

is held. The resolution which was adopted by a vote of 58 in favour (including Canada), 8 against, with 4 abstentions, also recommended that member states transmit their views on the proposal to the Secretary-General prior to the convening of the Charter review conference.

The Problem of Prisoners of War

In a progress report submitted to the Secretary-General on January 15, 1957, the *Ad Hoc* Commission on Prisoners of War briefly described the developments which have taken place in the repatriation of prisoners of war since the publication of its last report in November 1955¹. This *Ad Hoc* Commission, set up by the General Assembly in December 1950, is composed of three qualified and impartial persons appointed by the Secretary-General and its duty is to determine whether there are reasonable grounds for believing that all prisoners captured during the Second World War had been returned or otherwise accounted for². Its members are Mr. J. G. Guerrero of El Salvador who is a judge of the International Court of Justice, Countess Bernadotte of Sweden and Mr. Aung Khine, a judge of the High Court of Burma.

According to the *Ad Hoc* Commission's report dated January 15, 1957 a substantial number of prisoners and some civilians had been returned from the Soviet Union, from some countries of Eastern Europe and from China since the previous report was issued in November 1955.

Concerning the persons released from the Soviet Union, the *Ad Hoc* Commission reported that more than 9,000 German prisoners and 1,664 civilians had been repatriated from the Soviet Union to Germany following the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in December 1955. However, German records still listed the names of 93,388 prisoners of war and 15,798 civilian prisoners of whom nothing was known beyond the fact that they were in the Soviet Union at one time or another.

The Commission also reported that 1,087 German prisoners had returned from Czechoslovakia, 261 from Poland, 15 from Romania and 32 from Hungary. However, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany reported that 315 German prisoners were still in custody in Czechoslovakia and that nothing had been heard of the fate of 2,985 German nationals who were known to have been in Czechoslovakia. The German Government also stated that 867 German prisoners were still detained in Poland and that they had no information regarding the fate of 11,059 others captured in Polish territory. In addition, there was good reason to believe that 102 German prisoners were sent from the Soviet Union to Poland, 101 were reported to have been sent to Romania, and 85 to Hungary.

Turning next to the fate of prisoners in the Far East, the Commission's report noted that the Soviet Union and Japan had at last issued a joint declaration bringing to an end the formal state of war between them, and this joint declaration stated that the Soviet Union would release all Japanese citizens who were unable to return to Japan at the end of the war in 1945. However, from August 30, 1955 to December 23, 1956 only

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1954-55*, pp. 33-34.

²See *Canada and the United Nations 1950*, pp. 39-41.