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Postponement of consideration of item 71 and order of discussion of subsequent items

Chairman: Mr. Roberto URDANETA ARBELÁEZ (Colombia).

Postponement of consideration of item 71* and order of discussion of subsequent items

1. Mr. DULLES (United States of America) proposed that consideration of item 71 should be deferred.
2. His delegation had asked (General Committee, 69th meeting, paragraph 55) that the item should be placed on the agenda because, as Mr. Acheson had said (279th meeting), the United States Government was anxious that it should not be settled by force or by unilateral action. But, although the item should be retained on the agenda, it now seemed more appropriate not to start the discussion of the question of Formosa immediately.
3. Circumstances had changed since September when the United States' Secretary of State had expected that peace and security would soon be re-established in that part of the world. The rapid increase of Chinese intervention in Korea had created a serious problem for the United Nations and the task of the Security Council would not be facilitated if the General Assembly were to examine a matter closely related to the Korean problem.
4. If consideration of the question of Formosa were deferred there was reasonable hope that the Korean problem would be sufficiently clarified and could thus be discussed in a calmer atmosphere, without risk of complicating the task of the Security Council.
5. Mr. TSIANG (China) recalled that in a private conversation with the Chairman of the First Committee, his delegation had expressed the wish that agenda item 23, "Threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of China and to the peace of the Far East, resulting from Soviet violations of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance of 14 August 1945 and from Soviet violations of the Charter of the United Nations: report of the Interim Committee of the General Assembly" should have priority over item 71, "The question of Formosa". Consideration of item 23 would have enabled the General Assembly better to under-

stand the crisis in the Far East as a whole. That suggestion, however, had not been adopted, but now the United States delegation, for very good reasons, was proposing to defer consideration of the question of Formosa. The Chinese delegation therefore, suggested that item 23 should be the next question to be taken up by the Committee. It would be preferable, however, not to start to discuss that item until the afternoon of 16 November, in order to allow delegations sufficient time to study the matter.

6. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that his delegation, in the General Committee and in the Assembly, had opposed the inclusion of the so-called question of Formosa in the agenda. Taiwan (Formosa) belonged to China; that question had been settled by the Potsdam declaration, signed by the United States, and by the act of surrender of Japan, signed by the great Powers and a number of other participants. The act of surrender referred to the Potsdam declaration, paragraph 8 of which signified the intention of the signatories to implement the Cairo declaration, by virtue of which the Pescadores islands, Taiwan and Manchuria were to be returned to China.

7. Taiwan was therefore an integral part of China, and was even acknowledged as such by the United States, and the United Nations was not competent to consider that point. On the other hand, the Committee should take up for consideration the question raised in item 70 of the agenda, "Complaint by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics regarding aggression against China by the United States of America". That was the next question for consideration as it was the item which figured on the Committee's agenda immediately after the question of Formosa.

8. The position of the USSR delegation regarding the United States proposal was that the question of Formosa should be removed from the agenda. According to the Russian interpretation of his speech, the United States representative appeared to have indicated that the Committee should await the arrival of the repre-

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

representatives of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China before discussing the question of Formosa. But the truth was that it was quite impossible to study the matter, for the General Assembly was in no way competent to do so. In any case it was very doubtful whether the People's Republic of China would consent to an examination of the question. He wondered what would be the reaction of the United States representative if a delegation, supported by its allies, were to raise the question of the Hawaiian Islands.

9. Consequently, the only correct procedure was to remove from the agenda an item which had been placed on it in violation of international agreements and in disregard of pledges made by the United States, and to proceed immediately to consider item 70. If that procedure was followed, the Soviet Union delegation reserved the right to submit a proposal inviting the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, whose vital interests were affected by the matter, to take part in the discussion in the First Committee.

10. Mr. DULLES (United States of America) said that he could not believe that an interpreter could have made such a mistake as to quote the United States delegation as saying that consideration of the question of Formosa should await the arrival of the delegation of the People's Republic of China. Perhaps with Mr. Malik the wish had been father to the thought. On the contrary, the United States delegation had, in fact, hesitated to propose the adjournment of the discussion of the problem, lest it should be interpreted in the way in which the Soviet Union representative had just done.

11. The truth was that in the light of the Chinese intervention in North Korea, the invasion of Tibet, the assistance given to Ho Chi Minh and the threat of an invasion of Formosa, events which were liable to make that part of the world the theatre of a war of aggression, the discussion of the future of Formosa was liable to become a purely academic question.

