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**GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTH COMMITTEE, 738th
 MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Jiří NOSEK (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 44

Budget estimates for the financial year 1960 (A/4110,
 A/4170, A/4223, A/C.5/777, A/C.5/782, A/C.5/783,
 A/C.5/L.567) (continued)

First reading (continued)

SECTION 18. HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES
 (A/4110, A/4170)

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/4170,
 para. 217) for an appropriation of \$100,000 under sec-
 tion 18 was unanimously approved on first reading.*

SECTION 19a. NARCOTIC DRUGS CONTROL ADVI-
 SORY SERVICES (A/4223, A/C.5/777)

1. The CHAIRMAN read out a letter from the Chair-
 man of the Third Committee informing him that the
 Third Committee had adopted, at its 937th meeting, a
 resolution (A/C.3/L.779) on technical assistance in
 narcotics control, which reaffirmed Economic and
 Social Council resolution 730 I (XXVIII). He invited
 the Committee to consider the financial implications
 of that resolution, which appeared in the revised esti-
 mates submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/777,
 para. 43), and the report of the Advisory Committee
 on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on those
 estimates (A/4223, para. 18).

2. Mr. YATES (Secretariat) recalled the reasons
 which had led the Economic and Social Council to
 adopt resolution 730 I (XXVIII). For several years,
 it had been clear that the efforts of Governments and
 international bodies to prevent illicit traffic in nar-
 cotics were no longer sufficient. The Commission on
 Narcotic Drugs and the Council had felt that the system
 of control embodied in the international narcotics
 treaties should be supplemented by the methods of
 technical assistance which had proved so successful
 in other fields. However, the long waiting lists of pro-

jects, the impracticability of arranging inter-country
 projects and the inadequacy of United Nations financing
 arrangements constituted serious obstacles. The new
 arrangements proposed in the Council's resolution
 would permit the best possible utilization of technical
 assistance in that field. The new programme would
 involve no increase in staff or administrative costs.
 With the sum of \$75,000 requested by the Secretary-
 General, it would be possible to carry out one inter-
 country project, provide two experts, and grant eight
 long-term fellowships. The reduction of \$25,000 re-
 commended by the Advisory Committee would make it
 necessary to dispense with three or four long-term
 fellowships and one of the two experts. As it had al-
 ready done with regard to the experts in social affairs,
 the Secretariat could assure the Committee: (a) that
 it was in a position to carry out the proposed projects;
 (b) that the scheme would be closely integrated with
 assistance given under the Expanded Programme of
 Technical Assistance and (c) that the projects were
 valid and urgent. No formal request had yet been made,
 but the Secretary-General's report^{1/} and information
 received since its publication indicated that substan-
 tially more than \$75,000 would be needed to meet fore-
 seeable needs which could not be met under the present
 arrangements.

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/4223,
 para. 18) for an appropriation of \$50,000 under section
 19a. was unanimously approved on first reading.*

SECTION 20. SPECIAL EXPENSES (A/4110, A/4710)

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/4170,
 para. 218) for an appropriation of \$3,349,500 under
 section 20 was unanimously approved on first reading.*

AGENDA ITEM 54

Personnel questions:

(a) Geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat:
 report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/784)

3. Mr. HAMILTON (Director of Personnel) assured
 the Committee that the question of the proper geographi-
 cal distribution of the staff was a constant preoccu-
 pation of his Office. The Secretary-General's report
 (A/C.5/784) indicated the extent to which General
 Assembly resolution 1294 (XIII) had been implemented.
 As shown in paragraph 16, the distribution of United
 Nations staff by major geographical areas was reason-
 ably equitable, except in the case of Eastern Europe.
 The figures given for that region were, in fact, con-
 siderably short of the desirable range.

4. The number of Member State nationalities included
 in the staff would soon reach 73. However, it was not
 expected that a figure of 82 could be reached for some

^{1/}Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-eighth
 Session, Annexes, agenda item 14, document E/3268 and Add.1.

years. Several countries had stated, in reply to the Secretariat's requests for candidates, that they were unable to make anyone available to the United Nations.

5. The number of countries within the "desirable range" would soon reach 41 and the representation of the new Member States continued to increase. The number of staff from the USSR remained one of the most important factors contributing to imbalance. There had recently been a slight improvement and, if all went well, there would be 10 additional staff members from the USSR in the Secretariat by the end of the year. The Secretary-General earnestly hoped that the rate of recruitment would increase in the future.

6. Referring to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/785) on the proportion of fixed-term staff, he pointed out that, during the preceding three years, twice as many appointments had been made on a fixed-term basis as on a career basis. The proportion of the staff in fixed-term status in the Professional categories and above, but excluding staff in posts with special language requirements, had reached 16.6 per cent. The ratio should continue to increase, and the Secretary-General intended to continue the policy of offering fixed-term appointments to new recruits in the majority of cases. Such a policy would give him a greater opportunity to redress any imbalance in the geographical distribution.

