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CONTENTS

	Page
Consideration of the items on the agenda of the meeting	707
Question of impartial investigation of charges of use by United Nations forces of bacteriological warfare: report of the First Committee (A/2384) ..	707
Measures to avert the threat of a new world war and measures to strengthen peace and friendship among the nations: report of the First Committee (A/2386)	708

President: Mr. Lester B. PEARSON (Canada).**Consideration of the items on the agenda of the meeting**

Pursuant to rule 67 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss items 73 and 72 of the agenda of the General Assembly.

Question of impartial investigation of charges of use by United Nations forces of bacteriological warfare: report of the First Committee (A/2384)

[Agenda item 73]

Mr. Thors (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee, presented the report of that Committee (A/2384).

1. The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the report of the Secretary-General [A/2387] on the financial implications of the draft resolution proposed by the First Committee. Normally, under rule 152 of the rules of procedure, such estimates by the Secretary-General are examined by the Fifth Committee, which gives its opinion in regard to them before any action is taken by the General Assembly. During the resumed meetings of the present session, however, the Fifth Committee has not been meeting. That, however, need not prevent the General Assembly, in plenary meeting, from forming its own opinion as to the estimates, without having received a report from the Fifth Committee. But that can be done only by unanimous consent, that is, only if there is no objection on the part of any member of the Assembly. One factor in support of this procedure is that no budgetary appropriation is required to cover the financial implications of this proposal, as will be observed from the last paragraph of the Secretary-General's report to which I have just referred.

2. I call upon the representative of the Philippines, who wishes to speak on this particular question as Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

3. General ROMULO (Philippines): As Chairman of the Fifth Committee, I should like to suggest that the procedure recommended by the President is a reasonable way of meeting the present difficulties. It is of course obvious that the General Assembly is the master of its own procedure, and I believe that the Assembly should not be prevented at this late hour from proceeding to a consideration of the draft resolution now before it. Furthermore, the intention of the rule in question will be fully met if the Assembly is given this present opportunity of taking fully into account the budgetary implications of the draft resolution of the First Committee.

4. The estimates of the Secretary-General are before the Assembly for its information, and the Assembly is naturally free to take note of them or to express any opinion on them. In addition, as the President has just pointed out, no further budgetary action would be required by the Assembly because of the budgetary implications of the present draft resolution. The General Assembly, in adopting its 1953 budget, made provision for such actions as that envisaged in the present draft, by authorizing the Secretary-General to withdraw sums for such purposes from the Working Capital Fund.

5. I suggest, therefore, that, if there is no objection, the Assembly should take note of the estimates which are now before it and that we should proceed to the consideration of the draft resolution proposed by the First Committee.

6. The PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to this procedure?

7. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Soviet Union delegation considers that we should adhere to the established rules which are always systematically applied in similar cases. As our President has already rightly remarked, the opinion of the Fifth Committee

is required whenever any allocations are to be made. The fact that we have no such opinion in this case in itself serves as an obstacle to the adoption of a decision on the matter by the General Assembly. Even if the General Assembly were to see fit to depart from that established rule and were to take a decision without having the conclusions of the Fifth Committee before it, the USSR delegation, for its part, would be unable to associate itself with such a decision.

8. With your permission, I should like to explain why the USSR delegation would not be able to associate itself with such a decision if the General Assembly were to see fit to disregard the fact that no conclusion had been reached by the Fifth Committee. The fact is that the question of bacteriological weapons which is now before the General Assembly has already met with objections from the USSR delegation in the First Committee and, as is known, the USSR delegation voted against the draft resolution which was submitted. The USSR delegation considered and still considers that the establishment of any commission of investigation is unnecessary, since an investigation has already been carried out by absolutely impartial and authoritative international commissions.

9. When the matter was considered in the First Committee the USSR delegation pointed out that it was absolutely abnormal and inadmissible to discuss the question without inviting representatives of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and of the People's Republic of China, which are directly interested in the consideration of the problem.

10. It is self-evident that the discussion of the question without the participation of representatives of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China is absolutely irregular, since these republics are interested in participating in the discussion of the matter and such a discussion could not yield the desired results without their participation. If one of the interested parties takes part in the discussion, then justice, the universally established rules of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter demand that the other interested party should also participate. In such circumstances, if one of the interested parties takes part in the discussion of a question and the other interested party does not, there can be no impartial consideration of the question. For these reasons, the USSR delegation could not accept the draft resolution or the proposals contained in it. We still maintain this position, and consider it to be inexpedient and incorrect to set up a new commission to investigate facts which have already been proved definitely and with complete impartiality by the above-mentioned authoritative international commissions.

