

SIXTH COMMITTEE: ORGANIZATION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING

Held at the Capitol, Havana, Cuba
Wednesday, 17 December 1947 at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Erik COLBAN (Norway)

CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION OF ARTICLE 75

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) took exception, to the press release issued after the last meeting which misrepresented, mainly in its headline, but also in the text, the stand adopted by his delegation with regard to weighted voting. He wished to clarify again that it was not correct to say that the United Kingdom favoured the one country-one vote principle, or that it would go as far as the United States delegation's statement. He had only agreed to defer judgment on that point until the Charter as a whole was defined.

Mr. ALAYZA (Peru) agreed that both the United Kingdom and Canada had been misquoted as favouring the one country-one vote system, but he also found fault with the press release in that it gave the impression that the discussion had been closed and the Sub-Committee definitely established. In fact the debate was continuing now, and in its course it might be found necessary to alter the composition of the Sub-Committee in order to reflect more adequately the sentiment of the Committee regarding the various alternatives and that certain provisions could be discussed on the basis of one country-one vote principle.

Mr. AMADOR (Mexico) also thought that the Chairman might wish to review the composition of the Sub-Committee after the end of the debate.

The CHAIRMAN admitted that the press release had been at fault and felt that it might be better not to have any press releases at all than erroneous ones, even if they were not official documents. As to the Sub-Committee, he noted that he had, in fact, not had any speakers on his list when he had suggested it but he would certainly amend the composition of it if the discussion now following would require it.

Mr. ZORETO (Venezuela) supported Alternative B, as amended by the Cuban and Chilean proposals. It was the only one which upheld the primary objective of political equality which was far more important than all other

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considerations of commercial interests, national income, etc. combined. The principle of one country-one vote should logically be carried through to Article 75. To create an exceptional and privileged status for some Members would violate the principle of equality, to which Alternative B alone adhered.

Mr. POLITIS (Greece) thanked the United States representative for his declaration which would facilitate matters considerably. He thought that the following principles ought to rule the composition of the Board: (1) It should be representative of the Conference; (2) it should include the economically most important countries, whose industrial development, international trade and experience were major economic as well as political realities; (3) it should reflect the diverse regional types of economies in the world. The term "underdeveloped" was a very relative one, and countries such as those of the near and middle East would be happy to have the development of some other countries which were complaining of their underdevelopment.

He thought Alternative B to be the most equitable one, except that it did not allow for the permanent representation of the big powers; Alternative C, with the French amendment, corrected that, but did not provide for regional representation. His delegation would favour a compromise solution which would permit the permanent seating of the great powers, allow for regional representation, and provide for a vote by a two-thirds majority of the Members voting and present in the election.

Mr. RAUF (Afghanistan) endorsed the continuous seating of the big powers, balanced regional representation and the two-thirds vote, and suggested that the sub-committee be charged with finding a compromise solution embodying those principles.

Mr. GUTIERREZ (Bolivia) supported Alternative B with the Cuban amendment.

Mr. REAL (Switzerland) spoke in favour of Alternative B and pointed out that the members of the Executive Board should reflect the wishes of the Conference as a whole, rather than those of their own countries or their own commercial or governmental interests. They should, so to speak, cease being national representatives, and then there would be no need for the Charter to mention specific countries as becoming permanent members. Unless this was so, and if members of the Board continued to represent only their own countries, then every country would have a vital interest to be a member which was clearly impossible. There was no objection in his mind to having the most important countries being continuously reelected, which would happen in any event, but it should not be provided in the Charter.

Mr. LIMA (El Salvador) endorsed Alternative B. He felt that it was necessary to find a formula which recognized the rights of all nations, and

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preserved the continuous presence of the great powers on the Board not as a matter of right but in the interest of the Organization. He opposed the membership of customs unions, however, whose juridical rights had not yet been established.

He formally withdrew the El Salvador amendment (document E/CONF.2/C.6/12/Add.1) which had been based on another amendment recently withdrawn by the Pakistan delegation.

Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) thought that while it was important to abide by democratic principles, safeguards were needed to prevent their being abused. Since it was clear that without the continued presence in the Board of the most important economic countries the whole Organization would collapse, specific provision should be made in the Charter to ensure this. Alternative B was not adequate from that point of view. Secondly, the principle of requiring members of the Board to represent the Conference as a whole, was certainly a good one, but factual experience in similar bodies did not support the hope of its being carried out. The different economies and experiences of countries should, therefore, be adequately represented by regional arrangements, such as had not been provided for in Alternative C. A compromise solution should be developed ensuring provisions for the seating of permanent members and for regional economic representation.

Mr. ROUCHDY (Egypt), after thanking the United States representative for his statement, endorsed a compromise of Alternatives B and C as the most realistic solution which would benefit both large and small countries, while retaining, at the same time, the two-thirds majority rule for the election.

Mr. KUMLIN (Sweden), called the delegations' attention to the serious difficulties and deadlocks encountered in the Security Council of the United Nations by the establishment of the two-thirds majority rule for the election, which, he was afraid might similarly hamper the work of the present organization. He suggested that after a certain number of polls had been taken, provision should be made for the matter under debate to be decided by simple majority.

