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PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Under the terms of operative paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 2247 (XXI), the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to instruct the Publications Board to study and make recommendations on four questions relating to the publications and documentation of the United Nations. In operative paragraph 2, it requested the Secretary-General:

(a) "To submit to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at its summer session on the basis of the above-mentioned studies by the Publications Board, a preliminary report containing such suggestions and recommendations as may be appropriate for the elimination, consolidation or reduction in frequency of various publications", and

(b) "To report to the General Assembly at its twenty-second session."

2. A preliminary report was, accordingly, submitted to and discussed with the Advisory Committee in June of this year. The Committee has commented on the question of documentation in paragraphs 89 to 109 of its report on the 1968 budget estimates;^{1/} paragraphs 98 through 104 deal more specifically with this present consideration of the question.

3. The task of the Publications Board, as laid down in the resolution, was to examine both meetings documentation and publications. It is important in this over-all context to note the relative weight of these two categories:

(a) In 1966, the Office of Conference Services at Headquarters produced just over 150,000 pages ^{2/} of translation and revision in total in the five official languages. Of this amount, about 130,000 pages or

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/6707).

^{2/} The measurement of output is the "standard page", a typescript page which contains, in English, about 330 words.

87 per cent represented meetings documentation, including meetings records. The remaining 20,000 pages comprised translation of material for publications (including a substantial amount for the Treaty Series) and for internal purposes, such as translations of replies to questionnaires, etc. The figure of 150,000 pages does not include on revision only of previously translated material, totalling almost 20,000 pages of which 17,400 pages represented meetings documentation;

- (b) The 1968 budget estimates under Section 11 include \$1,967,300 for printing of official records, recurrent publications and studies and reports. Of this amount \$1,057,700, or 54 per cent, relates to printing of official records and \$725,100, or 36 per cent, to recurrent publications.

4. The four questions posed for the Publications Board's study by resolution 2247 (XXI) are dealt with separately below; the conclusions and recommendations resulting from that study are set out in paragraphs 46 to 51.

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- (a) Review of the present practice of preparation and publication of Official Records and Supplements and Annexes of all organs of the United Nations, with the aim of determining whether any economy can be achieved

5. The Board observes, as a point of departure, that issuance of all documentation of the various organs is governed by the rules of procedure of the body concerned and that subsidiary bodies which do not have separate rules of procedure normally proceed under the rules of procedure of their parent bodies. Special conferences, however, tend to have their own rules of procedure adapted to the specific needs of the conference.

6. In so far as languages are concerned, the rules of procedure generally draw a distinction between official languages and working languages.

Summary records

7. The volume of summary records depends upon the number of meetings of the body concerned, and upon the number of pages prepared by précis-writers for each meeting. The volume is also affected by the length of corrections to provisional records submitted by delegations. At Headquarters, summary records were provided for 1,095 meetings in 1965 and 1,183 meetings in 1966; many of these meetings, it may be noted, are those of subordinate bodies. In respect of the 1,183 meetings in 1966, the original summaries totalled just under 15,000 pages.

8. The possibility of reducing the length and volume of records of debates depends upon many factors, some of which are the following:

- (a) The length of time devoted to certain debates and the number of participants in them;
- (b) The number of requests for distribution, as separate documents, of individual statements in debates;
- (c) The number of new committees, working groups, etc. established;
- (d) The tendency to have speeches included in summary records in extenso; and
- (e) The tendency to have summary records in an increasing number of languages.

9. In the past it was agreed that the length of the summary records -tentatively fixed at fifteen pages per meeting - could be increased only if "the special substance of the debate required it". Lately, decisions have often been taken in committees for specific statements, both of representatives and of members of the Secretariat, to be issued in full as separate documents. Further, decisions have been taken to include in the summary records statements in extenso even though summary records are the recognized and approved form of the record for the particular committee. In a related development, there have been cases where extracts of the verbatim or summary record of an organ have been included in its report. Thus, while in 1966 the over-all average length of summary records remained within the standard of fifteen pages per meeting, the records of some organs have tended to exceed that number.

Verbatim records

10. At present, written verbatim records^{3/} are taken at Headquarters for:

- plenary meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of its First and Special Political Committees;
- the Security Council, the Disarmament Commission, and the Military Staff Committee;
- the Trusteeship Council;
- the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Committee of Twenty-Four);
- the Special Committee on Peace-Keeping Operations; and
- the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

^{3/} Sound recordings are made of all interventions in all open meetings of the United Nations, as delivered by the speakers.