7. No career appointments had been offered above the P-3 level during the last year and only one fixed-term contract had been converted to a permanent contract above that level.

8. Mr. TUGARINOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the question of the geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat had an important bearing on the work of the United Nations from both the practical and policy points of view. From the practical point of view, which meant from the point of view of the effectiveness and competence of the staff, it was clear that only wide representation of all peoples cultures and systems of government could guarantee the universality and objectivity required of an international secretariat. The United Nations Secretariat should not be subject to the influence of any single country or group of countries.

9. At previous sessions many references had been made to serious violations of the principle of geographical distribution. Unfortunately, however, there had been no appreciable improvement during the last year. The Secretary-General's figures showed that 8 countries were under-represented while 11 countries were not represented at all. There were 364 staff members at the P-1 level and above from Western Europe, 295 from North America, only 68 from Eastern Europe (including the USSR) and 36 from Africa. In an attempt to justify that abnormal situation, it had been stated that it was essential to give primary consideration to the qualifications of candidates. Quoting from the Charter, the Secretary-General had stated, at the 727th meeting, that the paramount consideration in the employment of staff should be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency and competence, while due regard should be paid to geographical distribution. There was no justification for regarding efficiency and geographical distribution as conflicting requirements and his delegation requested the Secretary-General to abandon such a policy. In the

first place, an harmonious combination of all the required factors—efficiency, competence and equitable geographical distribution—could give the Secretariat a truly international character and guarantee its efficiency and objectivity. Article 101 of the Charter, which the Secretary-General had quoted, did not give precedence to any one of those factors, but simply emphasized the importance of ensuring as wide a geographical distribution as possible. Secondly, the Secretary-General had lost sight of the fact that, by placing greater emphasis on competence than on geographical distribution, he might give certain States the impression that they were being discriminated against. It was obvious that all countries were at present in a position to nominate qualified candidates for posts in the Secretariat.

10. As regards the political aspect of the problem, he felt that, in order to fulfil the purposes of the United Nations and ensure the maintenance of international peace, international co-operation and the economic and social development of the under-developed countries, the Secretariat at all levels should reflect and respect the interests of all Member States and not the policies of any group of countries. Inequitable geographical distribution was a vestige of the cold war which paralysed the work of the Secretariat. For example, there could be no justification for the fact that 739 staff members out of 1,272 belonged to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries or that countries which were not Members of the United Nations but which belonged to Western military alliances were represented in the Secretariat, whereas certain Member States did not have a single one of their nationals on the staff. Such vestiges of the cold war should be eliminated as rapidly as possible and, in the spirit of the Camp David meeting, conditions should be restored to normal.

11. In resolution 1097 (XI), which it had confirmed at the twelfth session (resolution 1226 (XII), the General Assembly had recommended that, in future appointments at all levels, appropriate preference should be given to nationalities which formed a disproportionately small part of the Secretariat. Yet table 2 annexed to the Secretary-General's report showed that, out of 84 appointments made in 1959 to posts subject to geographical distribution, only 14 involved nationals of under-represented countries. The United States, for its part, had received 12 posts and the Netherlands 4, whereas some countries which were under-represented or not represented at all did not even appear in the table. Those figures demonstrated that there was no reason to share the optimism shown by the Secretary-General in his report and that certain steps should be taken to remedy a regrettable state of affairs.

12. In the first place, it would seem logical to limit recruitment to the nationals of under-represented countries. Secondly, in order to widen the Secretary-General's field of action, which was at present very limited on account of the small number of vacancies, the Secretariat could decide to end the recruitment of career staff and to grant only fixed-term contracts. That would make it possible to restore the desirable balance and would also enable under-developed countries to send some of their nationals to the Secretariat for a limited period in order to acquire the necessary knowledge and experience.

13. The Soviet delegation relied on those States which now had many staff members in the Secretariat to

discard all purely egoistical considerations and support its proposals to make the Secretariat a genuinely universal body and to give the under-developed countries their rightful place.

14. His delegation had noted with satisfaction the hope expressed by the Secretary-General that the rate of recruitment of qualified nationals of the USSR, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR would accelerate substantially over the coming months (A/C.5/784, para. 20). Unfortunately, the present situation showed the Secretary-General's promises in a doubtful light: during the period under review the Secretariat had recruited only 4 Soviet staff members as compared with 20 United States nationals. The USSR had a total of 34 staff members, the United States 356, the United Kingdom 132 and France 90 (table 1). In some departments there was no Soviet staff, and the same policy appeared to be followed in new United Nations organs: no posts in the Special Fund had so far been allotted to nationals of the Soviet Union or East European countries.

15. The Soviet delegation was sure the Fifth Committee would take the requisite decisions to ensure that the principle of geographical distribution was better observed, and thus make its contribution to the cause of strengthening world peace and co-operation among peoples.

16. Mr. SICILIANI (Italy) said that the Secretary-General's report showed that a balanced geographical distribution of the staff had not yet been achieved; therefore the Secretary-General should, in accordance with resolution 1294 (XIII), continue his efforts to remedy that state of affairs, giving particular regard to posts at the top level.

