

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE NINTH MEETING OF POSTAL EXPERTS

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Wednesday,
18 December 1946 at 11.00 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. D. J. Lidbury (United Kingdom)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Jimenez (Chile)

Rapporteur: M. Le Mouel (France)

Universal Postal
Union Observers: Mr. Fulke Radice (Vice-director of the
International Bureau)
Mr. E. Zaldua (Secretary of the
International Bureau)

Secretariat: Mr. Perez-Guerrero (Director of the Division of
Co-ordination and Liaison of
the Economic and Social
Departments)
Mr. B. Lukac (Director of the Transport and
Communications Division)

1. Adoption of the Text of a Draft Agreement Between the United Nations and the Universal Postal Union (document E/CONF/POST/P.C/W.17).

The CHAIRMAN called attention to document E/CONF/POST/P.C/W.17, which was the text prepared by the Drafting Committee in accordance with decisions that the Committee of Postal Experts had taken. He suggested that the document should be considered Article by Article.

DECISION: The following Articles of the Draft Agreement were adopted without discussion:

Preamble, Articles I, III, IV, VI, VIII, IX, X, XI, XIII, XV, XVI

(a) Article II

Mr. LAGER (SWEDEN), after reviewing the former procedure for new adhesions which had automatically led to membership for a sovereign country, stressed the fundamental change under Article II of the Draft Agreement, whereby the procedures for adhesion and for membership were

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expressly separated.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that the suggested change was basic and pointed out that the Congress of the UPU to be held in Paris in May had the final authority in the adoption of Article 2. The Article had, however, been adopted by the present committee after prolonged discussions.

Mr. BODY (AUSTRALIA) wished to reserve his government's position concerning Article II.

The representatives of Yugoslavia, France, and Poland likewise reserved their positions.

In reply to a point raised by Mr. TURNBULL (CANADA), the CHAIRMAN observed that all Member Nations would be free at the Paris Congress to take whatever attitude they deemed fit, and that no present decision would in any way prejudice later action.

DECISION: Article II was adopted.

(b) Article V

Mr. PEREZ-GUERRERO (SECRETARIAT) suggested that the title of Article V, "Recommendations of the General Assembly and of the Council", should be changed to read "Recommendations of the United Nations".

DECISION: Article V as modified was adopted.

(c) Article VII

Mr. MILANKOVIC (YUGOSLAVIA) said that Yugoslavia could agree to Article VII as a statement of the principle of co-operation between the UPU, as a specialized agency, and the United Nations. He asked if the Negotiating Committee would prepare Articles specifying the mutual obligations of the UPU and the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN stated that this Article was general enough to cover all specific obligations to which the Yugoslavian delegate had referred. Moreover, he did not think it could now be said what should be done in Paris.

DECISION: Article VII was adopted.

/(d) Article XII

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In reply to a question asked by Mr. BODY (AUSTRALIA) Mr. PEREZ-GUERRERO (SECRETARIAT) explained that in Article XII there was no reference to Article V since the reference made to Article VI and VII provided ample coverage of any point that might arise under Article V.

DECISION: Article XII was adopted.

(e) Article XIV

The CHAIRMAN explained that paragraph 2 of Article XIV included the provisions concerning liaison with regional offices of the United Nations contained in Article IX of the Franco-British draft.

DECISION: Article XIV was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN asked for discussion of the Draft Agreement as a whole.

Mr. KAMENEV (UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS) did not think that there had been sufficient time to study the Draft Agreement which had been distributed just before the meeting. He would therefore have to abstain from voting.

Mr. MILANKOVIC (YUGOSLAVIA) would also abstain from voting because of Yugoslavia's reservations in regard to Article II.

The CHAIRMAN did not consider it necessary to take a formal vote on the agreement.

Mr. PACE (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) expressed whole-hearted approval of the Draft Agreement as an intelligent working agreement between the UPU and the United Nations, and stated that his country would give it full support at the Congress in Paris.

In reply to a point raised by Mr. LAGER (SWEDEN), the CHAIRMAN explained that there was no question of signing the Draft Agreement now. The Rapporteur's report would suggest the details of the procedure for submitting the Draft Agreement to the various governments. He added the

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hope that serious consideration would be given to the agreement before final decisions were taken at Paris.

The RAPPORTEUR stressed that the Draft Agreement was merely a recommendation which he hoped that as many governments as possible would adopt.

DECISION: The Draft Agreement was adopted.

2. Discussion on Secretariat's proposals for modification of the Universal Postal Convention.

The CHAIRMAN stated that such work ought to be left to the Governments concerned and put by them separately before the Paris Congress. He felt however that the question of the "haute surveillance" of the Swiss Government over the Union might be discussed here.

