

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF ESTABLISHMENT
OF A GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPECIAL
COMMITTEE ON THE GREEK QUESTION

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

Rapporteur: Mr. G. BAGGE (Sweden)

1. In accordance with the request of the President of the General Assembly in his letter dated 18 October 1947 (document A/C.5/170), the Fifth Committee gave priority on the agenda of its seventieth meeting on 18 October 1947 to the financial implications of establishment of a General Assembly Special Committee on the Greek Question (document A/C.5/172).
2. This consideration by the Fifth Committee, in accordance with the terms of Rule 112 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, does not constitute an appropriation but only information to the General Assembly concerning the effect of the proposal upon the budget of the United Nations. It was agreed by the Fifth Committee that, if the proposal of the First Committee for the establishment of such a Special Committee were to be acted upon favourably by the General Assembly, the lump sum estimate approved by the Fifth Committee would be referred to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions with appropriate supporting details supplied by the Secretary-General for study and report to the Fifth Committee before amounts for specific items were voted.
3. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stated that his delegation could not participate in the discussion of the budget estimates for this Special Committee in the light of its opinion on the political factors involved and in the light of the fact that the estimates

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had been brought to the attention of the Fifth Committee on 18 October 1947 only. He proposed that the Committee refuse to allot funds for this enterprise. The representatives of Yugoslavia, Poland, and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic concurred in the view that it was impossible to separate the financial considerations from the political implications of the proposal. These representatives also stressed that no part of the contributions of their countries might be spent or allocated for the work of the Special Committee. The representative of Yugoslavia pointed out that the savings thus far achieved by the deliberations of the Fifth Committee would be largely negated by allocating monies for this Special Committee if it were to include payment of travel and subsistence of members. Calling attention to the fact that the Fifth Committee was concerned only with the budgetary and financial aspects of this question, the Chairman put the Soviet Union proposal to vote. It was rejected by thirty-one votes to six, with six abstentions.

4. The major point of discussion with respect to the estimates submitted to the Committee by the Secretary-General was the question of payment from the United Nations budget of travel and part or all subsistence expenses of members of the Special Committee. The representatives of Pakistan, Mexico, Brazil, Guatemala, Belgium and China spoke in favour of the principle of payment of such expenses from United Nations funds in cases in which members acted on behalf of the United Nations as a whole and believed the Special Committee on the Greek Question to be a case in point. Representatives of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia and the Union of South Africa pointed out that a very broad question of principle was involved to which the Advisory Committee had called attention in its Report (document A/336, paragraph 133) and asked that this matter be considered separately from the specific case of the Special Committee on the Greek Question or that alternative estimates, including and excluding payment of such expenses be presented to the General Assembly. However, the view of the majority was that the question of expenses of members of this particular Special Committee could be decided upon, as in the case of the Special Committee on Palestine, without prejudice to the question of principle. The representative of Belgium proposed specifically that travel and subsistence expenses of one representative and one alternate for each member should be borne in the United Nations Budget. The representative of the United Kingdom suggested that a compromise between the view of Pakistan, which had proposed that only fares and hotel

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accommodations of one representative of each Member be paid, and that of Belgium might be the payment of travel and subsistence for one representative of each Member. The Assistant Secretary-General for Administrative and Financial Services informed the Committee that the financial implications of payment of round trip fares and \$20 per day for subsistence of one representative for each Member would amount to \$11,600 in 1947 and \$85,000 in 1948 or twice that amount for one representative and one alternate (that is, a total of \$193,200). The Belgian proposal was put to vote and accepted by the Committee by fifteen votes to nine, with fourteen abstentions.

5. Other questions were raised with respect to the numbers of personnel to be assigned to the Special Committee, the character of their contracts, replacements at headquarters, the use of verbatim or summary records by the Special Committee, and the use of transport facilities for members of the press. The Assistant Secretary-General for Security Council Affairs explained the assignments of the twenty-five posts contemplated by the estimates. He pointed out that six verbatim reporters had been included on the basis of experience with the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents in 1947. However, if the rules of procedure were to call for summary rather than verbatim records, certain adjustments in numbers and grades of staff could be made. It was contemplated that, of the staff to be sent from headquarters, only technical staff required for the actual servicing of meetings would need to be replaced at Lake Success. This accounted for the \$89,200 estimated for temporary assistance which amounted to provision for replacement of about fifty per cent of the staff.

6. The total estimate of the Secretary-General, together with \$193,200 added for travel and subsistence of one representative and one alternate of each member, was approved by the Committee by thirty-two votes to six, with seven abstentions. The Fifth Committee, therefore, has the honour to state to the General Assembly that it believes the effect of the proposal concerning the establishment of a General Assembly Special Committee on the Greek Question to be \$72,840 in 1947 and \$538,600 in 1948, or a total of \$611,440.
