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 MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Mario MAJOLI (Italy).

AGENDA ITEM 50

Budget estimates for the financial year 1961: (A/4370  
 A/4408, A/4506, A/4523, A/C.5/818, A/C.5/819 and  
 Corr.1, A/C.5/828 and Corr.1, A/C.5/829, A/C.5/L.611)  
 (continued)

General discussion (continued)

1. The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that although he wished to revert, at a later stage, to the main financial and budgetary problems facing the United Nations, his present intervention had been rendered necessary by the statement made at the 768th meeting by the USSR representative, a statement which was obviously part of a follow-up of an operation initiated by the USSR delegation in the plenary debates of the General Assembly.
2. The fallacies in the arguments which that delegation had presented as evidence of his, the Secretary-General's, alleged biased attitude would be readily apparent to delegations, but he nevertheless wished to put on record his views on those arguments.
3. The question of the geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat would be considered later by the Committee when the latter could base its debate on a full presentation of the statistical data. It was not the first time the Committee had considered that subject, but it was the first time it had flatly been alleged that the universally recognized lack of balance in the composition of the Secretariat was the expression of a conscious and partial policy. In the light of all previous studies, the Committee should be able to appreciate the reasons for the present composition of the Secretariat.
4. The staff was employed, to an overwhelming extent, in a form providing for career service. For that and other practical reasons, its composition when he had taken office seven and a half years before had consti-

tuted a "fait accompli" which could be altered only to the extent that officers resigned because of age or for other reasons. Few opportunities for such alteration had yet arisen since the initial limited reduction he had made in the size of the staff and no revolutionary changes in the composition of the Secretariat had proved possible. He had adhered to the rule, based on the Charter of the United Nations, the staff regulations and the obligation to fulfil contractual obligations in good faith, that personnel should not be dismissed on grounds of nationality, to enable the United Nations to arrive at another geographical balance. He did not believe that the Assembly would wish to depart from that rule for any purpose.

5. The basis of the policy which he applied in recruitment and in selecting personnel for missions and special assignments was the Charter, which referred, in the first instance, to "the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity". The Charter further stated that "due regard should be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible". The USSR representative's primary request that, under all circumstances, three groups should be balanced within the Secretariat was at variance with the criteria laid down in the Charter.

6. Of the three factors, "efficiency, competence, and integrity", he would put integrity first. The requirement of integrity signified to him that United Nations officials, in the performance of their duties, should be loyal only to the United Nations. Those who did not see their work in that light or were forced to act on the basis of a different standard might still be useful in a United Nations operation, but the different rules of integrity which they applied could not be ignored by the Chief Executive, irrespective of their nationality. The requirement of integrity being met, he regarded competence and efficiency as being of equal importance. If required, United Nations officials should be prepared to give all their time to their work; they must be able to do so efficiently and to adjust themselves to teamwork with others of different backgrounds. Competence signified not only reasonably good training in a particular professional field, but also ability to put that training to full use in the international field.

7. Applying the Charter criteria, he had found it easier to recruit from some parts of the world than from others. If that had been reflected in the composition of hurriedly organized missions, he made no excuse for the fact. In his opinion, to accuse people who served the United Nations in the true spirit of the Charter, with unreserved loyalty and an integrity beyond praise, of being, because of their passports, spokesmen of one Power bloc or another, was a slight to men and women who deserved much better.

8. Various countries provided lists of candidates for Secretariat posts and apparently suitable persons were

picked from those lists when vacancies arose. Only too frequently, however, it happened that those recruited retired, resigned or were perhaps withdrawn after a short time and without pre-warning. It was, in some cases, difficult to effect recruitment which would keep pace with such withdrawals and lead to a continuous and desirable increase in the group concerned.

9. A primary consideration which he had to bear in mind, despite the very limited resources available to him, was the need for the Secretariat to be able to do its work in a way which would stand up to the critics of the future as well as to the honest critics of the present. To compromise with that aim in order to smooth the way momentarily would be to betray trust in the Secretariat—the caretakers of an experiment in national co-operation that would lay the basis for similar efforts in the future. He therefore looked in the first place for the man and only in the second place at the statistics. It was perhaps time for others also to apply qualitative rather than quantitative criteria.