In all cases, verbatims of the entire proceedings are taken in both English and French, and for the General Assembly plenary and First Committee meetings also in Spanish. Interventions in Russian and Spanish are also taken in those languages for meetings of the Special Political Committee, the Security Council and the Disarmament Commission, as are interventions in Russian for plenary meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the First Committee, the Trusteeship Council, the Committee of Twenty-Four and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. During 1966, verbatim records were taken for 394 official meetings, of which 213 related to the twenty-first session of the General Assembly, 50 to the Committee of Twenty-Four, 66 to the Security Council, 26 to the Military Staff Committee and 26 to the Trusteeship Council. The total number of pages of these verbatim records in one language, English, was 13,925, an average of about 35 pages per meeting.

11. The verbatim record is the final official record of plenary meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Disarmament Commission.^{4/} The official record of all other bodies is the summary record; the summary records of meetings of bodies for which verbatim records are taken are prepared in some cases by abridgement of the verbatim and in others by précis-writers present at the meetings. Since the initial verbatim records in, say, French, include the interventions in French as delivered, and the interpretation into French of interventions in other languages, it is necessary, for the final official records of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and the meetings of the Security Council and the Disarmament Commission, to have all speeches translated from their original language into the other four official languages.

12. Under arrangements made by the General Assembly in 1947 and 1948, verbatim records were to be provided for plenary meetings of the General Assembly, the meetings of one Main Committee of the Assembly at a time depending on the subject of debate at that time, the Security Council, the Disarmament Commission, and the Trusteeship Council. The present situation represents an extension of the provision of verbatim records beyond the limitations then envisaged, and there has been in recent years an increased pressure for verbatim records for working purposes, which means, in essence, the provision of such records to a body in session and, at the same time, the preparation of summary records as the official record.

^{4/} The Disarmament Commission did not meet in 1966.

13. A verbatim record, containing as it does the entire discussion in a committee, is obviously more complete than a summary record. On the other hand, the provision of verbatim records places a substantial workload on the Office of Conference Services, in the Verbatim Reporting Section (which is staffed to cover only one meeting at a time), in the Official Records Editing Section, and in the Stenographic and Reproduction Services which already account for a major portion of the overtime expenditures of the Office of Conference Services. In these circumstances, the pressure for further provision of verbatim records represents an important financial and administrative problem.

14. The Board is of the opinion that the possibility of achieving substantial reductions in the length and volume of records of debates depends primarily on the needs of the bodies and their participants themselves, and their willingness to adhere to rigorous discipline directed at limiting this type of documentation to essential needs.

Supplements

15. The Board notes that the number of supplements, which grew in the first ten years of the Organization, has recently shown a further increase. It follows therefore that there is a need clearly to define the documents which should be included in this category, particularly as most of them are issued in five languages. The Board believes that this should be done periodically.

16. In so far as the form of reproduction is concerned, until 1966, when the twenty-first session of the General Assembly was held, Assembly supplements with one exception were printed externally. During the twenty-first session, however, five were issued internally by offset printing from typescript in English, French, Spanish and Russian and one of them was also issued internally in Chinese, from calligraphy. At the same session, as a result of delays in submission of copy, seven supplements had to be issued first by internal means, and then printed later.

17. Three years earlier, in 1963, the internal offset method began to be used more extensively for supplements of the Economic and Social Council. A working group set up by the Office of Conference Services at the request of the Publications Board had already, at that time, shown that this method of issuing Economic and Social Council supplements would: (a) eliminate the necessity of producing a preliminary version of the same record by the mimeograph process; (b) eliminate the cost of the type-setting and printing of these supplements and (c) facilitate

the provision of these reports to the Council in final form under the "six-week rule" of the rules of procedure.

Annexes

18. In its study of the present practice of preparation and publication of annexes, the Board examined how the annexes had developed over the years. It notes that until 1950 certain documents, considered to have a permanent value, were printed separately from the summary records under the title "Annexes". The purpose was to provide the texts necessary for a full understanding of the discussion as reflected in the summary records. They were printed because, in the early years of the Organization, the facilities of internal offset reproduction were not as developed as they are today and printing offered the best means of preserving documents of a permanent value.

