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Chairman: Mr. Jiří NOSEK (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters IV and V) (A/2686, A/C.3/573) (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. The CHAIRMAN stated that some delegations had expressed a wish to refer, under item 12 of the General Assembly's agenda, to problems connected with the subjects discussed in chapters IV and V of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/2686),¹ but not specifically mentioned therein. He had therefore decided not to rule out of order the statements made by the representatives of the Netherlands and the USSR at the 586th meeting. However, as there were not many more meetings and it was difficult to decide whether problems that were not specifically mentioned in chapters IV and V of the report should be discussed or not, he invited all representatives who wished to speak on item 12 of the General Assembly's agenda to limit their remarks strictly to the questions dealt with in chapters IV and V.

Mr. Núñez (Costa Rica) took the Chair.

2. Mrs. FOMINA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that she had some observations to make on chapter V, section XI, of the Economic and Social Council's report (A/2686). The USSR delegation thought there were gaps in the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, particularly in the matters of health services, equal pay for equal work and discrimination against women. Although the USSR had signed and ratified the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (General Assembly resolution 640 (VII), annex), other countries had not. The USSR delegation approved of the work the Commission on the Status of Women had done with regard to the question of educational opportunities for women, but felt that the Commission had not given sufficient attention to the status of women in the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. It had considered certain questions connected with economic opportunities for women, including the question of part-time work for women and the situation

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Supplement No. 3.

of older women workers, and had made proposals which the USSR delegation had supported. However, the USSR delegation felt that the social security and vocational and technical training of women had not been given enough attention. A large number of documents on discrimination against women in private law had been submitted to the Commission, which had adopted several recommendations on the subject. The USSR delegation hoped that it would continue its work with a view to eliminating all remaining discriminatory measures in that respect. The USSR delegation did not approve of the Council's decision (resolution 547 M (XVIII)) requesting the Commission on the Status of Women to defer consideration of the item "Protection of mother and child" until the results of the Social Commission's study of the item were known. That was a very important question and one which the Commission on the Status of Women had to consider, even if there were overlapping between its work and that of the Social Commission. She therefore hoped that the Commission would resume its consideration of the protection of mother and child at once.

3. With regard to the Social Commission's work, the USSR delegation felt that the Commission carried out too many studies on theoretical questions or subjects of only secondary interest, at the expense of some other questions of primary importance, such as social security. That situation should be remedied. The USSR delegation attached great importance to the question of social security for all employees. It had discussed the question in several United Nations organs and had already submitted specific proposals. In the USSR, social security played a very important role and continuous progress was being made. In 1952, more than 21,000 million roubles had been devoted to the development of social security in the Soviet Union. Employees made no social security contribution; that was paid in full by enterprises or trade unions. Within ten days of its establishment, a trade union had to register as an insurer. Social security funds were managed by the trade unions, that is, by the employees' representatives. In the Soviet Union disabled employees received from 80 to 100 per cent of their wages. Old-age pensions were paid to all employees, regardless of their state of health, and the amount of the pension was calculated according to the number of years of service; a man received a pension at the age of sixty, after 25 years of service and women at fifty-five, after 20 years of service. The pension amounted to 50 or 60 per cent of the wages. Those who were eligible for a pension received it even if they continued to work, the pension being paid, in that case, in addition to their wages. Special pensions were granted to persons who could no longer work owing to accident or illness, and also to partly disabled persons. There were also special pensions for certain categories of workers, which were calculated on the basis of the recipient's seniority: elementary school teachers, for

instance, were entitled to a pension equal to 40 per cent of their basic salary. In the Soviet Union, there was no discrimination with regard to social security. The trade unions were working constantly to improve the condition of the workers. On the basis of the experience of the Soviet Union in that field, the USSR delegation had submitted proposals to various United Nations organs.

4. Mr. HSIA (China) wished to speak on only two questions in chapter IV of the Economic and Social Council's report, which were not listed as separate agenda items.

