

THREE HUNDRED AND NINTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Thursday, 3 November 1949, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Lester B. PEARSON (Canada).

Threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that general discussion on the question was closed, and said that the Committee had three draft resolutions (A/C.1/513, A/C.1/514/Rev.1 and A/C.1/518) before it for consideration.

2. He suggested that the joint draft resolution A/C.1/514/Rev.1, submitted by Australia, China, the United Kingdom and the United States which dealt with repatriation of children, should be considered first.

3. As there were no objections, he opened the debate on that draft resolution.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE REPATRIATION OF GREEK CHILDREN

4. Mr. KISELEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the first draft (A/C.1/514) had been somewhat toned down by its authors during revision. Nevertheless paragraph 2 did not correspond to fact. There was no need for concern as the repatriation of children was a difficult and complicated task which required time. Some delegations had further pointed out that the States which had sheltered those children were carrying out that task in accordance with General Assembly resolution 193 C (III).

5. Hostilities in Greece had not helped the repatriation of the children; obviously, conditions would be more favourable to their return, if hostilities ceased.

6. He pointed out that the parents of many of the children were in prison or concentration camps, and considered therefore that requests by parents for the repatriation of their children from camps could only have been obtained under pressure. He mentioned also an instance of children being claimed by a very distant relative. There were many similar examples, and he thought, therefore, that paragraph 2 should be deleted. His delegation could not vote for the proposal if paragraph 2 were retained.

7. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) though that paragraph 2 of the revised resolution contained a veiled charge against the States which had sheltered Greek children. The Red Cross Society's report had stated that the condition of the children who had received shelter in those States was satisfactory. Consequently, instead of feeling concern, it would be better to express gratitude for that humane action, and for the moral and material care given to the children by the States which had sheltered them.

8. The problem of repatriation was complex and its solution required time. The Governments concerned had already taken steps to implement General Assembly resolution 193 C (III) on the repatriation of children. Furthermore, hurried repatriation was undesirable as long as armed hostilities in Greece continued. He remarked upon the illogical attitude of certain delegations which had opposed the USSR draft resolution on the

cessation of hostilities (A/C.1/518), and which were now making veiled charges against the States which had sheltered the Greek children for not having as yet returned them to their homes.

9. He reminded the Committee that resolution 193 C (III) had been adopted unanimously during the General Assembly's previous session, and hoped that the same unanimity would be attained also during the current session. He, therefore, suggested that paragraph 2 of the draft resolution be deleted.

10. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) pointed out that any factors likely to lead to political controversy had been deleted from the revised draft resolution. He hoped, therefore, that it would meet with unanimous approval. Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution expressed a humanitarian concern that the Greek children had not been returned to their country. The authors had not intended any criticism of the States currently sheltering those children. There was therefore no need to delete that paragraph, but a separate vote should be taken so as to enable the Committee to make its views clear on that matter.

11. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) recalled that at the General Assembly's preceding session the question of the repatriation of children had been dealt with from a purely humanitarian point of view. He thought that, to maintain that attitude, paragraph 2 which was controversial and did not strengthen the remainder of the text should be deleted. Requests for repatriation had reached the Governments concerned only in August 1949. The examination and sorting of requests took a considerable time. There was, therefore, no need for concern.

12. The Committee should be grateful to the Governments which had undertaken to shelter the children, for they had enjoyed better conditions than those who had remained in Greece. He then read statements on that subject from newspaper correspondents, from which it could be seen that Greek children sheltered in Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia enjoyed better conditions than most orphans.

13. His delegation appealed to the Committee to refrain from using the draft resolution for political ends, and asked for the deletion of paragraph 2.

14. Mr. DE ALBA (Mexico) appealed to the authors of the draft resolution to agree to delete paragraph 2, so as to make a unanimous vote possible. Such a vote would not only denote agreement, but would also strengthen the action which the International Red Cross would take to repatriate the Greek children. If that were done all the Governments concerned would be obliged to assist the Red Cross in its work.

15. The resolution was humanitarian in substance. It should not, therefore, contain accusations, but should, above all, aim at results. Furthermore, unanimity on that question might facilitate the solution of the remaining questions on the Committee's agenda.

16. Mr. MAKIN (Australia) said that some of the parents of Greek children had emigrated to Australia and elsewhere. The words "to their homes" in paragraph 2 should, therefore, be interpreted as meaning the children's parents wherever they were.

17. Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) noted with satisfaction that Mr. Kiselev's proposal had been favourably received by certain delegations, in particular by that of Mexico. He wondered why, in the circumstances, the United States representative considered paragraph 2 indispensable. That paragraph expressed a certain concern; but in the course of debate, concern had been also shown in regard to the re-education of children in Greece. A proposal or an amendment might have been submitted on that subject. The reason why that had not been done, however, was a desire for unanimity.

18. Mr. Pipinelis had admitted that the Greek children abroad were in better condition than those who had remained in Greece. He could, therefore, see no reason to insert a paragraph blaming the States which had sheltered the Greek children.

19. The Australian representative's view was unfounded. The approach of winter would make the transportation and repatriation of children more difficult. He therefore supported the proposal made by the representative of the Byelorussian SSR and supported by the representative of Mexico.

20. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Australian representative's view that the word "home" might include a home in a foreign land, was not sufficient reason for retaining paragraph 2, as not a single request for repatriation had been received by the States sheltering the Greek children from any of the Greek parents in Australia or elsewhere.

21. The deletion of paragraph 2 would allow not only unanimous agreement on that humanitarian draft resolution, but would also make its application more effective.

22. ABDUR RAHIM Khan (Pakistan) had been impressed by the First Committee's desire to reach agreement in the interests of the children. He therefore hoped that the authors of the resolution would agree to revise their text and delete the words "with concern" from paragraph 2, so that the paragraph would not do more than state a fact. He appealed to all the representatives to consider that suggestion.

23. Mr. STOLK (Venezuela) recalled that, like the representative of Pakistan, he had already tried to obtain unanimity on that question. He had also intended to suggest the deletion of the words "with concern." The drafting of paragraph 2 was moreover too dogmatic. Indeed, it was not known whether some children had not already been repatriated; it would therefore be difficult to vote for paragraph 2 in its present form without first verifying the facts.

24. He therefore proposed that the Pakistan proposal be adopted, and that the rest of the paragraph be amended to state simply that some Greek children had not yet been returned to their homes.

25. Mr. PIPINELIS (Greece) saw no objection to accepting the Australian representative's in-

terpretation of the word "homes". He was, however, against the deletion of paragraph 2, since that paragraph merely stated facts, without passing judgment upon them. In that connexion, he assured members of the Committee, and especially the representative of Venezuela, that no repatriation had yet taken place and added that there was reason to believe that the delay might continue.

26. The Greek delegation considered that the responsibility for that delay should have been indicated, but as it was the injured party it had not proposed moral condemnation, in order to avoid that the eagerly awaited move should be further delayed. Nevertheless, opposition to the mention of such a lamentable fact would deprive the draft resolution of its fundamental meaning. Indeed, the Committee was considering the question anew because the Red Cross report had stated that Greek children had not been repatriated. That fact should, therefore, be mentioned in the draft resolution the Committee was to adopt. It was self-evident, however, that the Greek delegation would not oppose any possible drafting amendment of that paragraph.

27. Mr. C. MALIK (Lebanon) stated that he would be prepared to vote in favour of the revised draft resolution in the form in which it had been submitted. He had, however, listened with interest to the remarks made by the delegations of the Byelorussian SSR and the Soviet Union and to the suggestions made by the Pakistan representative.

28. The first two paragraphs of the joint draft resolution were in fact a preamble, and could therefore be condensed into a single paragraph. With regard to the substance of the question, if the Greek representative and the authors of the resolution would accept the deletion of the words "with concern", he would also accept it. He considered that the idea expressed in paragraph 2 should be retained. Nevertheless, in the interests of a unanimous decision, he wished to suggest as a matter of form that the first two words of paragraph 1 should be replaced by the word "Notes", and that the following wording should be used in paragraph 2: "Recognizing the necessity of further efforts for the full implementation of the above resolution . . ." If the representative of the USSR and the authors of the joint proposal approved those modifications, he would be prepared to propose them formally.

29. Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) regretted that the Greek representative had decided to speak on that question, for he had passed from the humanitarian to the political field. By stating that he was in agreement with the Australian representative's interpretation of the word "homes", the Greek representative had implied that Greek children might be sent anywhere, provided that they were not left in the country where they were at present.