19. The situation has changed considerably. Up-to-date offset printing equipment has been acquired, and it is now possible to reproduce a document from typescript by this method on good paper in such a way that it will be perfectly legible and durable.

20. With regard to the growing volume of the annexes, data relating to the annexes of the General Assembly show that at the sixteenth session the annexes consisted of 1,480 printed pages and at the twentieth session 2,088 printed pages, these figures applying to one language only. Figures for the documentation of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council show corresponding increases.

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- (b) Review of the publications programme in order to ascertain whether publications, studies and reports are prepared in accordance with pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and other policy-making bodies, as well as to determine whether any publication may have lost its usefulness or become redundant

21. On this question, the Publications Board has assumed that its purpose was not to examine and report on the authority for and continued usefulness of individual items included in current publications programmes, but rather to analyse the general issues raised by the question and to further compliance with its requirements by proposing criteria and guidelines which would serve United Nations bodies and their secretariats when drafting resolutions or other decisions calling for the preparation of publications.

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22. The Board believes that operative paragraph 1(b) of resolution 2247 (XXI) raises four specific issues:

- (a) What is to be considered as included in the "publications programme"?
- (b) What are "policy-making bodies" which have the power to authorize publications?
- (c) What formulation in the resolution or other decision of a policy-making body should be considered as providing authority for:
 - (i) The preparation of a study, report, etc.;
 - (ii) Issuing such study as a printed publication (rather than, for example, as a mimeographed document)?
- (d) Whether a publication has "lost its usefulness or become redundant". This raises two sub-issues:
 - (i) What are the criteria for making such a determination;
 - (ii) By what methods (and presumably at what intervals) is the determination on the basis of such criteria to be made?

While points (a) and (b) are questions of a legal nature to be determined on the basis of applicable United Nations decisions and regulations, points (c) and (d) raise difficult questions of judgement and methodology. The recommendations of the Board on these latter two points, therefore, should be considered as tentative, pending a re-examination of their merits in the light of further experience in their operation.

Publications programme

23. As defined in the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Publications Board (ST/SGP/131, Amend. 1, of 13 January 1967), the publications programme is to be understood as covering all "matter produced by printing or any other process of reproduction and offered for sale under an authorization of the Publications Board" (second paragraph of section II).

"Policy-making bodies"

24. The question, what are policy-making bodies that may request or authorize publications, really covers two issues. One relates to the authority to make budgetary provision for the preparation and publication of the study, report, etc.

in question. This, under the Charter, is exclusively within the province of the General Assembly, which alone may approve the regular budget of the Organization.

25. The other issue is concerned with which bodies may take the initiative in proposing or authorizing a publication within the limits of present or subsequent appropriations. Here no simple general answer can be given. It is clear that in the first place the "principal organs" under Article 7 of the Charter, i.e., the General Assembly, the three Councils, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat, must be considered as entitled to do so, as well as, presumably, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Industrial Development Board. The Secretary-General has in fact repeatedly exercised this initiative, as has, on his behalf, the Office of Public Information. In the case of the Office of Public Information, its publications were authorized under early resolutions of the General Assembly, principally resolution 13 (I) of 1946. They cannot be based on later individual authorizations because the need for them depends on occurrences in, and activities of, the United Nations which are not specifically foreseeable and whose importance in requiring coverage by publications must essentially be evaluated by the Under-Secretary in charge of the Department, on behalf of the Secretary-General.

26. The standing of initiatives taken by subsidiary organs cannot readily be defined in general terms, since the nature, functions and responsibility of those organs differ so widely that it would be neither practicable nor advisable to determine which ones are or are not "policy-making bodies" for the purpose of requesting publications. The fact is that most of these bodies have requested studies which have subsequently been published.

Authority for publication

27. The question whether the request of a "policy-making body" for the preparation of a report, study, etc., also constitutes authority for its publication, is also not readily resolved by general rules. While, in many cases, resolutions of the General Assembly and of other organs have expressly called for the "publication" of studies, reports, etc., there have been just as many, if not more, cases where such publication has been budgeted by the General Assembly, and authorized by the Publications Board, on the basis of resolutions calling merely for their preparation without indicating the form in which they were to be issued. This consistent

practice over the years, however, responds to the necessities of United Nations operations. Indeed, while in some cases the need for printed publications is evident from the beginning (e.g., in the case of statistical series, tax treaties, etc.), it is often not possible to anticipate at the time a study is initiated whether its results will be such as to justify, and indeed necessitate, its distribution in printed form. Here, the relevant factors must be examined by the Publications Board in the light of the substantive judgement of the responsible department before a suitable decision can be taken.