17. Taking into account the 84 staff members appointed since 1 September 1958, it appeared that only 19 States were short of the desirable range of posts; 9 countries had reached the desirable minimum, 29 had a number of posts somewhere between the minimum and the maximum of the desirable range, and 25 had more than the maximum. When the picture was seen as a whole, therefore, the distribution of posts could be considered satisfactory only with regard to 38 countries, the other 44 Member States being either over- or under-represented. Those figures sufficed to show how much remained to be done.

18. Furthermore only 6 of the 19 countries still below the minimum of the desirable range seemed to have benefited from the new appointments made between 1 September 1958 and 31 August 1959, while additional nationals had been recruited from 14 of the countries which had already had more than the desirable range of posts. It should also be noted that, of countries which had reached but not passed the desirable minimum, only one had benefited from the new appointments while, when the figures were adjusted for separations from the service, another had remained at the desirable minimum. Lastly, 20 of the 84 new appointments (or under 25 per cent) had gone to countries which had been short of the desirable range of posts, and 21 to countries whose nationals had already held more than the desirable range.

19. Even allowing for possible inaccuracies in the figures he had quoted, it was clear that the situation was far from satisfactory. Italy, which had had 15 of its nationals in the Secretariat on 1 September 1958, had since gained 4 new appointments, but separations

from the service had brought its present number down to 17, and its representation accordingly remained well below the desirable minimum. At that rate it would take many years to reach a satisfactory situation; the Italian delegation, therefore, was bound to express its concern and its hope that the Committee would draw the Secretariat's attention to the need to redouble its efforts in the matter.

20. Mr. HSUEH (China) observed that no one questioned the principle of geographical distribution, which was clearly set forth in the Charter. The point at issue was how far it had been put into practice.

21. In considering that question, the Committee should keep in mind the other basic principle which was laid down in the Charter and to which the Secretary-General had referred, namely, the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The Chinese delegation, convinced that that was a prerequisite for securing maximum efficiency at the lowest possible cost and for stabilizing the budget—an aim which all shared—unreservedly endorsed the Secretary-General's view (727th meeting) that the most qualified men could not and should not be put aside for reasons of geographical distribution; and it sincerely hoped that during the past few years the Secretary-General had not been induced, in deference to the principle of geographical distribution, to engage staff who in any way fell short of the required standards.

22. There was no doubt, however, that the observance of those standards did not affect the application of the principle of geographical distribution, for competent persons were to be found in all countries. The Secretary-General had made serious efforts to implement General Assembly resolution 1294 (XIII), and slow but steady progress had already been made. Nevertheless, as the Secretary-General himself indicated in paragraph 4 of his report, much remained to be done, and the Chinese delegation wished to make a few comments in an attempt to assist him.

23. The number of Chinese nationals employed in the Secretariat—52 on 31 August 1959—was barely above the desirable minimum and far short of the median desirable figure. Nothing seemed to have been done to remedy that situation, which had obtained for several years; for, despite that state of affairs, none of the 84 appointments made between 1 September 1958 and 31 August 1959 had gone to a Chinese national, whereas 18 of the new staff members were from countries which had already been over the maximum of their desirable ranges. Furthermore, while the geographical distribution had slightly improved in 1959 in comparison with 1958, there were still 25 countries whose nationals held more than the desirable range of posts. Lastly, a careful study of table 6 showed that the number of posts held by the nationals of one Member State over and above the desirable maximum had increased so sharply in the last few years that the new posts thus filled would have been enough to redress the situation for some 10 countries that were under-represented or not represented at all; if it was true that the best qualified persons were not all concentrated in one country, there must be some other explanation for that anomaly, which was enough in itself to show how much room there was for improvement.

24. The Chinese delegation was aware of the Secretary-General's difficulties. It had made its observations in

a purely constructive spirit, and sincerely shared the Secretary-General's hope that a more extensive and balanced geographical distribution would be achieved.

25. Mr. EL HAKIM (United Arab Republic) expressed his satisfaction at the progress made over the past few years with regard to the geographical distribution of the staff and the recruitment policy pursued. That progress might seem inadequate and unduly slow, but the Committee had to bear in mind the many obstacles facing the Secretary-General in his efforts to solve that complex and difficult problem.

26. His delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would continue to take steps to achieve a better geographical distribution of the staff within a reasonably

short time and without prejudice to the standards of competence and integrity required of Secretariat staff. In that connexion, the aim should be to continue increasing the proportion of fixed-term staff in order to introduce a system of rotation that would facilitate the attainment of the desirable balance. Furthermore, the principle of geographical distribution should be applied with the utmost strictness to the promotion of staff, and he hoped, in particular, that a better balance could steadily be achieved at the higher levels. Furthermore, questions of recruitment and promotion were closely interrelated, and the problem of geographical distribution should be considered from both those standpoints.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.