

During the past year the Security Council had before it six new applications for admission. Draft resolutions recommending the admission of Libya, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Japan were not adopted since in each case, while there was only one negative vote, it was that of a permanent member of the Council (U.S.S.R.). A Soviet draft resolution recommending the admission of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was also rejected by 1 in favour (U.S.S.R.) to 10 against. The Council also had before it a Soviet draft resolution calling for a recommendation to the General Assembly for the simultaneous admission of 14 states (Albania, Mongolian People's Republic, Bulgaria, Roumania, Hungary, Finland, Italy, Portugal, Ireland, Jordan, Austria, Ceylon, Nepal and Libya). This "package proposal" was rejected by 2 in favour (Pakistan, U.S.S.R.) to 5 against with 4 abstentions (China, France, Turkey and the United Kingdom).

In March 1950, the International Court of Justice had given its opinion that the General Assembly could not, by itself, effect the admission of an applicant state in the absence of a recommendation by the Security Council. This opinion of the Court did not, however, deal with the question whether a recommendation by the Security Council could be made in the face of a negative vote by one of the permanent members. Therefore, at the sixth session of the Assembly five Central American delegations had submitted a proposal which would have requested a further advisory opinion from the Court.

This proposal was transmitted to the seventh session of the Assembly for its consideration, but was later withdrawn, and in its stead the Central American group submitted a resolution to establish a Special Committee to study all proposals and suggestions relating to the question of admission of new members and to report to the eighth session of the General Assembly. The resolution establishing this Committee was adopted by a roll call vote of 48 in favour (including Canada) to 5 against (Soviet bloc) with 6 abstentions. This Special Committee was to be composed of representatives of 19 countries, including Canada. The U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia refused to serve on the Committee and India, which had been nominated, later withdrew.

The Central American group which sponsored the resolution setting up the Special Committee also put forward a resolution in which the Assembly would be asked to conclude that the admission of new members was not subject to the veto but was a matter to be dealt with by a procedural vote and also that the General Assembly was the organ chiefly responsible for deciding on applicants for membership in the United Nations. However, in view of their sponsorship of the resolution setting up the Special Committee to study these matters, the Central American group did not press this interpretative resolution on the veto to a vote but referred it to the Special Committee for study and report to the eighth session of the Assembly, together with a Peruvian draft resolution containing proposals to restrict the application of the veto in the Security Council.