11. It would be impossible to agree with the findings of such a commission because the discussion and settlement of those problems, both in the First Committee and in the General Assembly, have taken place, as I have already pointed out, in the absence of the governments most closely concerned with the question, in violation of the elementary norms of international law and of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

12. For these reasons, the USSR delegation voted against this draft resolution in the First Committee and will vote against it at this plenary meeting. It obviously cannot agree with a proposal to take decisions on financing the work of a commission when it objects to the very establishment of such a body.

13. In order to avoid returning to the question in an explanation of my vote, I should like to mention that the draft resolution absolutely by-passes the important question of appealing to States which have not yet acceded to or ratified the Geneva Protocol to do so. We consider that this important question should be settled immediately.

14. The PRESIDENT: I stated a few moments ago that I felt that this procedure, which was unusual, should be followed only by unanimous consent. As objection has been raised to this procedure, I feel that we should abandon it and proceed to the next item on the agenda.

15. The Fifth Committee may convene some time next week to consider the budgetary implications of the draft resolution. When the draft resolution comes before the General Assembly next week, we shall have a report from the Fifth Committee, in accordance with the normal procedure.

16. As there is no objection to my suggestion, the Assembly will now pass to the consideration of the next item on its agenda.

Measures to avert the threat of a new world war and measures to strengthen peace and friendship among the nations: report of the First Committee (A/2386)

[Agenda item 72]

Mr. Thors (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee, presented the report of that Committee (A/2386), and then spoke as follows:

17. Mr. THORS (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee: The draft resolution contained in the report, which obtained the unique unanimity of the First Committee, will, let us hope, lead to an end, in due course, of the war in Korea and will then mark one of the greatest achievements of the United Nations.

18. Mr. SKREZESZEWSKI (Poland) (*translated from French*): In view of the fact that the Governments of the People's Republic of China and of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea have again taken the initiative in order to reach an armistice agreement, to put an end to the conflict in Korea and to resume negotiations in Panmunjom, the Polish delegation has not insisted and does not now insist that its proposals on the Korean question should be put to the vote and it has supported the draft resolution submitted to the First Committee by the Brazilian delegation. This attitude, which was inspired by the deep desire of the Polish delegation to see the United Nations reach an agreement on a problem of such fundamental importance as the Korean question, and the initiative taken by the Brazilian delegation made it possible for the Committee to adopt the Brazilian draft resolution unanimously on 16 April. Neither did the Polish delegation insist nor does it insist now that the issues dealt with in points II and III of the Polish draft resolution [A/2229] should be put to the vote.

19. After listening to the debate on these questions we came to the conclusion that they called for a fuller debate enabling every delegation to explain its viewpoint so that complete agreement could be reached.

But this is not possible, as the work of the present session is drawing to a close and our time is limited. That is why my delegation reserved the right to revert to the problems mentioned in points II and III of its resolution at the next session of the General Assembly.

20. The decisions of the Government of the People's Republic of Poland to which we have just referred are not dictated by circumstances. They are not a gesture. These decisions are the result of the Polish Government's unaltered policy of opposing war and defending peace. Any sincere proposal for peace will have our support.

21. Mr. MUNIZ (Brazil): Both as the representative of Brazil and as the officer who had the unique honour and opportunity of presiding over the meetings of the First Committee when it reached unanimity on a decision of the highest significance, I feel it my duty, indeed, the most gratifying duty, to say a few brief words of hope and confidence in that action and in the future of our Organization.

22. The draft resolution before the Assembly does not belong to, and has never belonged to, the delegation of my country. It arose from the consensus of opinion firmly established as to the utmost necessity of reaching a prompt, just and honourable armistice in Korea, consistent with the principles and objectives of the United Nations. It was in response to the call of this unanimous feeling and to universal aspirations that the Government of Brazil took it upon itself to solidify and give tangible form to the lifelong traditions of the Latin American countries, which have never shirked responsibility in the pursuit of the great objectives of the Charter and in defence of the norms which govern the free association of States based on mutual respect and understanding.

23. Nothing that has been achieved would have indeed materialized had it not been for the unrestricted solidarity and unfailing confidence bestowed upon us by the delegations of the American republics here represented.