12. The United States delegation's only reason for suggesting deferment of the question of Formosa was its desire not to complicate the Security Council's already difficult task.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had three proposals before it: the United States' proposal that item 71 on the question of Formosa should be examined last; the Chinese representative's proposal to consider item 23 on the threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of China and to the peace of the Far East, and the Soviet Union representative's proposal that item 70 dealing with the complaint by the USSR regarding aggression against China by the United States should be taken up immediately.

14. Mr. DE SOUZA GOMES (Brazil) thought that it would be preferable to suspend the work of the First Committee until Monday, 20 November, rather than start the consideration of a new question which would have to be left in abeyance since plenary meetings of the General Assembly were scheduled for Friday, 17, and Saturday, 18 November.

15. Faris EL-KHOURI Bey (Syria) stated that, as the representative of the Soviet Union was apparently

ready to present his delegation's point of view on item 70 of the agenda, the best plan would be to hear that delegation forthwith instead of adjourning the meeting until the following day in the afternoon, as the Committee would be obliged to do if the Chinese proposal were adopted.

16. Mr. C. MALIK (Lebanon) felt that the Committee should decide the order of its future business before adjourning perhaps until 20 November.

17. Mr. DE SOUZA GOMES (Brazil) and Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) associated themselves with the opinion expressed by the Lebanese representative.

18. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) emphasized that it was inconsistent to waste several meetings just after the Committee had received a communication from the President of the General Assembly urging it to expedite its work (392nd meeting). The First Committee should therefore pass on to the next item on its agenda, namely, item 70.

19. Whatever decision was reached concerning procedure, it would in any case be necessary to settle the question of sending an invitation to the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. If it was desired that the representatives of that government should arrive in time, they should be notified in advance. The Soviet Union delegation therefore submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/630) to that effect.

20. Mr. QUEVEDO (Ecuador) pointed out that that draft resolution (A/C.1/630) had not yet been distributed. Delegations ought to have time to consider the matter before any decision was taken.

21. Faris EL-KHOURI Bey (Syria) said that his delegation, which had not yet made up its mind on the question of the representation of China, hoped that the decision to be taken on the status of Formosa would furnish the key to that question. There was only one thing to be done when a revolution had fully succeeded, and that was to recognize the new régime. But either Formosa was Chinese territory, in which case the United Nations should continue to recognize the Nationalist Government which had its seat there, or else it was not Chinese territory, in which case the Nationalist Government no longer exercised any authority over any part of the national territory, which meant that the revolution was over and the new government would have to be recognized.

22. The Nationalist Government was therefore logical when it stated that Formosa was Chinese territory and that the question should not be placed on the General Assembly's agenda. By contrast, the attitude of both the Soviet Union and the United States was illogical. The Soviet Union stated that Formosa was Chinese territory, but if so it was hardly arguable that the new government should be recognized, since the Nationalists, according to that opinion, were still exercising their authority over a part of China and hence had not ceased to exist as a government. The United States considered that the official transfer of Formosa to China should not take place until a treaty of peace with Japan had been concluded, which meant that Formosa was not Chinese territory, that the authority exercised

by China over the island for five years was not legally valid and that the support given by the United States to the Nationalists' position was not logical.

23. Hence the Syrian delegation could not support the United States proposal that consideration of the item should be deferred to permit further clarification of the question.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that he would have to accede to the request of the representative of Ecuador as it was based on article 119 of the rules of procedure.

25. Mr. SIROKY (Czechoslovakia) said that Formosa was indeed an integral part of Chinese territory but that did not invalidate the claim that the Kuomintang Government was non-existent as the island was under occupation by American forces following a typical act of aggression by the United States.

26. The action of the United States Seventh Fleet and the presence of United States troops in Formosa was a violation of the territorial integrity of China, and that aggressive act endangered international peace and security.

27. The First Committee should therefore take up consideration of the item immediately and as the presence of the interested party, the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, sole legal representative of the Chinese people, was required, the request made by the Soviet Union delegation should be granted.

28. Mr. TSIANG (China) pointed out that the decision to place on the agenda the question of Formosa, against which the representative of China had protested, had already been taken by the General Assembly and that the First Committee was not competent to reopen a question upon which the Assembly had taken a decision.

29. The CHAIRMAN agreed that the Chinese representative's views on the matter were correct.

30. Mr. TSIANG (China) said that the Brazilian proposal appeared to be acceptable, but that his delegation reserved its right to intervene later in the question of the USSR draft resolution to extend an invitation to representatives of the puppet régime which claimed to represent China.