30. He proposed formally that paragraph 2 of the revised resolution should be omitted.

31. Mr. PACHECO (Bolivia) considered that paragraph 2 merely stated the undeniable fact that no Greek children had been returned to their homes. The Bolivian delegation could not draw that conclusion without concern, and would vote in favour of paragraph 2 in its existing

form. It could not accept a text such as that submitted by the Lebanese representative, for it considered that that text served to conceal a reality which should be clearly stated in the resolution.

32. Mr. VITERI LAFRONTE (Ecuador) thought that the present wording of paragraph 2 might prevent the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole. The assertion that no Greek children had been returned to their homes was too categorical for his delegation's approval. He would abstain from voting if the existing text were retained. He was in favour of a text similar to that proposed by the Venezuelan representative and suggested the insertion of a phrase such as "a large majority of Greek children have not yet been returned to their homes" or "Greek children have not yet been returned to their homes".

33. If the existing text were retained, he would ask that a vote on the draft resolution should be taken paragraph by paragraph.

34. The CHAIRMAN called upon the authors of the proposal to give their views on the various suggestions and draft amendments that had been submitted.

35. U So NYUN (Burma) stated that, although his delegation was prepared to vote in favour of the existing text, in order to reach unanimity, he wished to suggest the following drafting for paragraph 2:

"Expresses the hope that all Greek children will be returned to their homes in response to the unanimous recommendation contained in the above resolution . . ."

36. Mr. BEBLER (Yugoslavia) stated that he was in favour of an amendment similar to that proposed by the representative of Venezuela.

37. He fully agreed with the interpretation of the word "homes" put forward by the Australian representative. That question was extremely important for Yugoslavia. In the first place, there were in that country half a dozen Greek children who had been claimed by parents residing in Australia, whereas several hundreds had been claimed by their parents in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary. In the second place, certain Greek children who were now in the three latter countries, especially in Czechoslovakia, had parents in Yugoslavia. The parents concerned were, for the most part, Greek citizens speaking the Slav Macedonian language, who had settled in Yugoslav Macedonia, probably forever, because of the oppression to which the Slav minority was subjected in Greece. Those parents' claims in regard to their children were of primary importance. Thus, it was not the Australian interpretation of the word "homes" that would prevent him from voting in favour of the existing text of paragraph 2.

38. Mr. DE LA TOURNELLE (France) agreed with the views expressed by Mr. Bebler. The Greek children should be returned to their homes, wherever they might be as a result of the vicissitudes of war.

39. He approved the existing text of paragraph 2, but with the deletion of the words "with concern".

40. Mr. GONZÁLEZ ALLENDES (Chile) supported the Australian representative's interpretation of the word "homes" and considered that any amendment to the text of the draft resolution should retain that word, since, in the opinion of his delegation, it represented the actual residence of the parents.

41. He considered that the existing text of paragraph 2 might be retained, with only one amendment, that of the omission of the words "with concern".

42. Mr. BOHEMAN (Sweden) was in favour of the present text of paragraph 2 if the word "homes" was interpreted as indicated by the Australian representative and the words "with concern" were deleted, if that was essential to reach a unanimous decision.

43. Mr. RAFAEL (Israel) supported the amendment proposed by the Lebanese representative, since he considered it to be the most likely to eliminate controversy.

44. Mr. BELAÚNDE (Peru) thought that in order to reach agreement the words "with concern" might be deleted and that the Venezuelan representative's suggestion should be adopted.

45. Sir Terence SHONE (United Kingdom) proposed the following wording for paragraph 2, provided that the other authors of the proposals were prepared to accept it:

"Notes that the Greek children have not as yet been returned to their homes in response to the unanimous recommendation in the above resolution, notwithstanding the co-operative attitude of certain of the Governments concerned, and recognizes the necessity of further efforts for the full implementation of this resolution" (A/C.1/523).

46. Baron VAN PALLANDT (Netherlands) stated that he intended to vote in favour of the joint draft resolution in its existing form, since he did not consider that political questions were involved. He regretted that the United Kingdom was prepared to delete the words "with concern", but he would vote in favour of the resolution as amended by the United Kingdom, since that did not affect the substance of the question.

47. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) accepted the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom.

48. Mr. CHOCANO (Guatemala) pointed out that there seemed to be general agreement on the interpretation of the word "homes"; it was therefore essential that paragraph 4 be amended, to avoid incompatibility between that concept of "homes", on the one hand, and that of repatriation, on the other. Paragraph 4 should mention the "early return of Greek children to their homes", and not their "repatriation".

