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POLITICAL AND SECURITY QUESTIONS

Elections to the Security Council

Three non-permanent members are elected to the Security Council each year for a two-year term. In the elections held during the Fourth Session of the General Assembly the following states were elected to non-permanent seats: Ecuador, India and Yugoslavia.* The election of these members was made necessary by the retirement from the Council, on the expiry of their two-year terms, of Argentina, Canada, and the Ukrainian S.S.R.

The elections to the Security Council during the session of 1949 were of particular interest because of the candidature of Yugoslavia. The U.S.S.R. and the other Communist-controlled countries of Eastern Europe were uncompromisingly opposed to the election of Yugoslavia to the Security Council and sought instead to persuade the Assembly to elect Czechoslovakia. When the elections took place, the quarrel between Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R. had already been injected into the proceedings of the Assembly in the statements of representatives of both countries. The attempt of the U.S.S.R. to prevent the election of Yugoslavia to the Council inevitably became, therefore, a part of the general effort which the Soviet Union was making to discipline Yugoslavia for its defection from the group of Communist satellite countries in Eastern Europe.

The candidacy of Yugoslavia for the Security Council raised also the question of the principle upon which members of that Council should be chosen. In its opposition to the Yugoslav candidature, the Soviet Delegation claimed that a well-defined procedure had been established, originally in a "gentlemen's agreement" amongst the sponsoring powers of the United Nations and subsequently by the custom in earlier elections, for the choice of members of the Security Council on a regional or geographical basis. In his statements prior to the Security Council elections in 1949, Mr. Vishinsky claimed that the principle was now well established that various geographical areas should be represented amongst the non-permanent

*On the first ballot Ecuador and India received 57 and 56 votes respectively, and were declared elected. Other states which received votes on the first ballot were Yugoslavia (37), Czechoslovakia (20), Afghanistan and the Philippines (1 each). Since only two members had received the required two-thirds majority, a second vote was taken to decide between Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. On the second ballot Yugoslavia received 39 votes, the exact number required for a two-thirds majority. The vote for Czechoslovakia on the second ballot was 19.