



Tuesday, 13 December 1955,
at 3.15 p.m.

New York

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Chairman: Mr. Hans ENGEN (Norway).

AGENDA ITEM 38

Budget estimates for the financial year 1956
(A/2904 and Add.1) (*continued*)

Second reading (A/C.5/L.367, A/C.5/L.374,
A/C.5/L.378, A/C.5/L.379) (*concluded*)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to resume the second reading of the budget estimates for 1956 on the basis of document A/C.5/L.374. The United States delegation had submitted three proposals relating to section 18 (A/C.5/L.379, para. 2).

2. Mr. MERROW (United States of America) said that his delegation proposed first that the amount of \$50,000 provided under chapter VIII for the modernization and improvement of the physical facilities of the United Nations European Office should be deleted. It still felt that it would be inappropriate and unwise to undertake such expenditure for the time being. The budget had already reached such a level that every non-essential expenditure should be eliminated.

3. Secondly, his delegation called for the deletion of the amount of \$3,000 provided under chapter I for the up-grading of six proof-reader posts from P-1 to P-2. The Advisory Committee's arguments against the proposal were completely convincing.

4. Lastly, the United States proposal recommended the restoration in chapter III of an amount of \$8,200 to provide for a Second Officer post in the Joint Secretariat of the Permanent Central Opium Board and the Drug Supervisory Body. His delegation had voted against the inclusion of that sum in the first reading, but was now better informed as to the duties of the holder of the post and thought that it would be better to restore the amount of \$8,200.

5. He also wished to emphasize that his Government was concerned about the level to which the United Nations budget had risen, particularly in view of the size of extra-budgetary expenditures. The original estimates submitted by the Secretary-General had not given any reason to suppose that expenditures would be so high. It was regrettable that some delegations had pressed for an increase in certain appropriations, notwithstanding the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Never had the financial burden to be imposed on the Member States been so heavy. It was absolutely

essential for the Member States to try to stabilize the budget at a reasonable level. Moreover, the Secretary-General could materially assist in achieving that aim. If it could not be attained, his delegation hoped that consideration would be given to the possibility of establishing one or more ceilings, as some delegations had suggested.

6. Mr. CLOUGH (United Kingdom) supported the United States proposals. With regard to the proposal concerning chapter VIII, he recalled that during the first reading of section 18 (519th and 520th meetings) opinions had been greatly divided on the wisdom of including the sum of \$50,000 for the modernization and improvement of physical facilities at the United Nations European Office. In view of the level of the budget, it would be better to postpone that expenditure. Moreover, it might be questioned whether, in view of the decisions taken in regard to the air-conditioning equipment and the construction of the new wing, the European Office would be able to spend a further sum of \$50,000 in 1956 on various additional technical improvements to the building.

7. To upgrade the six proof-reader posts would not only mean paying more than the market rate for that work; it would also embarrass the specialized agencies and would be quite inconsistent with the policy of co-operation and co-ordination between the United Nations and the agencies that had been so strongly advocated in support of the proposal to extend the Palais des Nations to accommodate the International Telecommunication Union and the World Meteorological Organization.

8. Lastly, his delegation agreed that, in the light of the further information now received, it would be advisable to restore the sum of \$8,200 to chapter III.

9. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) pointed out that the arguments of the United States and United Kingdom delegations had already been considered on first reading of the budget estimates. The decision on the building of a new wing for the Palais des Nations would have no financial implications in 1956 and the decision to replace the air-conditioning equipment had been taken the previous year. Hence, no new factor had been introduced and therefore the Committee could not but confirm the decision it had taken on first reading.

10. Mr. ZARUBIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation was also perturbed at the proportions the 1956 budget had assumed and it was prepared to support the United States proposals concerning section 18, chapters I and VIII.

11. Mr. TURPIN (France) did not think that it would be either good administrative practice or in keeping with sound budgetary policy to reduce the appropriations for a section on the pretext that the budget was increasing.

12. He also wished to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that, if the United Nations was soon to have eighteen new Members, the number of members of the Economic Commission for Europe would also increase and it was therefore reasonable to improve the facilities of the European Office.

13. He also wished to point out to the United Kingdom representative that proof-readers employed at Headquarters in New-York were graded P-2, whereas those employed at Geneva were only P-1. That made transfers difficult and was not fair.