3. Discussion on the creation of an Administrative Council of the Universal Postal Union. .

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the general principle of an Administrative Council and the possibility of withdrawing the Universal Postal Union from Swiss control should be discussed; such a general discussion would be useful as most members present would be attending the Paris Congress in May 1947.

Mr. LEMARLE (FRANCE) thought that the matter of Swiss control was not connected with the establishment of an Administrative Council and should be considered separately.

Mr. WEICHTMAN (UNITED KINGDOM) believed that the establishment of an Administrative Council was a matter for the Paris Congress. It would, however, be helpful to analyze the position at the present meeting. He disagreed with the French representative, maintaining that the establishment of an Administrative Council was connected with international control.

In Article II it was proposed to transfer from Switzerland some diplomatic functions concerning application for new membership and postal duties, for example supervising the International Bureau, auditing
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Bureau accounts, staffing, and providing funds.

He pointed out that the checking of equivalents (expressed in gold centimes) adopted by countries adhering to the Universal Postal Union could only be carried out by experts. Such a duty could not be performed by an Administrative Council meeting on rare occasions. He preferred the Swiss to continue that work, especially as they had done so very efficiently in the past.

Referring to an observation by the Assistant Secretary-General's speech concerning the Temporary Transport and Communications Commission's Report, he stressed that the Universal Postal Union had no permanent organ to act in the intervals between postal Congresses. Machinery did exist under provisions in the Universal Postal Convention allowing for the submission and adoption of proposals between Congresses, but that procedure was exceedingly slow. Present procedure had been laid down in 1891 at the Vienna Congress and had remained unaltered since. The Australian postal authorities had pressed for a revision of existing procedure taking into account the facilities of air mail. Mr. WEIGETMAN believed that the present minimum period of fifteen months for action to be taken could be reduced to about six months.

Mr. Le NCUEL had prepared a tentative proposal for the establishment of an Administrative Council providing for equitable geographical distribution and rotating membership. In establishing such a Council one great difficulty was in selecting suitable representatives. The Universal Postal Congress had been reluctant to delegate its functions to a smaller body, which was a fact worth remembering when establishing an Administrative Council.

Mr. KROG (DENMARK) said that an emergency situation might arise requiring a quick solution and that present machinery was slow. He advocated the creation of a permanent Administrative Council. He supported the French representative but considered the establishment of a Council difficult.

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He wished to know why the words "Government of the Swiss Confederation" had been replaced by "International Bureau" in Article 2 bis of the Tentative Draft, as the Swiss Government had always rendered satisfactory service. He felt that it was unpleasant and unfair to debate on a country which was neither represented nor invited.

Mr. LUKAC (SECRETARIAT) replied that the present text was only a preliminary draft to be used as a basis of discussion. Although recognizing the great service of Switzerland, he felt that if the Universal Postal Union became a specialized agency of the United Nations, it would be difficult to let Switzerland retain its present functions because it was not a Member of the United Nations.

He doubted, therefore, if the Swiss Government would be prepared to act as a liaison body. He suggested that, if the International Bureau had greater powers, it might function without such supervision, but that this question was for the Congress to discuss.

Mr. KROG (DENMARK) thought that Switzerland could retain its functions even if an Administrative Council were created.

Mr. Van GOOR (NETHERLANDS) reserved his decision concerning the creation of an Administrative Council, as the relationship of the Universal Postal Union to the United Nations was not yet clear. If the relationship were purely administrative, the International Bureau would be an adequate intermediary. If, however, collaboration extended to problems of principle, it would be better for the United Nations to refer to a higher agency. A Council conceived as an administrative and information agency could not make decisions on postal administration. He felt that the time was not yet ripe to discuss the establishment of an Administrative Council.

He supported the belief of the United Kingdom representative that the Swiss Government was entirely satisfactory.

Mr. SHOEBERT (INDIA) supported the United Kingdom representative but

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pointed out that: the existing arrangement was economical; the principle of rotation was admirable but would involve problems regarding consistency of policy; the Swiss Government had no particular powers or Bureau, and a high-ranking council might make weighty decisions between Congresses which the Congresses would subsequently find difficult to accept.

Those difficulties could be discussed at the Paris Congress, and he suggested that further discussion should be discontinued.

Mr. LAGER (SWEDEN) supported the representative of Denmark concerning the establishment of an Administrative Council. He considered it difficult to discuss the problem in the absence of any representation of Switzerland.

The meeting rose at 1:15 p.m.