10. In his statement concerning the various United Nations missions, the USSR representative had again been seriously at variance with the Charter. His proposals appeared to reflect a philosophy regarding the United Nations which ignored Article 99 of the Charter and what followed from it. If the Secretary-General was entitled to draw the attention of the Security Council to threats to peace and security, was he to rely on reports in the Press or from particular Governments? Certainly not. He had to find out for himself, and that could mean that he had to go himself, as he had gone to Laos in November 1959. To deny the Secretary-General the right to such personal fact-finding was, in fact to erase Article 99 from the Charter. That Article could be robbed of its content if such action was deemed appropriate, but it should not then be expected that anyone with a sense of his responsibilities would assume the duties of Secretary-General under the Charter.

11. However, the attitude adopted by the USSR representative had further implications. The mission to Laos of the Secretary-General's personal representative had been arranged at the request of the Chief of State and his legitimate Government and it had been endorsed by succeeding Governments, including the present one. The USSR representative's criticism implied that the Secretary-General could not respond to a practical request from a Government and the legitimate authorities of a country, unless such response had the approval of the Security Council, under the unanimity rule, or of the General Assembly, which might not be in session when the need arose. Those countries which desired independent assistance from the United Nations, in the modest forms open to the Secretary-General and without the complications of a major international political debate, would certainly be interested in the attitude of the USSR representative.

12. What was true of Laos was truer of Guinea. He had offered the President of that country practical assistance. The President and his Government had wanted, had accepted and had used that assistance. It would certainly interest Guinea to learn that his provision of assistance had been illegal.

13. Within a field that was administratively under his authority, he had assumed the burden of helping Gov-

ernments, at their request, not out of a desire to interfere, but because that was a part of the duties of the Organization. If the USSR representative held another view, he should say so clearly and test his view against the views of those who looked to the United Nations for support. He wondered why such a United Nations role was now considered so objectionable.

14. Regular technical assistance missions, which had not as yet been subjected to criticism such as that now voiced, could be of very different types. Some involved only a few technical experts, while others consisted of highly qualified experts used by Governments as advisers in their central planning. A distinction had first to be made between missions which were purely technical and those which had some kind of political impact. Secondly, a technical assistance mission might be of political significance, but in a way entirely under the control of the Government. Many Governments had sought and had received the latter type of technical assistance. Was that also to be considered illegal? And was it also to be considered illegal if the Resident Representative in a regular technical assistance mission was frequently called in by cabinet ministers for discussions and even had direct access to the Chief of State?

15. If it was not, what then was the difference between a technical assistance mission and special representatives such as those sent to Laos and Guinea, concerning whom objections had been raised? Alternatively, was the present criticism based on the view that Governments should not ask for, receive and accept technical assistance which was more than marginal and which might strengthen their hand so as to make them more independent of bilateral arrangements?

16. The full-scale attack made at the 768th meeting on certain policies could with greater justification have taken place in some other United Nations body, where it could have been based on his introduction to his annual reports to the General Assembly for the two years 1958-1959<sup>1/</sup> and 1959-1960.<sup>2/</sup> The principles which he applied and the aims which he pursued had been spelled out in those documents in a way which should clarify the present difference of views. In that connexion, he asked members of the Committee to read page 3 of the introduction to the report of the previous year and part 3 of the introduction to the report of the current year.

17. The USSR representative appeared to consider that technical assistance should be reduced to marginal expert work, that the Secretary-General should forget the responsibilities and needs which flowed from Article 99, and that he should serve only as a chief administrator of the Secretariat, technically assisting a vast conference machinery. That implied that the United Nations should be reduced to the role of a framework for public multilateral negotiations and robbed of its possibilities of action to preserve peace and to prevent such conflicts as might come before the various organs of the United Nations.

