



Fifth session
Agenda item 67

COMPLAINT OF FAILURE ON THE PART OF THE UNION OF SOVIET
SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO REPATRIATE OR OTHERWISE
ACCOUNT FOR PRISONERS OF WAR DETAINED
IN SOVIET TERRITORY

Financial implications of the draft resolution proposed by the
Third Committee (A/1690)

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. E. G. FOURIE (Union of South Africa)

1. In accordance with rule 152 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee, at its 282nd meeting held on 13 December 1950, considered the financial implications of the draft resolution proposed by the Third Committee regarding the complaint of failure on the part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to repatriate or otherwise account for prisoners of war detained in Soviet territory. The Fifth Committee noted that, under the terms of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to establish an Ad Hoc Commission composed of three qualified and impartial individuals chosen by the International Red Cross or, failing that, by the Secretary-General himself, to perform the functions enumerated in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution.
2. The Committee had before it estimates submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/444) together with the observations thereon by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as set forth in its fortieth report of 1950 (A/1686).
3. The Secretary-General pointed out that no basis existed for an accurate estimation of costs. He believed, however, that expenditure would amount to approximately \$45,000, which sum included provision for the payment of fees in

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addition to travelling and subsistence expenses of the members of the Ad Hoc Commission. The view was expressed by the Advisory Committee that the principles originally laid down in General Assembly resolution 231 (III) of 8 October 1948 and reaffirmed in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 1 December 1950 (A/1596) precluded the payment of fees to members of such a commission. The Advisory Committee further considered that such payment would create an undesirable precedent and that, in any case, no difficulty need be anticipated in securing the services of qualified and impartial persons willing to serve as a matter of honour and obligation on the terms approved by the General Assembly for expert bodies of the United Nations. On this basis, it recommended that no provision should be made for payment of fees and that, instead, the rate of daily subsistence allowance should be raised from \$12.50 to \$25.00 at Headquarters and \$20.00 in the field. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that provision should be made under section 1 of the 1951 budget estimates in the amount of \$35,000, representing a reduction of \$10,000 on the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General.

4. In the course of discussion of the Advisory Committee's recommendations, several delegations felt obliged to support, in principle, the payment of fees in the case of the proposed Ad Hoc Commission, having regard to decisions taken by the General Assembly and by the Fifth Committee with respect to certain other expert bodies. Other delegations, however, agreed with the Advisory Committee and suggested that persons appointed to the Ad Hoc Commission should not be regarded as experts within the meaning of General Assembly resolution 231 (III). Still other delegations felt that the policy regarding remuneration of experts required re-examination. The representative of France requested that, in future, the Secretary-General should furnish an annex to the budget document giving full details of payments made to members of various expert bodies.

5. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics explained that his delegation had clearly stated its position in the Third Committee, maintaining that the present proposal was submitted only for purposes of propaganda. He was therefore opposed to the appropriation of funds for carrying out the draft resolution of the Third Committee. A proposal to that effect was defeated by 25 votes to 4, with 4 abstentions.

6. The Fifth Committee thereupon approved the recommendation of the Advisory Committee by 24 votes to 4, with 5 abstentions.

7. The Fifth Committee

7. The Fifth Committee therefore decided to inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution of the Third Committee would require budgetary provision to be made in 1951 in the amount of \$35,000 (\$30,000 under section 1 and \$5,000 for printing under section 25).