14. He had no fixed opinion on the third United States proposal and would abstain when it was put to the vote.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. May, representative of the Permanent Central Opium Board, took a seat at the Committee table.

15. Mr. NAY (Permanent Central Opium Board) was afraid that the Committee had not had an accurate picture of the situation when it had decided on first reading to delete the sum of \$8,200 requested for a Second Officer post in the Joint Secretariat of the Permanent Central Opium Board and the Drug Supervisory Body. After agreeing to the establishment of a P-4 post, the Committee had abolished a P-3 post. The duties of the P-4 post were already being performed by a person appointed on a temporary basis and, therefore, the effect of the Committee's decision would actually have been to reduce the staff of the Joint Secretariat, although the entry into force of the Protocol on synthetic narcotic drugs would give it more work. The holder of the post that had been abolished did statistical work of the first importance. He was thoroughly familiar with the conventions and had been dealing with those questions for twenty years. Accordingly, the suppression of his post would seriously impair the functioning of the Central Board.

16. In the circumstances, he hoped that the Committee would agree to restore the amount of \$8,200 eliminated on first reading.

17. In reply to a question from Mr. FRIIS (Denmark), Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee saw no objection to restoring that amount.

18. Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines) wondered how far the classification of proof-readers in the professional category was justified.

19. Mr. WEIR (Canada) said that he was prepared to support the United States proposals, but thought that proof-readers should be classified at the same level in the various organizations.

20. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that proof-readers were included in the professional category because their duties required considerable experience and very advanced technical training. It would not have been logical to classify them with manual workers or clerical and secretarial staff. They were specialists and usually received the salary of Officers at the P-2 level. There were proof-readers at Headquarters and at various overseas offices, particularly the European Office. They were recruited internationally and could be transferred from one duty-station to another.

21. Mr. BLANCO (Cuba) recalled that on first reading his delegation had voted against the inclusion of the amount of \$50,000 requested for the modernization and improvement of the physical facilities

at the United Nations European Office. He would vote for the United States proposals concerning section 18, chapters I and VIII. He would abstain from voting on the proposal concerning chapter III, for he was not convinced of the need to restore the post that the Committee had decided to abolish.

22. Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines) did not think it logical to put proof-readers in the same category as professional staff, whose work required university training. He, therefore, supported the United States proposal.

23. In addition, he would vote for the proposal concerning chapter III and would abstain on the proposal concerning chapter VIII.

24. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the United States proposal for the deletion from section 18, chapter VIII, of the amount of \$50,000 provided for modernization and improvement of physical facilities at the European Office of the United Nations.

The proposal was rejected by 18 votes to 13, with 8 abstentions.

25. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the United States proposal for the deletion from section 18, chapter I, of the amount of \$3,000 provided for upgrading of six proof-reader posts from P-1 to P-2.

The proposal was adopted by 17 votes to 10, with 14 abstentions.

The estimate of \$4,932,730 for section 18 (excluding chapter III) was adopted on second reading by 23 votes to 8, with 6 abstentions.

26. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee to vote on the United States proposal for the restoration to section 18, chapter III, of the original estimate of \$8,200 to provide for a Second Officer post in the Joint Secretariat of the Permanent Central Opium Board and the Drug Supervisory Body.

The proposal was adopted by 26 votes to 4, with 10 abstentions.

The estimate of \$65,970 for section 18, chapter III, was adopted on second reading by 35 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

The estimate of \$685,000 for section 19 was adopted on second reading by 35 votes to 4, with 2 abstentions.

The estimate of \$940,000 for section 20 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$1,198,200 for section 21 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$1,015,100 for section 22 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$50,000 for section 23 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$20,000 for section 24 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$1,382,460 for section 25 (excluding chapter 1, paragraph V) was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$9,440 for section 25, chapter 1, paragraph V, was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$386,700 for section 26 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$479,400 for section 27 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$1 million for section 28 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

27. Mr. MERROW (United States of America) said that during the first-reading discussion of the revised budget estimates for section 28 in the 525th meeting his delegation had voted for the appropriation of \$150,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee for advisory social welfare services (A/3066) and against an increase of \$81,500, the effect of which was to bring the total for section 28 to \$1 million. On second reading the United States delegation, bowing to the majority decision, had voted for the estimate of \$1 million for that section, but felt it necessary to make some observations.