18. The United Nations was the instrument of the Governments of its Member States and they alone decided the destiny of the Organization. They could choose the line which had been emerging slowly in response to current needs over the last few years, or

<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 1A.

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., Fifteenth Session, Supplement No. 1A.

they could choose to fall back on the pattern of the League of Nations or the most conservative interpreters of the United Nations Charter. The Secretariat, as a body, would certainly loyally accept the role for the Organization which was chosen by Member States, but it should be understood that every member of the Secretariat served in accordance with his own conscience and that the best might withdraw if they felt they had no faith in the manner in which the Organization was permitted to survive.

19. Mr. CESKA (Austria) said that the intensification and expansion of United Nations activities, especially the support given to under-developed countries, inevitably resulted in heavier financial commitments for the Organization. The vitality of the United Nations, which had been particularly evident in its efforts to maintain international security during the past year, was also naturally reflected in its budget. His delegation shared the concern expressed by others at the increased financial burden imposed on Member States. It was necessary, moreover, to consider the total contributions those States were required to make to the various United Nations special programmes and to the specialized agencies.

20. In examining the 1961 budget estimates (A/4370), the Committee would have to satisfy itself that any additional appropriations would not be used, even in part, to finance an unproductive expansion of the administrative apparatus. Delegations had a responsibility to their peoples and Governments to ensure that the highest degree of efficiency was achieved at the lowest possible cost. That was of particular importance during the present crucial period when the United Nations was assuming unprecedented importance. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions which provided the best guarantee of observance of the principle of economy, had made a careful examination of the 1961 budget estimates and had recommended a total reduction of nearly \$1 million (A/4408).

21. With reference to the appropriation of \$202,000 requested under section 2, chapter I, for the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunity to be held at Vienna, he was glad to confirm that his country would contribute up to \$130,000 towards the cost of that Conference. The Advisory Committee had proposed that the estimate should be cut to \$190,000 by reducing expenditure on the printing of documentation for the Conference (A/4408, para. 103). His delegation considered it would be unwise to prejudice the outcome of the work of so important a conference, dealing with difficult subjects of a highly technical nature, by failing to provide for the necessary technical facilities. At a number of past conferences, such as the Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, participating delegations had laid great stress on the need for adequate documentation. He therefore asked the Secretary-General for information on the possible effect of the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee on the work of the Conference.

22. His delegation was concerned at the precarious financial position of the United Nations, caused by the large arrears of Member States on their contributions to the regular budget and, in particular, on their contributions to the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). It did not agree with the Advisory Committee's

suggestion that a possible solution was to increase the Working Capital Fund to \$30 million (A/4408, para. 68 (a)). That would merely have the effect of increasing the financial obligations of Member States. A step which might perhaps help the Organization to overcome its financial difficulties would be to allow States to pay their contributions in monthly instalments. Such a procedure would be particularly convenient, as the United Nations itself did not have to meet all its expenditure at the beginning of each year. Staff costs, such as salaries and wages, which represented the largest item of expenditure, involved a monthly outlay by the Organization. The Working Capital Fund, which amounted at present to more than one third of an annual United Nations budget, could then be drawn on to meet unforeseen and sudden expenditures.

23. The hopes of the entire world were now, more than ever, directed towards the United Nations. The basic idea of the Charter—the elimination of tensions and threats to peace through the promotion of economic and social progress throughout the world—was again gathering strength. Furtherance of that development, even if it had financial implications, constituted a real service to mankind.

24. Mr. BLOIS (Canada) said that the initial budget estimates for 1961 had obviously been prepared with care. They had, moreover, been the subject of an invaluable study by the Advisory Committee.

25. His country accepted in varying degrees the arguments which the Advisory Committee had advanced in favour of the reductions it had recommended in the estimates. It considered those reductions in the light of the total cost of the over-all programmes and budgets of the United Nations family of organizations, which it calculated had been less than \$250 million in 1958. The comparable figure for 1961 promised to be considerably more than twice that amount. New United Nations agencies had been set up and new programmes had been undertaken. His country's proportionate share of the rapidly rising United Nations expenditures had been substantial. Canada was the sixth largest contributor to the United Nations budget and was contributing on that basis to UNEF. Furthermore, it was contributing a much larger share of the cost of the various voluntary programmes. It was already committed to contribute \$19 million towards the various United Nations programmes and budgets in 1960, a figure which did not include the costs of equipment which his country had provided to UNEF—costs which the United Nations was not yet in a position to reimburse owing to the failure of many Member States to contribute.