24. Notwithstanding the hopes and the heartening enthusiasm which hailed the approval of the present draft resolution by the First Committee on 16 April, we are all aware that this text is only a first step towards a larger measure of agreement, which might encompass the most challenging political problems of our day. The draft resolution has gathered a momentum which goes far beyond its formulation or its actual wording. More than the unanimity from which it derives its mandatory force, it is a striking demonstration of one important fact—the fact that agreement is still possible among us when all Member States conform their actions and cast a vote in strict adherence to the solemn pledges of San Francisco. This explains the chain reaction of hope and optimism which pervaded Committee Room 4 when the result of the vote was proclaimed. The draft resolution has, furthermore, the supreme merit of reaffirming the unswerving determination of the United Nations to foster and promote the cause of peace and conciliation by keeping the development of the present world crisis under its constant vigilance.

25. This is a day of hope. Let us make it, likewise, a day of dedication to the great and more complex tasks which lie ahead. Peace is a daily effort, and the con-

stant endeavour to fight for peace will never cease. Ours to keep our faith and our determination; ours to facilitate and provide a sound basis for the painstaking efforts and strivings of all those statesmen, who, in this age of anxiety, endeavour to translate into deeds and constructive action the pressing desires of man. Should our hopes be frustrated, should this draft resolution fail to prove a useful contribution to the conclusion of an early armistice, then—to borrow from the inspiration of a great poet—April would indeed remain "the cruellest month" in the huge and scorched "waste land" of Korean martyrdom.

26. The end of the armed conflict in Korea, which is already in sight, will remove the present tragic tension and permit the United Nations to go ahead with its great task of bringing about, out of the anguishes, aspirations and contradictions of the day, a new world order based on justice, freedom and the respect of human personality which reflects the spirit of God, and on the recognition that each and every nation, great and small, has a part to play in the work of international creation, thus fulfilling the simple words of the prophet who said, "Inhabit the earth in peace so that it can reward you with its plenty".

27. Mr. MENON (India): We are all happy that this Assembly is closing its present series of meetings in this felicitous atmosphere of a unanimous decision with regard to the armistice negotiations in Korea. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing in plenary meeting the gratitude and appreciation of my delegation to the delegation of Poland for the response it made to our request to withdraw the first clause of its own draft resolution.

28. Thus this morning we are sending from here to the negotiators in Korea a message of good will and hope for their success. I am sure that the General Assembly appreciates the fact that, according to the newspaper reports, progress has taken place in this direction.

29. I should like to express the feeling of my delegation with regard to the last paragraph of the draft resolution now before the Assembly. Our understanding of it is that there is an initiative resting in the President for the recalling of this Assembly whenever it is required and in accordance with the wishes of the majority. In other words, we do not understand the draft resolution to mean that a request has to be signed by a majority of Members, but that the reference is merely to the President's obtaining in the normal way the assent of the majority of States.

30. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The head of the Polish delegation has just told us that the Polish delegation does not insist on a vote on its proposals concerning the Korean and other questions contained in the draft resolution submitted by that delegation to the First Committee.

31. The USSR delegation fully agrees with the decision taken by the delegation of Poland and with the motives by which that delegation was guided.

32. The USSR delegation therefore voted for the Brazilian draft resolution in the First Committee and deems it necessary to follow the same policy in the plenary General Assembly.

33. The PRESIDENT: Since no other representative wishes to speak at this time, the Assembly will now proceed to vote on the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report [A/2386].

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

34. Mr. GROSS (United States of America): We have just repeated in the General Assembly an unprecedented step which was taken earlier this week in the First Committee. We have adopted unanimously a resolution on the Korean question. The resolution expresses the hope that the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of war will be speedily completed and that the further negotiations at Panmunjom will result in achieving an early armistice in Korea consistent with United Nations principles and objectives.

35. This is an impressive development. It expresses a real striving for peace. It is a response to the desire of the peoples of the world for a lessening of tensions. We are pleased to see that the Soviet Union Government and those who vote with it have, for the first time, voted today with the overwhelming majority of the United Nations in the General Assembly on a resolution dealing with Korea. It remains to be seen whether this action warrants the hope and optimism that have been engendered by this vote and by some recent communist statements. It is easy enough for the communists to talk in favour of peace. They have done that only too frequently before. It remains to be seen whether they really want peace and whether this promise will be reflected in constructive performance around the conference table at Panmunjom. This strikes us as a solemn moment of hope, rather than of gratitude. While these developments are encouraging, this is not, in our judgment, a moment for elation: it is a time for sober reflection, for further practical action at Panmunjom which can result in an armistice.

