

## H. Statement by the Chairman of the General Assembly's Committee on Procedures and Organization, September 25, 1947

The report of the Committee on Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly (Document A/388 of September 23, 1947) is a very bulky document. The reason for this is that it contains a complete revision of the present provisional rules of procedure of the General Assembly. It also contains a number of suggestions and recommendations on measures to economize the time of the General Assembly which are not covered by the proposed changes in the rules of procedure.

The number of revisions recommended in the rules of procedure is very great. The total number of rules is increased from 117 to 150. Of the existing 117 rules the Committee has recommended the revision or deletion of 59. The Committee has also recommended a considerable number of new rules.

Because the number of changes recommended is so great it is hard for anyone who did not serve on the Committee to distinguish the important recommendations from the relatively unimportant.

In an effort to help the members of the General Assembly and the representatives of the press and radio to find their way through the Committee's report, the Canadian delegation prepared an analysis of the revised provisional rules recommended by the Committee. This analysis was circulated the day before yesterday (Document A/393 of 23 September, 1947).

In the analysis the revisions recommended by the Committee are listed under three headings: first, the six main drafting changes recommended; second, the six main changes recommended in order to codify useful existing practices; and third, the nine main recommendations for substantial changes in the rules.

Clearly these last nine recommendations are the most important. They are dealt with in paragraphs 21 to 30 of the analysis. Another important recommendation is dealt with in paragraph 19 of the analysis: that is the recommendation that members who abstain from voting are to be considered as not voting.

The reasons for the efforts which the Members of the General Assembly are making to eliminate procedural debates in the plenary and committee meetings of the Assembly are obvious to you all. Long procedural debates protract unnecessarily the duration of a session of the Assembly and lower the prestige of the Assembly, because people cannot understand how it is that the Assembly cannot get down to business but instead wastes its time on procedural debates.

The question is also a matter of dollars and cents. The longer a session lasts the greater is the financial burden on the budget of the United Nations. The holding of a session of the General Assembly adds to the ordinary costs of running the Secretariat, between \$130,000 and \$150,000 for every week the Assembly is in session.