Loss of usefulness or redundancy

28. Presumably, the two terms are to be distinguished in the sense that redundancy covers those cases where a publication, though continuing to be useful in itself, loses its usefulness because of the availability of the same material in another publication or similar medium. In that sense, redundancy means duplication and has to be determined on the basis of factors such as the ready availability of the material, at comparable price, in the same languages, at similar intervals (in cases of periodic publications), etc.

29. The basic tests of loss of usefulness otherwise than through redundancy may be formulated in terms of (i) changes in the concepts and principles discussed in the text; (ii) availability of more up-to-date information, both of a factual and a conceptual nature; (iii) relevancy of the publication to changing needs and (iv) current demand for the publication.

30. In the case of a non-recurrent publication, the tests will arise only where it is proposed to rerun or to revise it. Since, in the case of reruns, the cost will be substantially less than in the case of the original publication (notably also because of the absence of further expenditure of staff resources in the preparation of the publication), the tests may be less stringent than in the case of a revision (depending on the extent of the revision, both in terms of new texts and of new typesetting required) or of a recurrent publication.

31. In the case of recurrent publications,^{5/} it would not be practical to require a de novo determination for each new issue, especially where these appear at monthly,

^{5/} For information, it is noted that the 1968 estimates under Section 11, Printing, include \$725,100 for recurrent publications and \$184,500 for studies and reports. Of the \$725,100, some \$465,000 relates to statistical publications; a further \$134,000 relates to the Treaty Series.

annual or even bi-annual intervals. It would, however, be appropriate to provide that the responsible department undertake a re-examination, from the point of view of possible loss of usefulness or redundancy, at regular intervals (which might vary with the type of publication involved but should presumably be not less than five, nor more than ten, years) and to submit the results of such re-examination to the Publications Board for its consideration. In view of the large number of publications involved, a transitional period will be needed to put such a regular review programme initially into effect.

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- (c) Study of the documentation of the Organization with a view to suggesting possible ways and means of achieving economy both in extent and cost.

32. In its review of the documentation of the Organization, the Board notes that the subject has been considered at length over the years by various United Nations bodies, notably by the 1958 Committee on the Control and Limitation of Documentation - in which connexion General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII) and the Drafting and Editing Instructions arising out of it (ST/Drafting Manual/4 and Add.1) are particularly relevant. More recently, the Economic and Social Council in resolutions 1090 E (XXXIX) and 1154 (XLI) has set forth a number of proposals for reducing the volume of its documentation.

33. Although efforts to control the volume of documentation, avoid duplication and find ways and means of achieving economy are constantly being made, the Board recognizes that, so long as United Nations activities continue to grow, an increase in documentation is unavoidable, especially when new organs are established.

34. As directed, however, the Board has again reviewed the documentation to determine if, apart from reiterating the general need for continuing efforts to control and limit documentation, there were some more specific steps which would yield economies. Some observations on this matter are made under the

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above portion of this report relating to Official Records. The Board further noted in this regard:

- (a) That the growth of the conference programme has made it increasingly difficult to schedule meetings of subsidiary bodies in such a way as to avoid having to issue their reports first in provisional form, with the final reports being issued later. It hopes that some improvement can be made through the work of the Committee on Conferences established by General Assembly resolution 2239 (XXI);
- (b) That many technical papers submitted for conferences, seminars and workshops are issued in printed form;
- (c) That economies could be effected through holding, for issuance in a single document, replies of Governments submitted in response to specific resolutions, rather than issuing them as separate documents as they are received;
- (d) That the distribution of documentation appeared in some cases to exceed the true necessities. For example, some documents customarily circulated as "Limited" at Headquarters, are primarily of value in the conference room itself and to editorial staff. Yet a "Limited" document appearing in four languages calls for a total distribution of as many as 3,000 copies. There also appears to be some duplication in the present arrangements for distribution at Headquarters of "in-session" documentation of meetings held away from Headquarters. The Board is carrying out an over-all review of the distribution of documents and publications and will pay particular attention to the apparently non-essential issuances.

