

In order to estimate the probable benefit to the U.N. and to its member states and their taxpayers of the Committee's proposals, it is necessary to take into account not only the probable value of the immediate reforms proposed by the Committee but also the probable value of the further reforms which will be proposed by the *ad hoc* committee at the end of this session.

The Committee on Procedures and Organization was composed of fifteen states. It received suggestions from the governments of six other states, as well as from the Secretary-General. Over thirty of the fifty-five Members of the U.N. have still to be heard from. These Members will have valuable proposals for reform to be put before the *ad hoc* committee. It can therefore be expected that the reforms advocated by the *ad hoc* committee will exceed in their comprehensiveness and value the reforms proposed by the fifteen-nation Committee on Procedures and Organization.

Thus it is not unreasonable to hope that the total effect of the reforms in procedures, organization and practices adopted during this session of the Assembly will be that the next session will last for a week less than it otherwise would have and that the application of these reforms to other international meetings should reduce the duration of these meetings by a corresponding amount.

It seems to me that one of the most valuable results of the work of the Committee on Procedures and Organization is that its report will serve to dissipate the fears which existed last year that those who press for measures to economize the time of the Assembly are thinking in terms of the adoption of a very drastic *closure system* in the plenary and committee meetings of the Assembly. My impression is that a careful study of the recommendations and suggestions contained in the Committee's report will lead to the conclusion that the adoption of all these suggestions and recommendations would not limit in any way the existing rights of the members of the Assembly to discuss questions brought before the Assembly.

A valid criticism of the report might indeed be that it does not contain recommendations or suggestions on how to avoid the danger which exists at present that questions which are placed towards the end of the agendas of the various committees come up at a time when the committees are trying to complete their work quickly and these questions may, therefore, not be discussed at adequate length.

This is probably the biggest single problem which the *ad hoc* committee on rules of procedure will have to face. Experience at past meetings of the Assembly and of other international conferences demonstrates that the almost invariable pattern of an international meeting is as follows. The international meeting begins with unrestricted freedom of discussion and with normal working hours for committees. It ends by operating under the most rigid rules for limiting the number and length of speeches; and it holds meetings of its committees morning, evening, noon and night. It would therefore seem obvious that some rules must be adopted under which the pressure of work throughout a session of the Assembly will be maintained fairly constant from the very beginning to the very end of the session.

The proceedings of the Committee on Procedures and Organization mark a great advance over the proceedings of similar committees two years ago. Two years ago many members of such committees acted on