26. The present financial and budgetary situation of the United Nations had two very disturbing aspects. Firstly, the rapidly increasing level of expenditure was not being covered by contributions from Member States, as indicated by the inability of the Organization to pay its bills. Those countries which did contribute, whether in cash or in military personnel and equipment, were bearing an inequitable share of the costs of a collective decision in which the majority of Members of the United Nations had participated. If that situation continued, countries which were at present meeting their responsibilities might become reluctant to contribute further to the United Nations programmes and budgets at the present high level. That process might accelerate and might seriously undermine the

Organization—a possibility which should be of special concern to the medium and smaller Powers which were looking increasingly to the United Nations for support and assistance. His Government therefore hoped that a broad measure of financial support would be given at the present session to the peace-keeping operations being undertaken by the United Nations in the Middle East and in the Congo.

27. The United Nations budget estimates should therefore be subjected to close scrutiny and his delegation would support the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, as they appeared to be by no means excessive. However, it would give the most careful consideration to arguments advanced by the Secretary-General concerning particular budget items.

*Mr. Chelli (Tunisia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

28. Sir Robert GRIMSTON (United Kingdom) said that the charges of illegality and breach of the Charter which the USSR representative had seen fit to bring against the Secretary-General and the Secretariat at the 768th meeting had been well answered by the Secretary-General who, in carrying out his difficult duties, had the full confidence and support of the overwhelming majority of Member States. Such political charges had no place in the Fifth Committee.

29. The USSR representative's proposal to impose a ceiling of \$50 million on budgetary expenditure did not constitute a satisfactory solution to the problem of reducing the level of expenditure in 1961 and, moreover, he believed that it had been made before by the USSR delegation. Something more was expected of the Committee than sweeping proposals for reductions in expenditure. Such reductions as were proposed should be shown to be feasible and capable of being effected without impairing essential programmes decided upon by competent United Nations organs. That had not been done by the USSR delegation, which had merely spoken against the continuance of certain missions set up by Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and had complained of the lack of Soviet representation in such missions and even in the United Nations Emergency Force. Such complaints would come with more weight from delegations which had not persistently defaulted on their obligation to contribute financially to the Force.

30. His delegation looked forward to receiving the Secretary-General's report on the further progress made in 1960 towards ensuring adequate geographic representation in the Secretariat. If the USSR suggestions were designed to introduce into the Secretariat the political divisions which unfortunately existed between certain Member States, that would be a development which his delegation would strongly deplore.

31. At the fourteenth session his delegation had paid a tribute to the Secretary-General's achievement in curbing United Nations expenditures without impairing necessary growth, although it had been alarmed by a certain tendency to expansion. It had also been concerned at the growing seriousness of the United Nations cash position. However, the budgetary position of the previous session had now completely changed and the Secretary-General had warned of heavy expenditure far exceeding anything which had so far been envisaged by the Organization. Even before the recent developments in the Congo, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had pointed out that the combined cost of

the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the voluntary programmes would amount to nearly \$300 million, and the final cost of the United Nations action in the Congo was still unknown. Such was the sombre background against which the Committee was considering the 1961 regular budget estimates.

32. The Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of about 1.4 per cent in the Secretary-General's initial gross estimate of \$67,453,750. The Secretary-General regarded as too severe the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 3—Salaries and wages, and section 4—Common staff costs. His delegation believed that the Advisory Committee's approach had been justified and it was impressed by the argument that substantial increases in the establishment should be avoided until the current review of the Secretariat had been completed and until the results of the five-year appraisal of economic and social programmes had been considered by the General Assembly. Furthermore, the Committee was being asked to approve immediate increases to meet expanding activities in the economic and social fields but was not being offered counterbalancing reductions in respect of activities such as Trusteeship which were declining. It was surely wise at present to limit increases in permanent staff to the minimum and to meet expanding activity as far as possible by redeploying existing resources and by making increased provision for temporary staff and consultants.