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- (d) Harmonization of the publications programme of the United Nations with those of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), with a view to eliminating possible duplication

35. The Board draws attention to the fact that the publications of the United Nations and the agencies are the result of work programmes of each of the organizations, approved by their respective governing bodies. Thus, harmonization and avoidance of duplication are objectives to be sought in the first instance in the development of the work programmes themselves. At the Secretariat level,

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these objectives are sought through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) with its sub-committees and working groups on particular programme areas.^{6/}

36. Nevertheless, the Board has attempted to determine whether duplication of the publications does exist and to what extent. For this purpose, the Board had before it statements on the 1967 and 1968 publications programmes of the various agencies provided by them at the Board's request. Further, available publications catalogues were examined and a check was made of some actual publications the titles of which implied the possibility of some duplication. The Board does not suggest that this examination was in any way exhaustive; and, indeed, in the time and with the resources available, it was not possible to undertake even a cursory survey of all the material being published by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and IAEA. Moreover, difficulties were encountered even in the limited scope of the inquiry, since the statements obtained from the agencies varied in comprehensiveness, annotation and time periods covered. The observations made below are thus tentative and should be considered in the context described in this paragraph.

37. In their statements, several of the specialized agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), expressed the opinion that given the technical and highly specialized nature of their publications, there was little likelihood of duplication with the publications of the other specialized agencies and/or the United Nations.

38. In so far as the essentially technical series and studies of the specialized agencies and IAEA are concerned, the Board finds itself in general agreement with this position. The Board's examination did, however, indicate at least three possible areas in which duplication and/or overlapping occurred: (a) the legislative series; (b) statistics; and (c) some subject areas.

^{6/} See, for example, chapter II, Programme Questions, of the thirty-third report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to the Economic and Social Council (E/4337).

(a) Legislative Series

39. Some treaties, conventions and general international agreements published by the specialized agencies and IAEA also appear in the United Nations Treaty Series. There were, for example, agreements registered with IAEA and published by that agency as information circulars, general international agreements and conventions registered with and published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the loan agreements entered into and published by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

40. Under Article 102 of the Charter, the United Nations is required to publish every treaty and every international agreement entered into by any Member of the United Nations and registered with the Secretariat. There may well be similar statutory requirements and regulations in the case of the specialized agencies and IAEA. Furthermore, registration and deposit of the official documents of the specialized agencies and IAEA with the United Nations are governed by the relevant provisions in the agreements between the United Nations and each of the specialized agencies and IAEA. For example, article 21 of the agreement between the United Nations and IAEA pertains to registration with the United Nations international agreements entered into by the Agency and its members or by the latter and registered with IAEA.

(b) Statistics

41. The Board accepts that in the statistical field a certain degree of duplication may well be unavoidable in the light of the multi-purpose use of statistics as well as of the different orientation, timing, purpose and reading public of these publications. For example, statistics appearing in the Bulletin of Labour Statistics, published quarterly by the ILO, also appear in the Yearbook of Labour Statistics issued by that organization. The latter publication contains a yearly summary of labour statistics relating to all parts of the world. Statistics appearing in both of these publications are in part also covered in the United Nations Statistical Yearbook which compiles annual statistical data for more than 250 countries and territories covering a wide range of social and economic subjects.

42. Similarly, there is undoubtedly some duplication and/or overlapping in the field of statistics between the United Nations and such agencies as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). There is also some overlapping between and among such entities as: FAO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as well as between UNCTAD and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

(c) Subject areas

43. The catalogue of United Nations publications contains categories which cover most of the areas in which the specialized agencies and IAEA function. To ascertain the extent of avoidable duplication and to assess whether or not topical overlapping between the publications of the specialized agencies, IAEA and the United Nations is in fact complementary and therefore useful, would require a thorough sampling and content analysis of the numerous publications involved.

44. The Board does not feel, on the basis of the examination described above, that there is patently excessive and avoidable duplication and/or overlapping between the publications programmes of the United Nations and those of the specialized agencies and IAEA. The Board could, if it were so desired, pursue this examination in greater depth, but it questions that the time and effort and diversion of staff to do so would be commensurate with the results. Only a multi-member task force could carry out, in any limited period of time, a thorough examination of the numerous publications of the agencies, first to detect all areas of possible duplication and then review in depth the content of those publications in which duplication was suspected. Even then, the views of the substantive officials involved would have to be sought as to the feasibility of eliminating any or all of the duplication found. Further, the Board has doubts regarding any executive role it can play in preventing, at the time that work programmes of the United Nations and the agencies are planned, possible subsequent duplication in the publications produced.

