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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE PROBLEM OF HUNGARY

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 9 July 1958, at 3.30 p.m.

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PRESENT:

Chairman:

Acting Rapporteur:

Members:

Secretariat:

Mr. ANDERSEN

Mr. WALKER

Sir Claude COREA

Mr. SLIM

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT

Sir Humphrey TREVELYAN

Mr. SCHREIBER

Denmark

Australia

Ceylon

Tunisia

Uruguay

Under-Secretary for
Special Political
Affairs

Acting Principal
Secretary

PREPARATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S SPECIAL REPORT (continued)

The CHAIRMAN invited comment on Section V.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) and Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) objected to the final sentence of the Section. The amount of independence a people could have in the presence of foreign troops, even if those troops were present by agreement, was a highly debatable question and one that should be avoided if possible.

Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) said that he agreed but felt that in the case of Hungary there were circumstances which could lead to only one conclusion, namely that the political independence of the Hungarian people could not be restored so long as Soviet armed forces remained in Hungary. First, Soviet troops were there as a result of the intervention which had deposed the Nagy Government. Secondly, the Committee was engaged in writing the present report because of the execution of leaders who had been unlawfully arrested by Soviet forces. The question of the presence of Soviet troops therefore could not be avoided. While the Committee had a duty to say that there had been some reduction in the number of Soviet troops, it must also say that there remained a considerable force which facilitated the repression of the Hungarian people.

The Section should be recast so as to bring out more clearly the connexion of the presence of Soviet troops with the Committee's purposes.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) saw no need for mentioning the agreement on the status of Soviet armed forces. Any such reference might provoke a discussion in the General Assembly on a secondary question. It was not important whether the troops were in Hungary by agreement or whether some had been withdrawn by agreement. What was important was whether they were there and the extent to which they had been withdrawn.

Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) noted that in September 1957 the General Assembly had reiterated its call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary, in full knowledge of the Soviet-Hungarian agreement of May 1957. Moreover, the agreement

(Mr. Slim, Tunisia)

had been mentioned in the Committee's main report. The Committee would therefore be justified in not mentioning the agreement again.

Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) said that the agreement was a fact and could not be ignored without inviting criticism. So far as the Committee's report was concerned, the existence of the agreement only confirmed the presence of the troops; it did not modify the effect of their presence.

The agreement was the only evidence of the probability of the "protracted stay" of Soviet troops mentioned elsewhere in the Section.

The CHAIRMAN suggested a short recess while a new draft of Section V was prepared.

It was so agreed.

The meeting was suspended at 4.40 p.m. and resumed at 5.5 p.m.

Mr. WALKER (Australia), Acting Rapporteur, read out a new draft of Section V.

The new draft was approved.

Mr. WALKER (Australia), Acting Rapporteur, drew attention to some further changes of a technical nature in the part of the report considered at the previous meeting. In particular, he had prepared a new paragraph which would give a fuller account of the Yugoslav note of protest to the Hungarian Government, dated 24 June 1958.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) said that the new paragraph dealt with an aspect of the executions of special concern to Latin American and other countries which considered the right of asylum an inviolable institution of international law. The breach of undertaking with respect to that right, in the case of Imre Nagy, was the worst in modern times, and it was the duty of the Committee to throw the fullest light on the matter. Unfortunately, the Yugoslav note of protest did not go into the question in sufficient detail. He therefore suggested that the Committee should ask the Yugoslav Government for additional information.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Denmark, said that Yugoslavia had not voted for the establishment of the Committee, had not responded to the Committee's general appeal for additional information addressed to Governments in a press communiqué, and had given no indication that it had further information which it would like to transmit to the Committee. In view of the international political situation at the present time, he did not think it wise to approach the Yugoslav Government directly on the matter.

Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) observed that in spite of his own reservations the Committee had decided to address letters to the Governments of the Soviet Union and Romania, so that a precedent had been set for a letter to Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, he still felt that the Committee should have limited itself to a note to Hungary and, in view of special considerations in the case of Yugoslavia, he could not support the Uruguayan representative's suggestion.

Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) asked whether the additional information that might be received would outweigh the possible harm that might result from the postponement of the publication of the special report pending a reply from the Yugoslav Government. Events were moving swiftly and while the Committee waited for a reply, more persons might be executed.

Mr. WALKER (Australia), Acting Rapporteur, reported that as acting Chairman of the Committee he had spoken to the acting head of the Yugoslav mission to the United Nations, who had indicated that it was unlikely that more information would be forthcoming in view of the very full account given in the communiqué published by the Yugoslav Government.

The CHAIRMAN observed that there was no support for the Uruguayan representative's suggestion.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) said that so far as he was concerned all Member States were on an equal footing and no distinction should be made in deciding whether or not to ask a particular State to furnish information of interest to the Committee. The violation of the right of asylum in the case of Mr. Nagy was particularly outrageous because it was a prelude to murder. The

(Mr. Rodriguez Fabregat, Uruguay)

world had the right to expect further information on the matter, if not in the Committee's special report, then in a statement by the Yugoslav representative to the General Assembly.

He considered the proposed paragraph inadequate but would not oppose it.

The technical changes proposed by the acting Rapporteur were approved.

The CHAIRMAN invited comment on the final paragraph of the report in which the Committee expressed the hope that the Hungarian Government would stop its persecutions.

Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) said that in view of the nature of the report and of the Committee's terms of reference, it was not for the Committee to address an appeal to the Hungarian Government. That was a function of the General Assembly.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) reminded the Committee that he had proposed a discussion of the possibility of a special session of the General Assembly on the question of Hungary. The response to the proposal had not been too encouraging and he was prepared to withdraw it if the Committee would agree to express the hope, in the final paragraph of the report, that States Members would encourage the Hungarian Government to desist from further death sentences and executions.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee was concerned not only about executions but about all measures of persecution against persons who took part in the Hungarian uprising.

Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) suggested a draft which he felt would be acceptable to all the members of the Committee.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) supported it in principle.

Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) suggested that the Tunisian draft should be circulated for consideration at the next meeting.

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN announced that a new revised draft of the whole report would be prepared for final adoption.

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.