33. The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 122 of its report (A/4408), had raised the question of the extent to which the Secretariat should provide services, under the regular budget, for inter-governmental activities for which the United Nations was not primarily responsible. The Latin American Common Market programme was no doubt important, but he was not convinced that the functions assigned to the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America could not equally well be performed by the secretariat of the Free Trade Area Association. Analogous work for the European Free Trade Area and the European Economic Community was performed by the secretariats of those bodies, and not by officials of the Economic Commission for Europe. The same question arose in relation to the staffing of the office of the Executive Agent of the Lower Mekong Project. A detailed study such as that being undertaken under General Assembly resolution 1446 (XIV) might disclose other instances. The Secretary-General had clearly stated in paragraph 16 of the foreword to the 1961 budget estimates (A/4370) the need for "streamlining" and for using his limited resources in a flexible manner to meet constantly changing needs and situations.

34. The United Nations found itself, as the Secretary-General had stated, at the turn of the road. Whether that turn led to success or failure would depend, to a large extent, on the adequacy of the Organization's financial resources. Those resources were at present strained to breaking point and his delegation wished to sound a clear note of warning. He respectfully suggested that the Committee should bear in mind the maxim that "if you look after the pence the pounds will take care of themselves". By so doing, it might make some contribution to the solution of the larger problems facing the United Nations.

35. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that the budget ceiling of \$50 mil-

lion which his delegation had proposed at the 768th meeting was a net figure and not, therefore, directly comparable with the budget estimates of \$67.5 million. Despite the United Kingdom representative's remarks, his delegation still considered \$50 million net sufficient to cover the activities of the Secretariat and of the United Nations as a whole, and it would suggest specific economies as the relevant budget sections came up for consideration.

36. The issue which his delegation had raised at the 768th meeting, and which the Secretary-General and the United Kingdom representative deemed inappropriate for discussion in the Fifth Committee, had already been discussed in plenary meetings, and the Fifth Committee, in reviewing the financial and administrative activities of the Secretary-General, was fully entitled to consider all aspects of the question.

37. The Secretary-General's attempt to justify his recruitment policy by alluding to the principles laid down in Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter could be construed as a slight upon the countries inadequately represented in the Secretariat. The implication of the Secretary-General's remarks—i.e., that staff members from countries not members of Western blocs were deficient in the qualities of efficiency, competence and integrity—illustrated the Secretary-General's biased approach to the question of the geographical distribution of staff. The requirements of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter could best be met by the recruitment and distribution of staff on the basis of universality.

38. It was not his delegation's purpose to challenge the Secretary-General's right to provide technical assistance. It had merely pointed out that, during a five-year period, over 2,000 of the 3,700 technical assistance experts provided had been nationals of colonialist countries; that the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Federal Republic of Germany had accounted for 45 per cent of all the experts, the socialist countries for only some 2 per cent, and the USSR for only 1 per cent; and that that one-sided distribution favoured the political and economic expansion of one group of countries.

39. The Secretary-General had further argued that the bulk of the recruitment had been completed before he had taken office, and that he had been able to make only minor changes. The USSR delegation's point was that such changes as the Secretary-General had made in the staff had been undertaken, not in deference to the wishes of the neutral and socialist countries, but for the purpose of increasing the influence exerted by the United States and other Western countries. On the retirement of the Secretary-General's predecessor, there had been only 8 or 9 officials at what was now called the Under-Secretary level including 1 USSR and 1 United States national. There were now 28 such officials, but they still included only 1 USSR national as against 6 from the United States. A comparison over the years in the respective numerical representation of those two countries showed that the position of the United States had been greatly strengthened and that of the USSR considerably weakened; at the Under-Secretary and Director levels, and among mission personnel, all the changes made had been to the detriment of the USSR.