5. In resolution 802 (VIII), the General Assembly had extended the mandate of the United Nations Children's Fund indefinitely and had stated that its activities were useful for two reasons—because they realized some of the high objectives of the United Nations and because they created favourable conditions for the development of the long-range economic and social programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. It had also requested the Secretary-General to ensure effective co-ordination of UNICEF programmes with those of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The Secretary-General's report on programme co-ordination (E/2601)² to the Economic and Social Council at its eighteenth session had shown that co-ordination had been ensured not only in over-all policy and planning but also in aid to individual projects. There was no duplication: UNICEF provided mainly supplies and equipment, and the other agencies technical assistance. The different kinds of assistance fitted harmoniously into a whole, which prevented dissipation of United Nations efforts on behalf of children. That example also showed that concerted action to raise living standards in the under-developed countries was both possible and desirable. The Chinese delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would work to ensure the continued co-ordination of activities, and that the Economic and Social Council would pay special attention to the question. The General Assembly had constantly urged UNICEF to place special emphasis on its activities in the under-developed areas. The Chinese delegation was happy to note that since 1950 the under-developed areas had received more than 80 per cent of the total assistance provided, and that appropriations had recently been approved for fifteen African countries and territories. He hoped that the United Nations would continue on that path, which was the right one, so long as the areas concerned needed aid.

6. The United Nations Children's Fund depended on voluntary contributions from governments or private donors for its existence. In eight years UNICEF had been able to assist millions of mothers and children in more than eighty countries and territories. The activities of UNICEF had gained for the United Nations the respect and sympathy of all the peoples of the world, particularly those of the under-developed countries, which placed great hopes in UNICEF. In those conditions, the Governments and non-governmental organizations, whose financial support was required, should be as generous in the future as they had been in the past.

7. Turning to his second point, he emphasized that China, which had been one of the first victims of the opium scourge, had always taken a special interest in the international control of narcotic drugs. As early

as 1948 the Chinese delegation to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had taken the initiative of submitting a proposal to restrict the production of opium to medical and scientific needs; that proposal had led to the meeting of the United Nations Opium Conference in May 1953. Although the Protocol adopted at the Conference (E/NT/8)³ was not perfect, it was a first step forward. Furthermore, at its eighteenth session the Economic and Social Council had approved the appointment of a rapporteur to prepare a draft model code and commentary for the application and interpretation of the Protocol (Council resolution 548 C (XVIII)) and had designated Mr. Charles Vaille to undertake the task. The Chinese delegation wished to congratulate the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Permanent Central Opium Board, the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs and the Governments concerned for their joint efforts which had led to steady progress in recent years, particularly with regard to scientific opium research, the question of the production and chewing of the coca leaf, the control of synthetic drugs and the problem of narcotics addiction.

8. In its future work the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would have to concentrate on the preparation of a single convention and the control of illicit traffic. With the Council's approval (resolution 548 K (XVIII)), the Commission had already decided to give priority at its next session to the elaboration of a single convention. He would therefore merely stress the urgency of the problem of illicit traffic. The situation still gave cause for concern. The Council's report (A/2686) showed that Governments had reported 1,763 seizures between 1 March 1953 and 28 February 1954. The position was particularly alarming in the Far East where the Communist authorities on the Chinese mainland were encouraging illicit traffic in order to obtain foreign currency and to undermine the physical health and moral well-being of neighbouring populations. Information from many sources showed that poppy-growing and the manufacture of narcotics were widespread and that the Communist authorities had sold hundreds of tons of opium. General control measures were inadequate to deal with such a problem. There was a need for special provisions, for example, to make it possible to ascertain the origin of seized opium and to prevent opium from being moved in and out through neighbouring countries. His delegation would unreservedly support any proposal for special measures commensurate with the seriousness of the position and was confident that a majority of members would agree with him.

9. The CHAIRMAN invited representatives who wished to speak on the Economic and Social Council's report to submit their names as soon as possible.

10. Mr. ROY (Haiti) did not see why representatives should be urged to put their names on the list of speakers. If there were no speakers on the list after a reasonable time, the Committee should pass on to the next agenda item. The Committee had not set any particular number of meetings for the study of the Economic and Social Council's report.

11. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that he was not urging speakers to submit their names; he merely wanted those who wished to speak to put their names on the list as soon as possible. Some representatives had expressed a desire to speak on Monday, 22 November, and had put their names down. He suggested that a date should

² *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Eighteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 9 (b).*

³ *See United Nations Opium Conference, Protocol and Final Act signed at New York, 23 June 1953, United Nations Publications Sales No.: 1953.XL6.*

be set for closing the list of speakers, for example 12 noon on 19 November. The time limit for announcing the proposal of draft resolutions or amendments might be fixed at 6 p.m. on 19 November.

12. Mr. ROY (Haiti) expressed surprise that some representatives had put their names on the list of speakers for Monday, 22 November, whereas there were no speakers for 19 November.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that some representatives had put their names on the list of speakers for 19 November; he had accordingly permitted others to put their names down on the list for 22 November.

14. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) pointed out that the three representatives who had spoken on the Council's report (A/2686) had not taken any previous part in the Third Committee's work during the session. That showed the importance which their delegations attached to the item before the Committee. Small delegations had not had time to prepare their statements. Many of them were not represented in United Nations organs dealing with the questions which were the subject of chapters IV and V of the Council's report. In the light of those considerations, he asked the Chairman to delay the setting of a time limit for closing the list of speakers.

15. The CHAIRMAN stated that five representatives were on the list of speakers for 19 November and three for 22 November. In view of the Afghan representative's protest, he withdrew his suggestion that the list of speakers should be closed at 12 noon on 19 November.

16. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) thought that the Council's report was very important and should be discussed. She suggested that the list of speakers should be closed at 6 p.m. on 19 November.

17. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) supported the proposal.

18. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) pointed out that two representatives had more or less repeated the Chairman's suggestion, although the Chairman had withdrawn it. He asked representatives who wished to fix a time limit for closing the list of speakers to show a spirit of co-operation by putting their own names down on the list.

19. Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) did not think that the importance of the Council's report was the point at issue. On the one hand the Chairman wished to save the Committee's time whilst on the other hand some delegations, particularly the smaller ones, wanted to have time to prepare their statements. As a compromise he therefore proposed that the list of speakers should be closed at noon on 22 November; that would enable representatives who so desired to prepare their speeches on 20 and 21 November.

20. The CHAIRMAN stated that he would not fix any time limit for closing the list of speakers since some rep-

resentatives seemed to think that that would be an encroachment on their freedom of speech. He felt, nevertheless, that representatives should be in a position to say whether or not they wished to put their names down to speak. As Vice-Chairman, he preferred to leave it to the regular Chairman to decide whether or not a time limit should be set for closing the list of speakers.

21. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) repeated that in his opinion it would be premature to close the list of speakers. He asked the Chairman whether there were any relevant precedents.

22. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) thought that the Afghan representative was implying that her suggestion was out of order. She had made the suggestion in good faith and hoped that the Afghan representative's attitude was due to a misunderstanding.

23. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) pointed out to the Afghan representative that the Dominican representative's suggestion, which he had supported, was in no way designed to restrict other representatives' freedom of speech. On the contrary, its only purpose was to postpone the time limit which the Chairman had proposed for closing the list of speakers.

24. The CHAIRMAN informed the Afghan representative that he would not make any inquiry as to whether there were precedents. He pointed out that in the Second Committee the number of meetings to be devoted to each agenda item was determined beforehand. The purpose of that practice was not to curtail freedom of speech. The Committee had to take a decision with regard to the Dominican representative's suggestion.

25. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) explained that he had not said that the Dominican representative's statement was out of order, nor had he ever maintained that the Uruguayan representative wished to restrict the freedom of speech of other representatives. He had never made any such accusation against any delegation.

26. The CHAIRMAN pointed out to the Afghan representative that the Dominican representative had not given the term "out of order" its strict procedural meaning.

27. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) endorsed the Chairman's interpretation of her remarks.

28. The CHAIRMAN repeated that he would leave it to the regular Chairman of the Committee to decide whether a date should be set for closing the list of speakers.

29. Mrs. FOMINA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that the meeting should be adjourned if no representative wished to speak on the item before the Committee.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.