45. On the other hand, the Board recognizes the need to eliminate all unnecessary duplication that may exist in present recurrent publications and series and to

avoid such duplication in new series and in studies and reports, not only from the point of view of printing costs but even more so to prevent unnecessary staff expenditures for authorship, preparation of texts, translation, etc. In its conclusions and recommendations which follow, it makes a suggestion to this end.

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Conclusions and Recommendations

46. In the foregoing portions of this report, the Board has made a number of observations regarding practices and arrangements which have developed regarding the documentation of the Organization which, while perhaps useful and convenient, may not be essential. It makes certain specific recommendations below, but the observations and recommendations should be considered in a broader context - one to which the General Assembly has itself paid attention in a succession of resolutions: the need for (a) sustained concern and vigorous effort to control and limit documentation to the level necessary for effective functioning of the Organization, and (b) adequate advance planning with advice from editorial officers. The guidelines for this purpose were set out in the 1958 report of the Committee on Control and Limitation of Documentation^{7/} and, indeed, a number of the recommendations made now were contained in that report. Their repetition here is not intended to suggest that the Secretariat has not attempted to follow them, but rather that it has not been consistently successful in doing so, often for reasons beyond its control.

47. The recommendations of the Board fall basically into two categories; some are more of a "procedural" nature - paragraphs 48 to 50 below, others relate to steps to control specific types of documentation - paragraph 51.

48. In respect of its study under paragraph 1 (b) of resolution 2247 (XXI), relating to authority for publications and the determination of their continuing usefulness or redundancy, the Board was of the opinion that the following guidelines and arrangements might be applied, with a re-examination of their merits in the light of experience:

^{7/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 51, document A/3888.

Subject to the budgetary powers of the General Assembly:

(a) Bodies requesting or authorizing publications

- (i) where a subsidiary organ has taken an initiative resulting in a request for publication to the Publications Board, it should be for the Board to determine whether such a request must first be approved by the parent body concerned;
- (ii) Departments should be considered as having the authority to propose publications where these are clearly required by the Charter or resolutions of ~~policy-making organs~~.

(b) Authority for publication

The Publications Board and the responsible Department must determine in each case whether there is authority to publish. They must also decide on the form of reproduction, that is to say, whether a publication is to be printed, offset or otherwise reproduced.

In so far as the question of determining whether publications have lost their usefulness or become redundant:

The Publications Board should examine recurrent publications every five years to ten years, depending on the periodicity of the publication, and non-recurrent publications when reprints or revised printings are requested, on the basis of an evaluation of the publication by the substantive department under the following criteria:

- (i) A publication should be deemed redundant when the material contained in it is substantially available in another publication at a comparable price, in the same languages and, in the case of periodic publications, appearing at similar intervals;
- (ii) A publication should be deemed as to having lost its usefulness (otherwise than through redundancy) in the light of (a) changes in the concepts and principles discussed in the text, (b) availability of more up-to-date information, both of factual and conceptual nature, (c) relevancy of the publication to changing needs and (d) current demand for the publication.

49. In respect of its study under paragraph 1 (d) of resolution 2247 (XXI), relating harmonization of the publications programmes of the United Nations with those of the specialized agencies and the IAEA with a view to eliminating possible duplication, the Publications Board suggests:

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- (a) that the appropriate authorities in the specialized agencies and IAEA examine the extent to which their requirements for publication of legislative material in their respective fields may be reduced by the availability of this material in the Treaty Series and other legislative series published by the United Nations;
- (b) that the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination be requested:
 - (i) to examine, through its sub-committees and working groups, the recurrent publications and series of the United Nations and the agencies with a view to eliminating duplication to the extent feasible;
 - (ii) to ensure that, in its activity on co-ordination of the work programmes of the United Nations and the agencies, attention is given to the harmonization of the publications resulting from those programmes;
 - (iii) to take appropriate action for improving inter-agency arrangements for exchange of information regarding publication forecasts plans and programmes and/or other steps which might assist in the co-ordination of those programmes, and to consider the desirability of convening an ad hoc inter-agency meeting on publications - the last such meeting having been held in 1962 - to pursue this question.