28. Until the present year section 28 and part IX as a whole had remained comparatively stable, chiefly owing to the development of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, which was financed from extra-budgetary funds. The Committee was not unaware that the United States contributed a large proportion of the cost of such technical programmes and had in the past agreed to furnish more than 50 per cent of the funds needed to implement the Expanded Programme.

29. In that connexion he pointed out that, under the provision restricting United States participation to 50 per cent of the total, the United States contribution for 1956 had not yet reached the maximum it was prepared to pay. His delegation therefore wondered why it should be considered necessary to increase the regular budget estimates when many of the activities covered might be financed under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance. It might perhaps be thought that the regular budget was better suited to the financing of long-term projects, or that expenditure could be shared more fairly by that method. Perhaps Governments were taking a keener interest in social activities, in which case an increase in their contributions to the Expanded Programme might be foreseen. Perhaps some felt that such activities could be kept under better control if they were financed from the regular budget. Others again, perhaps, were dissatisfied with the operation of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance.

30. At all events the United States delegation was following the question very closely, and among other things was concerned at the size of contributions to the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance; for the United States would obviously have to consider whether it should revise the form and amount of its contributions to fit the type of programmes which most Members of the United Nations were prepared to finance.

31. Mr. CUTTS (Australia) said that his delegation, like that of the United States, had voted against increasing the estimate for section 28 on first reading, but on second reading had voted in favour of the estimate of \$1 million. He was none the less convinced that it would have been better for Member States to increase their contributions to the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance.

The estimate of \$50,000 for section 28 (a) was adopted on second reading by 40 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

The estimate of \$145,000 for section 29 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$649,500 for section 30 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$2 million for section 31 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$106,000 for section 32 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$620,000 for section 33 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$961,000 for section 34 was adopted unanimously on second reading.

The estimate of \$413,000 for section 35 was adopted on second reading by 30 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.

32. Mr. MERROW (United States of America) stated that during the first-reading discussion of section 35 (523rd meeting) he had voted against the Secretary-General's proposal for an increase in the Headquarters cost-of-living allowance (A/C.5/636) because in his view it was clear that the cost-of-living index for New York had not changed sufficiently since 1951 to justify such an increase. Since, however, the Fifth Committee had by a heavy majority approved the estimate requested on first reading, the United States delegation had abstained on second reading.

33. Trade union representatives from the New York area had recently drawn the United States delegation's attention to the fact that some persons affiliated to their unions and working in the United Nations received less than the wage paid for similar work in the New York area. Apparently the reason was that the wages in question were paid out of funds which were of necessity limited, being governed by fixed fee contracts. It would accordingly be desirable to increase contract costs when the contracts came up for renewal. The United States delegation would support any proposal made to that effect at the eleventh session.

34. Mr. ZARUBIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had voted against the estimate of \$413,000 for section 35 because the whole question of salaries and allowances would shortly be reviewed by a committee of experts. The Soviet Union delegation accordingly felt that it would have been better to await that committee's findings, and that it was premature to take a decision on the Headquarters cost-of-living allowance before the eleventh session.

35. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the revised total of the budget estimates for the financial year 1956 in the amount of \$48,566,350.

The total estimate of \$48,566,350 was adopted on second reading by 34 votes to 4, with 4 abstentions.

36. Mr. CLOUGH (United Kingdom) said that the United Kingdom delegation had abstained in the vote on the general total because it was not satisfied with the amount of the estimates requested for some sections. Furthermore his delegation was concerned at the high total of the 1956 budget as a whole. Many Governments had long been asking for stabilization of the United Nations budget, but the trend in that direction noted the previous year appeared to have been short-lived. It was true that the United Nations was constantly undertaking new activities. The United Kingdom delegation welcomed that, particularly in such fields as the peaceful uses of atomic energy. That did not however justify the increase in the total budget. Room should be made for new activities by dropping or deferring other projects which had a lower priority value.

37. Mr. ERHAN (Turkey) said that he wished to give a brief explanation concerning the Secretary-General's reply at the 522nd meeting to his statement on the geographical distribution of posts.

38. In mentioning some steps which should be taken in that connexion the Turkish delegation had been seeking to assist the Secretary-General in his difficult task and to obviate the resumption of long discussions in the Fifth Committee. It had never thought that the Secretary-General was showing ill-will; it had expressed its confidence in him when he had spoken at the 516th meeting of the measures which were being taken to remedy the situation. It was for that reason that it had simply made some suggestions, without putting forward a formal proposal.