31. Sir Keith OFFICER (Australia), supported by Mr. C. MALIK (Lebanon) said that in order to avoid a discussion on the substance of the question of Formosa it would be preferable to put the United States proposal to the vote immediately.

32. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the United States proposal that item 71, "The question of Formosa", should be deferred until after consideration of items 23 and 70.

The proposal was adopted by 53 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

33. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that his delegation's proposal, which was incompatible both with the Brazilian proposal that the work of the Committee should be suspended until 20 November, and with the Chinese proposal that item

23 of the agenda should be considered next, should be put to the vote immediately.

34. Mr. BARANOVSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that in view of a previous decision taken by the First Committee (384th meeting), the next question on the agenda was item 70. The only point to be settled was whether the Committee would open discussion on that item at once or adjourn until the following day or even until 20 November.

35. His delegation objected to the First Committee wasting time in that way, and supported the USSR proposal that the Committee should immediately take up the study of the next item on its agenda.

36. The CHAIRMAN thought that the Chinese and Soviet Union proposals were mutually exclusive and hence it was difficult to reach a decision concerning the order in which they should be put to the vote. In those circumstances he could only apply rule 130 of the rules of procedure according to which proposals should be voted upon in the order in which they had been submitted. In the present case, the Chinese proposal had been submitted before that of the Soviet Union.

37. Mr. C. MALIK (Lebanon) considered that the Chinese proposal was in the nature of a motion to amend the First Committee's agenda according to which the next item on the agenda should be item 70. However, an amendment should be voted on first, and added to that was the fact that China had submitted its proposal before the Soviet Union. It was clear therefore that the Committee should vote first on the Chinese proposal.

38. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), replying to a question by Mr. UNDEN (Sweden), explained that his draft resolution (A/C.1/630) did not propose that the Committee should await the arrival of the delegation of the People's Republic of China, but simply that an immediate decision should be taken on the invitation to be sent to that delegation.

39. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Chinese proposal that the First Committee should take up the consideration of item 23 of the agenda before that of item 70.

The proposal was adopted by 14 votes to 8, with 36 abstentions.

40. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that the First Committee should proceed to discuss the question of the invitation to the People's Republic of China. Under rule 119 of the rules of procedure, the Chairman had the power to authorize consideration of certain proposals, even if copies had not been circulated within the prescribed time-limit.

41. The CHAIRMAN agreed that he did have that power, but in the spirit of the rule, his authority should not be exercised except in the absence of any opposition. The delegation of Ecuador had, however, already asked for more time in which to study the USSR draft resolution, and it was clear that other delegations shared that point of view.

42. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Committee should not hold up

its work because certain representatives had expressed a desire not to speak at the current meeting. Those delegations which desired to speak forthwith should be permitted to do so.

43. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that there was no urgent reason why the USSR representative should speak immediately on the question of the possible participation of a representative of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China in the consideration of the item on the complaint by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics regarding aggression against China by the United States of America, as the Committee had just decided not to take up that item of its agenda for the moment. The Chairman therefore ruled that the USSR draft resolution (A/C.1/630) would not be put to the vote.

44. Mr. CHAMORRO (Nicaragua) supported the Chairman's ruling. Since the last sentence of rule 119 of the rules of procedure which had been quoted by the Soviet Union representative dealt only with amendments and procedural motions, and since the USSR draft resolution dealt with a question of substance, the Chairman would have to respect the prescribed time-limit under which twenty-four hours had to elapse between the submission of a proposal and the discussion thereof.

45. Mr. SARPER (Turkey) thought that it would be advisable to postpone a vote on the USSR draft resolution since a number of representatives had not

yet received instructions from their governments and would therefore be obliged to abstain from voting.

46. Mr. QUEVEDO (Ecuador) said that he did not wish to prevent an immediate discussion of the USSR draft resolution but since that draft had only just been submitted in writing, he requested that a decision on the matter be deferred.

47. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the motion of the representative of Brazil that the Committee's work should be suspended until 20 November.

The motion was adopted by 36 votes to 2, with 20 abstentions.

48. Faris EL-KHOURI Bey (Syria) explained that he had voted against the motion because he was concerned lest the resulting delay in the Committee's work might necessitate the holding of night meetings later in the session.

49. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked the Chairman whether his draft resolution (A/C.1/630) could not be discussed the following day, since rule 119 of the rules of procedure provided for a time lapse of only twenty-four hours between the submission of a proposal and its discussion.

50. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee had just decided to suspend its work until 20 November.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.