

international conferences on matters falling within the competence of the Council, and in particular on international trade and employment, and health.

Provisional Agenda

The contents of the provisional agenda were determined by the recommendation of the Executive Committee as to the nature of the First Session of the General Assembly. Some delegations, especially those of the United States and the Soviet Union, believed that the First Session should be divided into two parts, the first of which should be entirely organizational in character. The Canadian representative argued that, in view of the many pressing world problems which clamoured for attention, the General Assembly could not refuse to deal with problems of substance even at its first meeting. He advocated, therefore, the inclusion in the agenda of an item providing for the discussion of major questions of policy.

The Executive Committee finally recommended that while the first part of the First Session should be primarily organizational, it should also include consideration of such urgent world problems as might be raised by any Member. On the initiative of the United Kingdom delegation, the provisional agenda drawn up by the Preparatory Commission referred specifically to the problem of refugees. The experience of the General Assembly has justified the Canadian position. The Assembly devoted almost as much time to the consideration of urgent problems of policy as to discussions of matters of organization.

Discussions regarding the agenda of the Assembly in the appropriate committee of the Preparatory Commission revolved therefore around three main points: (a) the order in which the various items should be set down; (b) the competence of the General Assembly to discuss any portion of the Report of the Preparatory Commission, and (c) the inclusion in the agenda of an item relating to urgent problems, including the problem of refugees.

After considerable discussion, agreement was reached on the first of these points. With regard to the second point, the Soviet delegation wished the General Assembly to confine its discussion of the Report to those sections which directly concerned the activities of the Assembly, thus, in effect, removing from consideration by the Assembly that section of the Report which dealt with the Security Council. Eventually the compromise proposed by the Canadian delegation, altering the relevant item in the agenda to read "discussion of those sections of the Report which the General Assembly may decide to consider" was adopted. This wording safeguarded the right of the General Assembly, under Article 10 of the Charter to "discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter..."