

motion which might be made to limit such a debate. This point was clearly explained by the distinguished delegate from Greece, at our last meeting. The Canadian delegation does not consider it is a good practice, or one which is in the best interests of the United Nations, to allow a small group or a minority of delegations, which for reasons of their own, endeavour to prolong the consideration of an item on the agenda by means of a debate on a procedural point, particularly when the majority of delegations do not favour such a debate.

In resumé, Mr. Chairman, the Canadian delegation will support the amendment to the Norwegian resolution which has been sponsored by Brazil and France. We consider, that by adopting the resolution thus amended, this Committee and this Session of the General Assembly will have made some concrete progress towards limiting the duration of regular sessions of the General Assembly, without at the same time restricting in any way the sovereign right of Member States to freely and adequately express their views on any matter that comes before the United Nations.

We thought that the distinguished delegates from China and Greece pointed out, in a very clear and convincing manner, that the proposed amendment to Rules 73 and 113, could have no other effect than to limit the debate on a purely procedural point. The purpose is solely to limit the time of the debate before the assembly. We entirely agree that we can rightly be put on the words, its purpose is solely to limit the time of a procedural debate and in no way could it prevent any delegation from freely expressing the views of its government on the main item under consideration. We do not see the logic of the argument that a possible limitation of the time for a procedural debate would, in itself, be a means of preventing any member state from presenting its view on the item under consideration. A procedural debate would, by its nature, be restricted to a point of procedure and must exclude the merits of the item on the agenda. This must be clear to all delegations in this committee. Moreover, we do not think that the debate on the main item before the Assembly should be unnecessarily delayed or extended by a long, time-consuming procedural debate in which sixty delegates might make lengthy speeches on a procedural point. Surely lengthy procedural debates are not in the best interests of the United Nations or in the spirit of the Charter.



The Soviet delegate was, in our view, on very weak ground when he tried to convince this committee that this proposed amendment would prevent delegations from freely expressing their government's views on any item on the agenda of the United Nations. He neglected to emphasize, and I think this is important for all delegations to keep in mind when considering this proposed amendment, that Rule 73 (113), as amended, will still be subject to the wishes of the majority of delegations in the General Assembly or any of the committees. If the majority of delegations do not want to limit the procedural debate, they do not have to. They can simply vote against any