

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY****ASSEMBLEE
GENERALE**A/21.
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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REQUESTS SUBMITTED BY THE WORLD
FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONSREPORT BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE TO THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 13 December, 1945, the representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions wrote to the President of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations informing him of the resolution unanimously adopted by the World Trade Union Congress in Paris, concerning the representation of world labour in international institutions and organizations, and asking him to bring the terms of this resolution to the knowledge of the representatives of the United Nations.

On 28 December, 1945, the deputy Executive Secretary informed the World Federation of Trade Unions that its letter had arrived too late to allow of its examination by the Preparatory Commission, but that the questions raised therein could doubtless be discussed by the General Committee of the General Assembly, which was to hold a meeting on 10 January.

At the first meeting of the General Committee of the General Assembly, the Delegate of the Ukraine asked that the proposals of the World Federation of Trade Unions should be placed on the agenda of the Assembly.

The General Committee decided that it would be advisable to have a preliminary examination of the requests that had been made.

During this examination, the President of the Assembly received a second letter from the World Federation of Trade Unions, in which the proposals of this organization were set out in more specific terms.

These proposals may be summarized as follows:

The World Federation of Trade Unions requested to be allowed to sit in the General Assembly in a consultative capacity and to collaborate regularly, under the provisions of Article 71 of the Charter, in the work of the Social and Economic Council, in the hope that at a later stage it would be possible for it to be granted full participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council with the right to vote.

This request was very carefully considered, first by the Sub-Committee set up by the General Committee to meet the representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions, and later by the General Committee itself.

During these discussions, various fresh documents were brought before the General Committee:

- (a) A letter from the International Co-operative Alliance asking that it be brought into effective relationship with the United Nations Organization through participation in the deliberation of the Economic and Social Council and/or in any other way which the constitution of the Organization might permit.
- (b) A letter from the Congress for the Constitution of the International Democratic Federation of Women asking for representation with the right to vote, on the Economic and Social Council, and also the organization and acceptance of a Women's Committee in the United Nations, together with the right to attend the General Assembly of the United Nations in an advisory capacity.
- (c) A telegram from Mr. R.J. Watt, international representative of the American Federation of Labour, requesting that the American Federation of Labour be accorded the same consultative

or other status as may constitutionally be accorded to the World Federation of Trade Unions by any organ of the United Nations.

This last proposal was taken up officially by the Delegate of the United States of America.

The General Committee was unanimously of the opinion that there could be no question of granting any organization representation, with the right to vote, in the various organs under the United Nations, and that there was no need to place such a question on the agenda of the General Assembly, since it really represented a proposal to modify the Charter.

With regard to the request of the World Federation for the right to sit in a permanent consultative capacity in the meetings of the General Assembly, the General Committee was unable to formulate any specific proposal, since some members wished to put into practice immediately some system of collaboration between the World Federation and the General Assembly, whilst others felt very strongly that the principle of national representation by governments, which underlies the whole constitution of the United Nations as set forth in the Charter, would be infringed if this right were granted to a non-governmental organization.

Collaboration between non-governmental organizations and the Economic and Social Council was, however, provided for in Article 71 of the Charter, although some members felt it was premature to make specific proposals at the present juncture.

Several draft resolutions were submitted in the course of discussion in an effort to find a general formula which would satisfactorily cover not only the present requests from the World Federation and the American Federation of Labour, but also others which might be received in the future and be

officially supported by Delegations.

After lengthy discussion, however, the General Committee by 7 votes to 6, with 1 abstention adopted the following text for submission to the General Assembly:-

"In connection with the request of the World Federation of Trade Unions that its representatives should be allowed to take part in the work of the Economic and Social Council, and in accordance with Article 71 of the Charter providing for the carrying out by the Economic and Social Council of appropriate consultations with non-governmental organizations,

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDS:

That the Economic and Social Council should as soon as possible adopt arrangements allowing the World Federation of Trade Unions to take part, for purposes of consultation, in the work of the Economic and Social Council, its commissions and committees."

While the General Committee approved the above formula setting forth the character of the relationship which might be established between the Economic and Social Council and the World Federation of Trade Unions under Article 71 of the Charter, it was unable to formulate a concrete proposal to cover a possible relationship between such non-governmental organizations and the General Assembly.

The General Committee therefore recommends that the question be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly for its consideration.

In order to facilitate the discussion, the General Committee thinks it advisable to inform the General Assembly of the various proposals made to it with a view to arriving at a settlement of the questions raised. These proposals will be found in Annexes A, B and C.

ANNEX A

Proposal put forward by Mr. FRASER (New Zealand) at the
Seventh Meeting of the General Committee, held on 24 January 1946.

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Verbatim
record.

"1. That provision be made for representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions, and such other international organizations as are willing and able to assist the United Nations organization, and which are approved and accepted by the General Assembly, to be present as invited guests at the meetings of the General Assembly, the privilege of addressing the General Assembly on any subject in which a particular international organization can speak with special knowledge, experience and authority to be extended exclusively by the General Assembly at its discretion.

"2. That the Economic and Social Council be requested to take the necessary and appropriate action to bring into early operation the arrangements provided in Article 71, for consultation with non-Governmental organizations, and that full opportunities for such consultation be extended to the World Federation of Trade Unions, and such other organizations whose applications are accepted by the Economic and Social Council."

ANNEX B

Proposal put forward by Mr. CONNALLY (United States of America) at a meeting of the sub-committee of the General Committee, held on 28 January 1946.

"In view of the requests received from certain non-governmental organizations to establish relations with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly recommends that:

I

"The Secretary-General make arrangements for allocating seats in a special gallery of the General Assembly for representatives of those non-governmental organizations with which the Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation pursuant to Article 71.

II

"The Economic and Social Council consider at an early date making suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence as provided in Article 71 of the Charter."

ANNEX C

Proposal put forward by Mr. GROMYKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) at the Ninth Meeting of the General Committee, held on 29 January 1946.

"1. In connection with the request of the World Federation of Trade Unions that its representatives should be allowed to take part in the work of the Economic and Social Council, and in accordance with Article 71 of the Charter providing for the carrying out by the Economic and Social Council of appropriate consultations with non-governmental organizations,

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDS:

"that the Economic and Social Council should as soon as possible adopt arrangements allowing the World Federation of Trade Unions to take part for purposes of consultation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its Commissions and Committees.

"2. In connection with the request of the World Federation of Trade Unions that its representatives be allowed to take part in the work of the General Assembly, in an advisory capacity, the General Assembly finds it possible to invite the World Federation of Trade Unions to send its representatives to attend meetings of the General Assembly during its sessions as official guests."

NOTE: Paragraph 1 was adopted by the General Committee and is included on page of the Report.
