

Finally, on November 30, 1948, the President of the Security Council, on his own initiative, invited the Governments of Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, and Syria each to nominate a financial or economic expert who would consider and make recommendations to the President of the Security Council on the most equitable conditions for an agreement among the Occupying Powers which would constitute appropriate trade and financial arrangements for Berlin. This represented a new approach by those members of the Council who were not directly concerned with this question. This Committee of Experts was originally given thirty days in which to complete its task. The Committee elected Mr. N. A. Robertson, who was then Canadian High Commissioner in London, as its Chairman. Its period of office was extended on December 27, when it became apparent that it could not complete its work within the 30-day period. In January the three new members of the Security Council, Cuba, Egypt, and Norway, were each invited to send experts to these meetings.

After a careful and detailed study of the problems, this Technical Committee submitted a preliminary draft paper on the settlement of the Berlin currency and trade problems for the comments of the technical experts of France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the U.S.S.R. The responses of experts of the four powers to the Committee's approach to the problem revealed wide differences of opinion which the Committee endeavoured to narrow in subsequent discussions. In the end it became apparent that a unified currency under Four-Power control could not be achieved in a city otherwise divided.

On February 11, 1949, the report of the Technical Committee was presented to the President of the Security Council. On March 15 it was made public. This report outlined the views presented to the Committee by the Occupying Powers. The Committee reached the conclusion that "the present positions of the experts of the four Occupying Powers are so far apart in this matter that further work by the Committee at this stage does not appear useful. In the circumstances, the Committee is debarred by its own terms of reference from putting forward any recommendations".

At the same time as the Technical Committee was reporting failure, an informal exchange of views was started at Lake Success between Dr. Philip Jessup, United States Representative, and Mr. Malik, Soviet Representative, which eventually led, on May 12, to a lifting of the Berlin blockade and on May 23 to a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris. Although the talks had been launched and developed at Lake Success, and although the Berlin question remained on the agenda of the Security Council, no further action by the Council was taken on this item during 1949. The subsequent efforts to resolve the deadlock took place outside the United Nations.

When the Council of Foreign Ministers met in Paris in June, with negligible results, they recommended a further exchange of views at the Fourth Session of the General Assembly. In view of the fact, however, that the Occupying Powers continued, although without much success, to discuss their mutual problems in Berlin, the matter was not raised during the Fourth Session of the Assembly.

The treatment of the Berlin question has not been without significance in the development of the United Nations. It was the first time that there had been a serious and frontal clash between permanent members of the Security Council. This was a situation which, it had frequently been said,