The Department of Public Information would naturally tend to expand its work, and had therefore considered the Liberian representative's pro-

posal (A/C.5/L.19), and the Secretary-General had submitted budget estimates amounting to 37,660 dollars (A/C.5/321) for such an information centre in Liberia. On the assumption that the activities of such a centre might be more limited in scope during its initial period of establishment and organization, the estimated cost for 1950 could be reduced to 25,000 dollars.

4. As regards information centres in general, the Secretary-General considered it necessary first to conduct negotiations with the country concerned in order to have complete assurance that the immunities and privileges of officials of the United Nations would be respected, and that the centre would be free to operate.

5. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to the remarks of the Polish representative at the previous meeting, pointed out that the Fifth Committee had already approved on first reading the Advisory Committee's recommendations with regard to section 21, Information Centres. The Advisory Committee could not therefore deal with the question of possible savings to be effected on existing centres unless expressly requested to do so by the Fifth Committee. The Polish representative had expressed surprise at paragraph 4 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/1047) reading as follows:

"The Advisory Committee considers that the practice hitherto followed is a correct one, and that a departure in the present instance might, by constituting a precedent, have extensive financial consequences."

6. Mr. Aghnides emphasized that the Advisory Committee had to deal with administrative as well as budgetary questions. He considered that the remarks of the representative of Israel implied that that representative placed too restrictive an interpretation on the functions of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Committee had to advise the General Assembly on all matters — administrative as well as budgetary — which were referred to it.

7. In the fifth paragraph of document A/C.5/321 it was stated that "it had been assumed that the Information Centre located in Monrovia, Liberia, would cover territories in West and Equatorial Africa in accordance with agreements to be reached with the appropriate authorities". Mr. Aghnides said that if it had been the Fifth Committee's intention that the proposed new centre should cover the territories mentioned, the Advisory Committee could have expressed its opinion regarding the Secretary-General's estimate of 37,660 dollars. The Advisory Committee