39. The regrettable situation which had arisen in previous years, and the discussions that situation was still provoking, would amply justify the creation of the suggested Assembly committee to supervise the application of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter. Recalling the opinion expressed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee at the 503rd meeting, he said that the Article in question was very important. Any suggestion regarding the possibility of establishing a committee to supervise its application should not be interpreted as a lack of confidence in the Secretary-General, any more than the establishment of national supervisory organs responsible for ensuring the proper execution of the laws could be interpreted as a lack of confidence in the Government.

40. The Turkish delegation accordingly wished to assure the Secretary-General of its full and entire confidence. It sincerely hoped that, as a result of the measures he had taken hitherto and those he would take on the basis of the suggestions put forward in the Fifth Committee, that important question would not arise again in the future.

DRAFT RESOLUTION RELATING TO UNFORESEEN AND EXTRAORDINARY EXPENSES (A/C.5/L.386)

41. Mr. TURNER (Controller) pointed out that, as a consequence of the decision taken by the Fifth Committee at its previous meeting, the following subparagraph (d) should be added to the draft resolution:

"Such commitments, not exceeding a total of \$90,000, as may be required in connexion with the travel of representatives to the General Assembly in the event of the admission of New Members."

The draft resolution relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses (A/C.5/L.386), as amended, was adopted unanimously.

DRAFT RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE WORKING CAPITAL FUND (A/C.5/L.387)

The draft resolution relating to the Working Capital Fund (A/C.5/L.387) was adopted by 39 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter X) (A/2943)

42. Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines), Rapporteur, said that, if the Committee agreed, he would submit to the Assembly a brief report stating that the Fifth Committee had duly taken into account the financial implications of the measures adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its nineteenth and twentieth sessions when it had recommended estimates for the relevant sections of the draft budget for 1956.

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

43. Mr. FRIIS (Denmark) recalled that his delegation had already voiced its concern that the work of the Assembly was not perhaps prepared and organized in such a way as to achieve the best possible results in a minimum of time. Other delegations, particularly those of the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union, Australia and Belgium, had expressed the same feeling.

44. His delegation had referred to the fact that essential documents for use by some committees had been circulated so late that several of the committees had been late in starting work, and it had been difficult to organize the discussions in a rational and systematic way. Many delegations had emphasized the difficulties created by certain delays. The Secretary-General himself had recognized the fact and had decided that several of the important questions dealt with in the report of the Survey Group should be deferred until the next session.

45. His delegation felt confident that the Secretary-General, who had so often shown such a high sense of responsibility would, on the basis of that year's experience, consider before the next session whether some practical measures could not be taken to avoid or reduce the loss of time.

46. The Fifth Committee might consider whether some further thought could not be given to the preparation and organization of the work of the next session. The organization would depend very largely on the work of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, which again was dependent on the work of the Secretariat and particularly on the timing of the relevant documentation. The Danish delegation thought that it might be useful to give the representative of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee the opportunity now to make whatever observations they might wish to present. That suggestion should not be construed as a criticism of the Secretariat or of the Advisory Committee, which, despite a steadily increasing work-load, had made it their constant concern to ensure that their work was satisfactory to all delegations.

47. Mr. WEIR (Canada) also held that the programme of work should be well organized before the opening of the session, so that Governments would be able to give full instructions to their delegations.

48. In particular, he thought that it might be possible to achieve better co-ordination of the work of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee should be given two weeks at the opening of each session before the Fifth Committee started its work. The Fifth Committee might also meet in the afternoons only, so as to give the Advisory Committee every morning to examine the proposals before the Fifth Committee; it would also allow delegations time to examine the documents and to prepare their speeches.

49. His delegation regretted the position taken up by the Belgian delegation at the previous meeting on the subject of the second reading. The practice hitherto followed had always given good results. In his view, delegations should be able to open a debate and to present new proposals during the second reading; that was an important right, which delegations should, however, use with the utmost circumspection. His delegation

would like to know the opinion of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on those questions.

50. Mr. CLOUGH (United Kingdom) associated himself with the Danish representative's statement. The information the Secretariat had given on Fifth Committee documentation (A/C.5/L.365) showed that quite a large proportion of the documents examined during the current session had not been circulated to Governments at the opening of the session. Delegations had accordingly had some difficulty in obtaining instructions from their Governments when needed; furthermore, the Advisory Committee had sometimes had great difficulty in giving its views to the Fifth Committee at the appropriate time. Some delegations had even had to propose the deferment of certain decisions until the following session.

