

MEMBERSHIP OF U.N. Organs

Statement in the General Assembly by  
Mr. Arthur R. Smith, Canadian  
Representative on the Special Political  
Committee, on November 25, 1959.

...The Canadian Delegation did not make a statement in the Special Political Committee when that body was discussing the three items now before us - these items which concern the possible enlargement of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the International Court of Justice. However, my Delegation listened to this important debate with close and sympathetic attention. We should like at this stage to make a few brief comments.

In the Committee, the Canadian Delegation found itself in the fortunate position of being able to vote in favour of both the resolutions before the Committee. We believe that the views expressed by the distinguished representative of El Salvador reflected an obvious and general interest in the Committee for their desire to enlarge the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and thus allow for the rapid growth in the membership of the United Nations. Such a move would enable the newer Member States, particularly those of Asia and Africa, to play their full role in the deliberations and decisions of these two major organs of the United Nations. The resolution presented by El Salvador, however, went beyond the recognition of the need for expanding the Councils and the simple, though important, recommendation to the Assembly to continue to give this problem its earnest attention. The El Salvador resolution called for the establishment of a small committee empowered and instructed to study the possibility of arriving at an agreement which would facilitate amendment of the Charter so as to increase the membership of these two Councils.

...We considered it unrealistic to expect any progress to be achieved in this field by the proposed committee considering the circumstances under which the latter would operate. Several representatives in the Committee debate shared our views in this respect, and we believe it is not necessary here to repeat the various arguments which they set out. It was for these reasons that we abstained in the vote of the Special Political Committee whether the proposed smaller unit should be retained or dropped. Our opinion proved not to be that of the majority, and it became apparent during that voting that no fewer than 35 delegations favoured setting up this small committee, partly in the expectation that it could be of practical use and partly, it seemed to us, in order to demonstrate in some way dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs with regard to Security Council and ECOSOC membership, and their hope of breaking out of the deadlock which has prevailed in the Assembly for so long. We sympathize with the natural desire to take some concrete steps, even if their chances of success appear tenuous. Since so considerable a group of conscientious and vigorous delegations wished to establish a body to study the possibility of amending the Charter so as to expand the Councils, my Delegation, though with some mental reservation, in the final vote of the previous debate did not oppose the establishment of such a committee, and we are prepared to vote in the same sense today.