Mr. RIVERA (Guatemala) and Mr. DOMOND (Haiti) supported Alternative B; and Mr. ZORLU (Turkey) spoke in favour of democratic elections but for the seating of permanent members on the Board.

Mr. FORTHOMME (Belgium) then clarified certain remarks he had made at the Committee's eleventh meeting. In a customs union, such as that between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, members retained their independent sovereignty except for certain well defined matters, and they should, therefore, be allowed independent representation in the Organization. Only

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in questions of customs could they be treated as a unit. To achieve adequate representation, he thought that the Customs Union of Benelux could be recognized on the Board by rotating the seating of its three component countries.

Mr. Garcia SERRATO (Uruguay), in agreeing with Chile and other representatives, spoke for an increased number of members on the Board.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran), after adding his thanks to the United States representative, quoted from the experience gained in the Economic and Social Council in his support of Alternative B. Although the great powers had no permanent seats on the Council, their continued re-election proved that there was no danger of their being left out.

He very strongly endorsed the Swedish suggestion that the Sub-Committee study most carefully the possibility of the two-thirds vote being converted into a simple majority vote after two or three polls had been taken.

Mr. COUILLARD (Canada) supported the United Kingdom censure of the press release and said that he disbelieved the truth of the statement that the United States declaration had administered the coup de grace to the system of weighted voting. The Canadian delegation, at any rate, had not yet abandoned that system and had withdrawn its objection to the one country-one vote principle only temporarily to expedite the proceedings, and had to reserve its position. The economic importance of certain countries had to be recognized either by the system of voting or else by granting them permanent seats on the Board. He wished to make it clear that the provisional concession made by the United Kingdom and the Canadian delegations had not yet definitely settled the issue.

Mr. SHAMMA (Lebanon) endorsed the statements made by the representatives of Iraq and Egypt on behalf of a compromise solution between Alternatives B and C.

Mr. KARMAKAR (India) recalled that at Geneva, Committee B had considered including India as a permanent member of the Board before partition had gone through. After the establishment of the new Dominion of India, it might not command the necessary prerequisites for such inclusion, but he felt that it deserved to have a permanent seat on the Board in any event.

Mr. GAZDAR (Pakistan) observed that he had not been at Geneva, but quoted from the figures of the Appendix, Table A (document E/FC/T/186, pages 65 and 66) to prove that while the old India occupied the fourth place in the list of the most important countries to whom permanent seats were to be allocated, the new Dominion of India could not possibly be so treated. No exact figures would be available until 1950 showing the national incomes, populations, and external trade records of India and Pakistan respectively,

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but if the relation of two to one was to be adopted, Argentina, Italy, Australia and Sweden would now outrank India. He hoped that India would agree to share a seat jointly with Pakistan on the Board, but he would have to reserve his delegation's position in the event that such an agreement failed to materialize.

Mr. MAUNG (Burma) recognized that benefits would accrue from the continued representation on the Executive Board of the major economic powers, but thought this representation should not be unrestricted.

Mr. ENTEZAN (Iran) appealed to India and Pakistan not to continue the discussion on their economic importance and consequent eligibility for membership on the Executive Board, as this question might not arise.

The CHAIRMAN stated that 44 members had taken part in the discussion; 27 were in favour of Alternative B; 2 or 3 were in favour of Alternative A, and 7 had expressed general interest in Alternative C. The French proposal had obtained support from Belgium, and some interest had been shown by others who were also in favour of other alternatives, including Alternative B.

The composition of the Sub-Committee, as proposed by the CHAIRMAN would include, amongst others, representatives of the six delegations definitely in favour of B, three delegations definitely in favour of C, and several delegations which were in favour of A.

The CHAIRMAN asked Mr. DJEBRARA (Syria) to be the Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

The following membership of the sub-committee was approved: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, France, Italy, India, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Syria, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States.

Articles 76 - 79, inclusive

Approved on first reading as drafted by the Preparatory Committee.

Article 80

In answer to a question by Mr. STINEBOWER (United States) with regard to the words "Except as otherwise decided by the Conference...", the CHAIRMAN assured him that the Conference could not decide to elect members of Commissions on grounds other than personal capacity. This point might be kept in mind by the drafting sub-committee.

Paragraph 1 was approved on first reading as drafted by the Preparatory Committee.

Paragraph 2. The representative of Cuba objected to the rigidity imposed by the words "The numbers, which shall not exceed seven..."

Mr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia) supported Cuba's point of view, saying that if it was afterwards found that an additional member was necessary the Charter would have to be amended, and Mr. de VRIES (Netherlands) thought the

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set number might cause difficulties not only in the field of commercial policies but also in economic development.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States) reserving his position for a further reading, nevertheless agreed with Cuba, and suggested the insertion of the word "normally".

It was agreed that "normally" should be inserted in square brackets.

Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 were otherwise approved on first reading as drafted by the Preparatory Committee.

Paragraph 5. After the representative of the United States had proposed that the drafting committee should bring this paragraph into line with Article 69 (e), it was approved on first reading as drafted by the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. de la GUARDIA (Costa Rica) suggested that the drafting committee should consider placing the Sections "The Conference", "The Executive Board", "The Tariff Committee" and "The Commissions" in the order stated in Article 70, and make the consequent changes in the numbering of Articles 79, 80 and 81. It was agreed the Drafting Sub-Committee would be advised of this proposal.