51. He did not wish his remarks to be taken in any way as a criticism of the Secretariat which had worked very hard to try to overcome the difficulties faced by the Committee. He suggested that the best course would be to reach agreement on a system of work for future years which would eliminate those difficulties. For example, the Fifth Committee might begin its work later, as the Canadian representative had suggested. A delay of one month after the opening of the session would give the Advisory Committee time to complete its consideration of all the Committee's documents. It might be part of that arrangement that the documents on which the Fifth Committee had to take a decision should be circulated to Governments before a certain date, perhaps 1 August. Governments would thus be in a position to take decisions and give their delegations instructions before the opening of the session. Documents distributed after that date would not be acted upon until the following session.

52. It might also be agreed that the Secretary-General should be requested to give the total of the whole draft budget in his statement on the budget estimates. Should it not be possible at the time the budget estimates were published to give detailed estimates for certain types of expenditure, the budget statement might show approximate figures so as to enable the Governments of Member States to form an idea, before the Fifth Committee began its deliberations, of the total appropriations requested for the following financial year.

53. Mr. MERROW (United States of America) endorsed the ideas put forward by the representatives of Denmark, Canada and the United Kingdom. In his view, it would also be helpful if all proposals relating to the budget estimates were submitted in written form before the Committee was asked to take a decision on them. In addition, the Committee could make rules for the participation in the debates of certain persons such as the Chairmen of other Committees, representatives of the staff and representatives of certain organs.

54. That was a problem which should be taken up at the beginning of the next session. The Fifth Committee should therefore ask the Assembly to include in the provisional agenda of the eleventh session an item on General Assembly procedures for the adoption of the budget. Furthermore, the Committee could take up that item when it considered the form of the budget.

55. Mr. VENKATARAMAN (India) stressed the fact that at times he had been compelled to abstain from voting on certain questions because he had not had time to obtain instructions from his Government. He therefore thought that the Committee should not begin to

discuss an item of the agenda until at least two weeks after the Advisory Committee's report on it had appeared.

56. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium), like previous speakers, noted that the present situation was unsatisfactory with regard to the publication of documents, the Committee's working methods, and the discipline delegations ought to show during debates in order to save time. It was not, of course, a question of criticizing anyone. The Secretariat, like the delegations, hoped that the Committee would adopt better working methods. The importance of the problem was not under-estimated by anyone, and it might grow worse if the United Nations admitted new Member States whose delegations would not have the same experience as the Committee's present members.

57. All those reasons added to the importance of the suggestions made by Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. As regards the procedure to be followed on second reading of the budget, members should discriminate and not reopen debate on a proposal unless new facts were placed before the Committee.

58. The Committee must look at the problem as a whole. At the sixth session (340th meeting), the Norwegian and other delegations had submitted an ambitious plan (A/C.5/L.173) which had been rejected. It might be useful to take up some of their ideas. The Netherlands representative had asked at an earlier meeting whether the Fifth Committee was competent to give an opinion on the working methods of other Committees; he had felt that it was a matter for the General Committee. But in fact the Fifth Committee was the body best qualified to determine what results the work of the other Committees might have. The best way would therefore be to ask the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, to study means of improving the General Assembly's working methods by a more satisfactory circulation of documents and a better organization of debates.

59. Mr. ZARUBIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the suggestions made by the Canadian, United Kingdom and United States delegations.

60. Mr. TURNER (Controller) wished first to point out that, contrary to what some members of the Committee seemed to believe, the main documents with the exception of about three or four, had been sent to Governments before the session opened. He himself had been surprised to find that the situation in that respect had been better than at the opening of the previous sessions. It should, of course, not be forgotten that a rather large number of documents could be prepared only during the session in order to take account of the decisions reached by other Committees. He assured the Committee that the Secretariat would do all in its power to ensure that there would be no reason in future to complain of any delay in the circulation of documents.

61. The Danish representative's action in drawing the Committee's attention to the need for improving the organization of its work was highly praiseworthy. He recapitulated the Canadian, United Kingdom and United States proposals and suggested that at the end of the session the Committee should make a rapid critical examination of the list of reports and studies it had asked the Secretary-General to submit to it at the next session. It was with that in mind that the Secretary-

General had circulated the draft agenda of the Fifth Committee for the eleventh session (A/C.5/L.390). In the past the Committee had tended to include a very large number of items in its agenda, which had considerably increased the work of the Secretariat and of the Advisory Committee.