50. As regards the more general question of limitation of documentation, the Publications Board believes that some unnecessary documentation or work results from the pressure of work itself, when the need for a document is so urgent that time does not permit the observance of editorial rules in force, and in part to lack of familiarity with those rules. It is also due to demands by members of committees and other bodies, demands which often do not appear to take fully into account the many calls which have been made by the General Assembly for restraint in this matter. Thus, the Board has recommended, and the Secretary-General has agreed:

that there should be a continuing process for acquainting Secretariat members of the rules regarding control and limitation of documentation, through internal instructions and such other steps as can further strengthen the efforts of the Secretariat in this regard.

The Board also believes that before each session of a committee, commission or other body:

- (i) The members of the body should be informed in writing (by a concise standard working paper) of the policy of the General Assembly regarding control and limitation of documentation as expressed by it in its resolutions 593 (VI), 789 (VIII), 1203 (XII), 1272 (XIII) and resolution 2247 (XXI) to which this report is addressed, the cost of producing documents and such other information as might enlist their assistance in avoiding the preparation, translation and reproduction of documents not essential to the work;
- (ii) The attention of the presiding officer should be called to these matters, and his assistance be particularly sought.

51. In connexion with the more specific steps to limit documentation which are discussed in the portions of this report dealing with paragraphs 1 (a) and 1 (c) of resolution 2247 (XXI), the Board's recommendations are set out below. In the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions referred to in paragraph 2 above, the Committee has stated that "it would prefer to see the recommendations drafted as standards, even if this were to mean that the rules of procedure of certain organs had to be modified"; an attempt has been made to formulate the recommendations accordingly:

- (a) The length of summary records for any single two-and-a-half hour meeting should not exceed fifteen pages unless exceptional circumstances so require;
- (b) Statements made in meetings by representatives, members of the Secretariat, or others should not be reproduced in extenso in summary records, or as separate documents, unless a decision to that effect is taken by the body concerned after a statement of the financial implications involved has been submitted in accordance with Financial Regulation 13.1. [This would not prevent the distribution, for example, of copies of advance texts of such statements provided by delegations or others, or when the capacity permits, as OPI press releases in the language submitted.]
- (c) Any organ establishing an ad hoc committee or other subsidiary body should be invited to consider whether the nature and objectives of the proceedings of that body might not allow that summary records for its meetings be dispensed with, relying on an adequate reflection of views expressed and decisions reached in its final report, or being provided with minutes only. Already established bodies receiving summary records (or their parent bodies) should be invited to re-examine their need for summary records in this light;

- (d) The provision of verbatim records should be strictly limited. No extension of verbatim records beyond present arrangements shall be made unless the General Assembly so decides, in knowledge of the financial implications involved;
- (e) Verbatim or summary records of an organ, or extracts therefrom, should not be included in its report;
- (f) The reproduction in the body of a report of summaries of views that have already been set forth in the records should be allowed only in exceptional cases and after the need to do so has been clearly demonstrated and approved by the organ concerned, the financial implications having been brought to its attention;
- (g) The list of documents intended for issue as supplements should be reviewed and approved by the Publications Board periodically;
- (h) All supplements should be considered for reproduction internally by offset printing from typescript, with the exception of reports of the main organs, volumes of resolutions and certain others which for technical reasons may not lend themselves to internal reproduction. This should apply to language versions in English, French, Spanish and Russian. A study should also be made to determine the extent to which Chinese language versions can feasibly be reproduced internally from calligraphy;
- (i) Reproduction of supplements in both a preliminary and a final form should be limited to cases of strict necessity, for example, when a final version of a particular report cannot be produced in time for adequate consideration by the body to which it is submitted;
- (j) The substantive departments concerned should strictly limit the number and length of the documents they select for inclusion in the annexes to those essential for the understanding of the relevant discussion. Further, as a specific point, no document which is already, or will be, printed or reproduced by the internal offset process should be included in the annexes. Equally, the inclusion of a document in an annex should exclude it from any separate printing or reproduction by internal offset later;
- (k) The contents of the annexes and their production costs should be periodically reviewed by the Publications Board;
- (l) Reports of subsidiary bodies should be submitted in good time so that the issuance of those reports, first in provisional form, and later in final printed form, may be avoided;
- (m) Replies of Governments submitted in response to specific resolutions should, wherever possible, be grouped in one compilation or periodic compilations, rather than issued as separate documents;

- (n) The present practice under which the technical papers submitted for conferences, seminars and workshops, are reproduced in printed form should be modified to the end that wherever possible only selected papers or summaries would be printed.
