

SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION SYSTEM

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

Rapporteur: Mr. Th. Aghnides (Greece)

1. In accordance with instructions given by the General Assembly at its meeting on 31 October 1946, the Fifth Committee has considered the question of the extension of the simultaneous interpretation system (documents A/C.5/81 and A/C.5/85). The question was discussed at length at the thirty-first meeting of the Fifth Committee.
2. The representatives of Denmark, France, Norway, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and China were in general agreement that the system should be continued but should not replace entirely the system of successive interpretation. It was pointed out that, while the major advantage of the simultaneous interpretation system was the time saved for Committees and Councils, under certain circumstances, when drafting problems or debate necessitated, successive interpretation was preferable.
3. There was difference of opinion among the delegations concerning the extent to which the simultaneous system should be developed. The representative of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics suggested that only one more Committee room be equipped until a more thorough study of the cost could be made. The representative of the United Kingdom believed that the delegations would want the system installed in most of the Committee rooms prior to the next session of the General Assembly.
4. The representative of the United Kingdom also made a number of suggestions concerning the ways in which the simultaneous system might be improved. He further suggested that special attention be given to the

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Secretary-General's note on the wireless interpretation system and, since it appeared that such wireless equipment might be available before the next session of the Assembly, he believed it wiser not to take any final decision concerning wired installations.

5. The following resolution, proposed by the Rapporteur, was accepted unanimously by the Committee, and is recommended to the General Assembly for adoption:

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HAVING considered the Report of the Secretary-General and the observations made by several representatives in the Fifth Committee:

1. TAKES no decision, for the time being, on the simultaneous interpretation system but recommends the continuation of the present practices until the next session of the General Assembly when a final decision should be taken.
2. REQUESTS the Secretary-General to equip before the next session a second conference room and a second committee room with simultaneous interpretation apparatus.
3. REFERS the proposal for equipment of a second conference room and of a second committee room for consideration to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, which should also examine the advisability from a budgetary point of view of installing a wireless system of simultaneous interpretation in preference to the present equipment.