62. The number of requests made by the Committee at the present session had been small. Nevertheless, he hoped that the Committee would leave it to the Secretary-General to decide whether it would be useful to prepare a detailed report on the question of the replacement of furniture and furnishings. The Secretariat might not have enough information at its disposal to enable it to submit constructive recommendations. It would also be desirable for the Secretary-General to submit the report on the system of education grants at the twelfth, and not at the eleventh session.

63. The Secretariat would certainly have to carry out a somewhat heavy task in 1956 in connexion with the review of salaries and allowances. It would be submitting several special reports to the Advisory Committee's spring session, and would be preparing other reports in time for preliminary consideration by the Advisory Committee at its summer session.

64. So far, the Committee had devoted a minimum of time to procedural debates; the greater part of the debates had dealt with the substance of the questions before it. It would, however, be useful to examine the Committee's working methods in detail and if necessary to change them. That was why he felt that it was desirable, as the United States representative had suggested, that the question of the methods to be followed in examining the budget estimates should be included in the agenda of the next session. If that were done, the Secretary-General would certainly have to submit a report on the matter.

65. He emphasized that the Indian representative's suggestion would give rise to certain practical difficulties. If it was decided that the Fifth Committee would not examine a question until two weeks after the receipt of the relevant report from the Advisory Committee, it would be necessary for the other General Assembly Committees not to adopt resolutions with financial implications in the month preceding the closure of the session.

66. He reiterated the assurance that the Secretariat would, for its part, do everything possible to prevent delay in the circulation of documents.

67. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the Advisory Committee had held two sessions in 1955, comprising a total of 101 meetings. Its reports to the General Assembly on thirty-seven different questions had amounted to a total of 302 mimeographed pages. The data on which the Advisory Committee's work was based were prepared by the Advisory Committee's staff and the United Nations Secretariat. The amount of work handled by the Advisory Committee could not be increased unless its sessions were excessively prolonged. Moreover, in the course of the past two months the Advisory Committee's staff had worked practically every Saturday and Sunday.

68. There was probably no perfect solution to be found in that field. The Controller had assured the Fifth

Committee that the United Nations Secretariat would do all in its power to improve the situation and the various solutions proposed by the Canadian, United Kingdom and United States representatives should be thoroughly examined.

69. With regard to the Canadian delegation's views on the reopening of debate on proposals on second reading of the budget, he had pointed out that the Fifth Committee had established a jurisprudence on that question. Rule 124 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure covered the question of a proposal which had been "adopted or rejected". The issue was? therefore, at what stage the various sections of the budget were adopted? They were adopted not when the Committee took a decision on first reading, but on second reading. Some delegations sometimes wished to question a decision at the time the Rapporteur introduced his report. It was then that the provisions of rule 124 applied.

70. Mr. WEIR (Canada) thanked the Controller and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for their explanations. The United Kingdom representative had asked that the Committee should not meet until one month after the opening of the General Assembly's session. The Canadian delegation had suggested a delay of two weeks. The period might, as a compromise, be fixed at three weeks.

71. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that it was difficult to fix the period exactly. In some cases it might be necessary for the Fifth Committee not to meet during the first four weeks of the session; in others a delay of two weeks might suffice.

72. Mr. CLOUGH (United Kingdom) agreed that the length of the period in fact depended on the amount of work the Advisory Committee had to do. The question could be studied by that Committee and the Secretary-General.

73. Mr. FRIIS (Denmark) thought that his delegation's initiative had not been unavailing. Several delegations had made practical suggestions and the Controller and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had replied to the suggestions in a very satisfactory manner. The Secretary-General should now study them in co-operation with the Advisory Committee. The United States proposal that the question of the methods to be followed in examining the budget estimates should be included in the agenda of the eleventh session was a logical outcome of the discussion. That question might be linked to that of the form of the budget and give rise to a fruitful debate.

74. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) thought, with regard to the United States proposal, that in drafting the item to be included in the next session's agenda the Fifth Committee's working methods should be mentioned. He expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would submit to the Committee a report prepared in co-operation with the Advisory Committee.

75. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the members of the Committee, thanked the Danish delegation for having initiated the debate on the organization of the Committee's work.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.