49. Mr. MAKIN (Australia) stated that he was prepared to accept the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom representative.

50. Mr. CHENG (China) considered that paragraph 2 corresponded to the facts. Nevertheless, in the interests of a unanimous decision, he would accept the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom representative.

51. Mr. C. MALIK (Lebanon) requested the Chairman to ask the authors of the joint draft

resolution on the one hand whether they were prepared to support the amendment submitted by the United Kingdom delegation, even if it were not adopted unanimously by the Committee, and on the other the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR, Poland and the Soviet Union whether they would accept that amendment.

52. The CHAIRMAN called upon the authors of the joint draft resolution to inform the Committee whether or not the replacement of paragraph 2 as a whole by the United Kingdom amendment would be dependent on its unanimous adoption.

53. Sir Terence SHONE (United Kingdom) said that his amendment had been submitted in the hope that it would obtain the majority of the Committee's votes and perhaps full acceptance.

54. Mr. J. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that he would have to obtain the Russian text of the United Kingdom's representative's amendment before he could give his final views on it.

55. The main argument put forward by certain representatives in favour of paragraph 2 was that it stated the facts. Those facts, however, were actually contained in paragraph 1 of the first draft, which referred to the report of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. That report mentioned the enormous work performed by the Governments that had received the Greek children as well as by the Committee and the League. It pointed out that those Governments had acted in that humanitarian work as a matter of duty. Much organizing work still remained to be carried out, since it had not yet been possible, for technical reasons, to take final measures for the return of the children. In those circumstances, it was difficult to imagine what reproaches could be made to the countries concerned. Neither the authors of the draft resolution nor the USSR delegation could find any, and his delegation therefore considered the insertion of paragraph 2 in the draft resolution unnecessary. The Greek representative's statement left no doubt that that

paragraph had political implications, and that only confirmed the Soviet Union delegation's conviction that the paragraph should not be retained.

56. If he understood the United Kingdom amendment correctly, it seemed to stress the fact that the General Assembly should recognize the necessity of further efforts for the implementation of the provisions of the previous resolution. That idea, however, was already expressed in paragraph 4 and the inclusion of two paragraphs dealing with the same subject in one resolution could serve no useful purpose.

57. He reserved the right to give his views on the United Kingdom amendment when he received the printed text.

58. Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) stated that he could not express an opinion on the amendment until the text was distributed.

59. Mr. C. MALIK (Lebanon) suggested that the first three paragraphs of the joint draft resolution should be amalgamated into one paragraph constituting the preamble to the proposal. The words "Notes" and "Recognizes" could be replaced by the words "Noting" and "Recognizing".

60. The CHAIRMAN proposed that an attempt should be made to submit a final text for consideration at the next meeting.

61. Mr. SUNDE (Norway) considered that paragraph 2 was not indispensable. Nevertheless, if there were any objections to its deletion, he would support the amendment proposed by the representative of Ecuador, for the adoption of the following wording:

"Notes that Greek children have not yet been returned to their homes".

62. He also supported the amendment to paragraph 4 submitted by the representative of Guatemala.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

THREE HUNDRED AND TENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Thursday, 3 November 1949 at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Lester B. PEARSON (Canada).

Threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece (continued)

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION CONCERNING REPATRIATION OF GREEK CHILDREN (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the joint draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/514/Rev.1, and to the United Kingdom amendment thereto (A/C.1/523). He inquired whether the sponsors of the joint draft resolution had any observation with regard to the suggestions made, respectively, in the course of the morning session, by the representatives of Lebanon and Guatemala to the effect that the first two paragraphs of the joint draft resolution should be considered as a preamble and that in paragraph 4 the words "early return of Greek children to

their homes" be substituted for the words "repatriation of the children".

2. Sir Terence SHONE (United Kingdom) said he would accept the Guatemalan amendment and added that his delegation was prepared to delete from paragraph 2 (A/C.1/523) the words "in response to the unanimous recommendation in the above resolution".

3. Mr. KISELEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that since there seemed to be an endeavour on the part of the First Committee to reach a unanimous decision on the draft resolution concerning the Greek children, his delegation would submit the following compromise text as a substitute for paragraph 2:

"Notes that the Greek children have not as yet been returned to their homes in accordance with