40. In basing his case on Article 99 of the Charter, the Secretary-General had failed to quote the equally

relevant Articles 97 and 98, which defined his primary duties; they were to act as the chief administrative officer of the United Nations at meetings of principal organs, and to perform such other functions as were entrusted to him by those organs. Those provisions gave him no authority to undertake such political activities as the visit he had paid to Laos in November 1959. As to the mission of the Special Consultant in that country, his delegation considered that two or three experts should have been sufficient to co-ordinate technical assistance to the value of \$213,000, instead of the 28 persons whom the mission actually comprised. The Secretary-General had stated that the purpose of his visit to Laos had been to ascertain the facts so that he could subsequently report to the Security Council; but no such visits should be undertaken without prior authorization from that organ. His delegation felt, therefore, that both the Secretary-General's own visit to Laos and the mission of the Special Consultant had been undertaken for some unavowed purpose. If not in the Fifth Committee, then in some appropriate body, his delegation would like to learn the real reasons for those two missions.

41. The Secretary-General should keep within the limits set to his functions in Article 97 of the Charter. In the existing international situation, and with the existing composition of the Secretariat, any intervention in matters arising out of current international disputes, in the form of visits or missions, could only harm the United Nations.

42. Several delegations had vainly endeavoured, in plenary meetings, to establish that the USSR delegation's purpose was to weaken the United Nations. On the contrary, his delegation sought to strengthen the United Nations by making it genuinely international, and had therefore taken a position calculated to remove defects in the organization of the Secretariat and to adapt it to its tasks. The USSR proposal for a budget ceiling of \$50 million net had been made in a further effort to stabilize the situation, and to preclude the use of the Secretariat to promote the political and economic expansion of any one group of countries.

43. Mr. MONTERO BUSTAMANTE (Uruguay) said that his delegation was satisfied with the ethical principles enunciated by the Secretary-General as the basis for the work of the Secretariat. With regard to the recruitment of staff, his delegation also welcomed the Secretary-General's statement that his policy was to look for the man rather than at the statistics. Thanks were due to the Secretary-General for having spoken with such clarity and probity concerning his dedication to the life, and indeed the survival, of the United Nations.

44. Mr. ARRAIZ (Venezuela) said that, without endorsing the USSR representative's remarks as a whole, his delegation agreed with that representative in one respect. The Secretary-General, in replying to the USSR charge that most staff members belonged to a particular region, had stated that those staff members possessed the requisite integrity, loyalty and competence. As the representative of a country outside the region concerned, he found that statement derogatory, by implication, to other regions.

*Mr. Majoli (Italy) resumed the Chair.*

45. Mr. PUPLAMPU (Ghana) said that, in considering the budget estimates for 1961 (A/4370) and the

report of the Advisory Committee (A/4408), the Committee should bear in mind, in the Advisory Committee's words, the "necessarily speculative character" (*ibid.*, para. 14) of the figures before it. Since the documents in question had been prepared, new situations had arisen which would make further demands on United Nations resources. The responsibilities of the United Nations in connexion with economic and social development had been intensified by the admission of new Member States and by the unhappy situation in the Congo, and the budget was designed partly to meet the new challenge from Africa. It was gratifying to note that both the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee showed a sympathetic awareness of that urgent problem: the Secretary-General had stated in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization (A/4390/Add.1) that, in the context of a newly emerging Africa, the rate of achievement was not commensurate with the needs. His delegation would support all measures aimed at increasing, within the limits of the Organization's resources, the rate of economic and social progress in Africa and elsewhere.

46. Despite the misgivings expressed regarding the progressive rise in the level of United Nations expenditure, his delegation considered that rise inevitable in view of the rapid increase in the membership of the Organization and the attendant expansion of its responsibilities. Its resources, however, were limited, and it would be some time before its income was appreciably increased by contributions from the new Member States. The Secretary-General's budgetary estimates should therefore be approached with objectivity and realism.