36. Let there be no misunderstanding: progress has been made; we realize it, and we are glad. The United Nations Command negotiators and the communist commanders have agreed to exchange sick and wounded prisoners of war, a humanitarian task which is scheduled to begin on 20 April. I am sure that all of us will be watching carefully, in the hope that this important agreement will be carried out expeditiously.

37. On 7 April last [423rd meeting], the chairman of the United States delegation, Mr. Lodge, gave a report to this Assembly regarding developments which had taken place in Panmunjom up to that time. A supplementary report of the communications exchanged since 7 April is being transmitted to the President of the General Assembly for the information of Members of the United Nations.

38. We are hopeful that the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of war will be completed shortly. We are hopeful, also, that the United Nations Command's letter of 16 April will lead to a resumption of negotiations on the over-all question of prisoners of war.

39. My Government, which bears the responsibility for the Unified Command, will continue to seek peace by every honourable and decent means. The true initiative for peace has been with the United States and other loyal supporters of the United Nations. As President Eisenhower said on 16 April, the first step towards

peace must be the completion of an honourable armistice in Korea.

40. Mr. DAVID (Czechoslovakia) (*translated from Russian*): The Czechoslovak delegation voted in the First Committee for the draft resolution which that Committee has now submitted to the General Assembly in its report [A/2386].

41. The Czechoslovak delegation has again voted for this draft resolution today. This attitude expresses the sincere wish of the whole Czechoslovak people that the war in Korea should be brought to an end as soon as possible, that the whole Korean question should be settled in the interests of the people and that a stable peace should be established throughout the world. We shall concentrate all our future efforts on the achievement of these ends.

42. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) (*translated from Spanish*): The Peruvian delegation wishes briefly to express its satisfaction at the unanimous adoption of the Brazilian draft resolution by the First Committee and now by the General Assembly. At the same time, having resolutely opposed the original Polish proposal—which was not put to the vote because the Polish representative did not press for a vote on the first part and reserved his position with regard to the second and third parts—my delegation feels it its duty to pay tribute to the Polish delegation for having made possible the unanimous approval of the resolution we have adopted. Moreover, the USSR representative's statement that he would carefully study and fully support the Brazilian delegation's proposal also helped to bring about the unanimous adoption of the resolution.

43. The Peruvian delegation feels that the importance of this resolution transcends the immediate objective it has in view. The resolution not only expresses the hope that the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners will facilitate agreement on the general question of prisoner exchange, but creates an atmosphere and introduces an element which will contribute to a successful solution at the Panmunjom discussions.

44. We sincerely believe that such moral factors are not merely the expression of pious hopes and more or less wishful thinking; that they create a moral force of enormous strength. Because of our confidence in this moral force we shall not resign ourselves to the failure of the negotiations on the exchange of prisoners of war after the unanimous vote in the First Committee and the General Assembly on the proposal so opportunely submitted by Brazil. Such a failure would involve a terrible responsibility; one which no State, we are convinced, would assume at this time.

45. On the other hand, we know that peace brings very serious problems; indeed I believe that peace, like charity, calls for patience. It must not be hurried. We must accept the dictum: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof", and congratulate ourselves that the problems before us are being gradually solved in accordance with the interests of mankind.

46. We have now dealt with the problem of the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners, a happy step initiated as we know by the United States Government. We shall be faced in the near future, at the Panmunjom discussions, with the great problem of the exchange of all prisoners. We hope that that problem will be solved

because it involves the solution of the whole question of Korea, with all its destroyed homes, poverty and misery, which is in the minds of all of us.

47. All mankind hopes that a just peace will be achieved soon, and that we shall be able to dedicate to peace and the rehabilitation of the Korean people all the energies which, through the force of a terrible fate, we have devoted to war.

48. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly's consideration of this important matter has now been brought to an auspicious and encouraging conclusion. Unfortunately, unanimous conclusions are not as common in the United Nations General Assembly as we should all like.

49. We know, of course, from experience that resolutions are not always the same as solutions. On this occasion, however, I think we have the right to hope that the step we have taken unanimously will make an important contribution to the efforts now being undertaken in Korea to bring peace to that unhappy land.

50. As President of the General Assembly, I shall, of course, forward the resolution to those concerned. I know Members would like me to send with the resolution our good wishes and our hopes for an early and successful conclusion of the important task being undertaken at Panmunjom.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.