47. The Secretary-General was to be congratulated on the improved form of the budget, including the more detailed foreword; further improvements were indicated, to enable Members to identify sources of possible savings.

48. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals to build up the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and endorsed the Advisory Committee's remarks on the subject (A/4408, para. 123). The Secretary-General's proposal for an additional budgetary appropriation of \$5 million in 1961 in respect of technical programmes in the newly independent countries of Africa (A/C.5/828, para. 27) warranted serious consideration, and his delegation, like the Advisory Committee (A/C.5/829, para. 24), attached the greatest importance to those proposals.

49. No one would question the soundness of the Advisory Committee's call for a careful application of priorities and for awareness of the financial implications of programmes (A/4408, para. 27). The Secretary-General's account of his continuing efforts to improve the organization and management of the work of the Secretariat (A/4370, foreword, paras. 69-79) should be read in the light of his warning that greater support from Governments was needed in obtaining a shift of resources from areas of lower priority (*ibid.*, para. 17). His delegation considered that, pending consideration of the reports referred to in paragraphs 52 and 31 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/4408), the policy of stabilization should be substantially maintained and the Advisory Committee's recommendations—entailing a modest reduction of some \$943,000 in the budget estimates—could be considered acceptable.

50. The financial position of the United Nations, as described by the Secretary-General (A/4370, foreword, paras. 87-91) and by the Advisory Committee (A/4408, paras. 30 and 63-68), required urgent action. Nothing, however, could be done without the good will and co-operation of Member States. In making its budgetary recommendations, the Fifth Committee should give due weight to the new duties and challenges partly reflected in the budget estimates, and to the problems facing the newly independent States which looked to the United Nations for assistance in achieving stability and economic emancipation.

51. Mr. NA CHAMPASSAK (Laos) said that, with regard to the USSR delegation's charge that the Secretary-General had sent missions to Laos illegally, and that delegation's demand that such missions be recalled and disbanded, he wished to point out that the first mission to Laos had been sent there by the United Nations at the request of the Lao Government which needed expert assistance in reorganizing its finances and in the task of economic and administrative reconstruction. The current mission had been sent on the initiative of the Secretary-General, in the belief that the presence of the United Nations was needed to co-ordinate assistance programmes.

52. It had been disappointing for a small delegation like his own to listen, at the current session, to repeated attacks on the Secretary-General and the United Nations. The Soviet Union was strenuously opposing every step which the Secretary-General took. The reproaches recently uttered by certain delegations appeared to imply that, in their view, every activity which did not bear the stamp of Moscow was illegal and undesirable, whether it took place in the Congo or in Laos. He wished the USSR representative would indicate the line of demarcation at which legality ended and illegality began.

53. The Government of Laos and people were very grateful for United Nations assistance because it was given multilaterally and, consequently, without political implications. He wished to pay a warm tribute to the Secretary-General for his activity on behalf of Laos. In view of its geographical position, Laos sought economic aid in a form not susceptible to cold war propaganda.

54. Laos had welcomed the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR; it asked that great Power to point the way to co-operation, and to show a spirit of solidarity and a much greater sense of reality where Laos was concerned. His small, weak country needed the friendship of others. In the interests of international co-operation and peace, the United Nations experts and technicians working in Laos should be permitted to pursue undisturbed their efforts for the country's well-being.

#### First reading

SECTION 1. TRAVEL AND OTHER EXPENSES OF REPRESENTATIVES, MEMBERS OF COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES AND OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES (A/4370, A/4408, A/4506; A/C.5/818)

55. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Advisory Committee recommended (A/4408, para. 96) an appropriation in the amount of the initial estimate of \$857,700 submitted by the Secretary-General. An additional estimate of \$34,000 had been submitted for the 1961 Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of the

Pacific Islands (A/C.5/818, para. 2); the Advisory Committee recommended an appropriation of \$32,000 (A/4506, para. 5). The Fifth Committee's recent decisions on subsistence allowances for members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations (766th meeting) and on honoraria for members of the Administrative Tribunal (767th meeting) necessitated additional appropriations of \$15,000 and \$2,500 respectively. The total provision recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 1 was thus \$907,200.

56. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked for a separate vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendation of an appropriation of \$32,000 under section 1, chapter IV for the 1961 Visiting Mission. His delegation wished to abstain on that item, because the forthcoming General Assembly debate on the question of a declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples might throw new light on the future need for and functions of such visiting missions.

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/4506, para. 5) for an appropriation of \$32,000 under section 1, chapter IV was approved on first reading by 58 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.*

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation for an appropriation of \$907,200 under section 1 was unanimously approved on first reading.*

## SECTION 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES (A/4370, A/4408, A/4523, A/C.5/819 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.611)

57. Mr. TURNER (Controller), replying to the Austrian representative's question concerning the effect of the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee on the work of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities to be held at Vienna, said that the Advisory Committee's observations (A/4408, paras 99-110) were mainly concerned with the proposed provision of \$40,000 for printing. The printing programme had been drawn up early in 1960; there was always an element of uncertainty in such estimates and the actual cost would not be known until the latter part of 1961. The Secretary-General intended to spread the recommended reduction over all the items of expenditure for the Conference instead of applying it to one particular item. He assured the Committee that the Publications Board would make the most economical printing arrangements and would take full account of the facilities for internal printing, when considering the actual programme of printing for the Conference. If the amount authorized proved to be inadequate, the matter would be referred back to the Advisory Committee. Approval of the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee, however, entailed no risk of prejudicing the efficient servicing of the Conference.

58. Mr. CHIKARAISHI (Japan) expressed his delegation's concern at the size of the estimates for temporary assistance and printing for the Conference. Though he did not wish to make any specific proposal for a reduction in the provision for temporary assistance, he wondered whether the employment of ninety-seven temporary staff was really necessary.

59. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the additional estimates of \$45,600 under section 2 resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council (A/C.5/819 and Corr.1),

pointed out that the decisions in question were being discussed by the Second and Third Committees and would be submitted to the General Assembly for approval. It would, therefore, be inappropriate for the Fifth Committee to prejudge the General Assembly's decision by voting on these estimates.

60. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the basic issue seemed to be whether the Economic and Social Council was competent to take decisions on the convening of conferences, subject to a decision on their budgetary implications by the General Assembly acting on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee. It was of course conceivable, though most unlikely, that the Second or Third Committee might see fit to overrule the Council's decisions in the matter, but the estimates could be revised, if necessary, on second reading. He pointed out that the Committee had just taken a decision on a similar additional estimate for the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Pacific Islands, a matter within the competence of the Trusteeship Council. He saw no reason for differentiating between decisions made by two principal organs of the United Nations.

61. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that it would be more logical to postpone the first reading. Since the Second and Third Committees were now considering the decisions of the Economic and Social Council, that procedure would involve little delay.

62. Mr. CUTTS (Australia) observed that, in the past, the Committee had considered the budgetary implications of decisions of the Economic and Social Council without waiting for substantive consideration of those decisions in other Committees of the General Assembly. His delegation had no objection to proceeding with the first reading of the estimates.

63. Mr. QULJANO (Argentina) urged the USSR delegation not to press its objection and so enable the Committee to continue its work on the same lines as in previous years. If, at a later stage, the Second or Third Committee modified an Economic and Social Council decision, there would still be the second reading, at which the Committee could take appropriate action.

64. Mr. PARISIS (Belgium) asked how the Advisory Committee proposed to achieve a less frequent periodicity for sessions of various subsidiary organs and greater flexibility for the Secretary-General in the scheduling of special conferences, as suggested in paragraph 98 of its report (A/4408).

65. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 44 of its report, it considered that there would be advantage in extending the biennial pattern of sessions to those functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, which did not now follow that pattern. If the principal organs did not specify dates and locations of conferences, the Secretary-General would have more flexibility in scheduling conferences and that would result in greater economy.

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation for an appropriation of \$255,600 under section 2 was unanimously approved on first reading.*

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.