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ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARIAT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES

Text of a statement made on October 12, 1954, by Mr. S.D. Hemsley, Canadian Representative in the Fifth Committee of the ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, on agenda item 53 - Organization of the Secretariat, and 38 - Budget estimates for the financial year 1955.

The Canadian Delegation was very favourably impressed by the approach of the Secretary-General to the question of the reorganization of the Secretariat when he placed before the General Assembly one year ago certain proposals on this important question. Although the proposals were at that time in the nature of a tentative outline, they commended themselves to the great majority of delegations and the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to proceed on the lines he proposed. In the view of the Canadian Delegation, the confidence thus placed in the Secretary-General has been completely justified. In the documents now before us we have a detailed reorganization scheme which in the view of my delegation is an excellent one. *It has obviously been very carefully thought out.* In the structural changes and staff arrangements that are proposed, there is evident a judicious application of the principles so ably set before us by the Secretary-General last year.

When we were considering another matter last week, the distinguished Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions rightly reminded the members of the Fifth Committee that it was decided at the San Francisco Conference that the Secretariat should be one of the main organs of the United Nations and that everything should be done to preserve that status for the Secretariat. My delegation has concluded that the reorganization plans of the Secretary-General will, by improving the efficiency of the Secretariat and making it more readily adaptable to the changing needs of the Organization, strengthen it in the role envisaged at San Francisco. We shall, therefore, give our full support to the Secretary-General's proposals.

I should like to make special mention of the Report of the Secretary-General's Survey Group. This document is evidence of a painstaking and intelligent review of the Secretariat and my delegation warmly commends the members of the group. We look forward with great interest to the results of the surveys which are to be made of the United Nations offices and activities outside headquarters.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that the Secretary-General proposes to have two under-secretaries without portfolio in the top level of the Secretariat. We would venture the suggestion that in practice these officials might coordinate to some extent the activities of the other officials in the top rank of the Organization and thus relieve the Secretary-General of the necessity of too frequent exercise of his own coordinating functions in the administrative fields. We share to some extent the misgivings that have been expressed about increasing the Secretary-General's administrative responsibilities.

We agree with the Secretary-General's view that the reduction of staff which is contemplated in the reorganization plan should be accomplished in the main through the normal turnover of staff; and in the light of the Secretary-General's statement yesterday that the 1956 Budget will to all intents and purposes reflect the target manning tables that have been established we would consider that rate of reorganization to be satisfactory.

My delegation may have other comments and questions on the reorganization proposals when the Committee examines them in detail, but we would not like to let this opportunity go by without expressing our whole-hearted congratulations to the Secretary-General on his Report on the Organization of the Secretariat.

The Secretary-General has stated, quite properly in our view, that the primary aim of the reorganization should be efficiency and that budget savings would emerge as a by-product. Very substantial savings have already emerged. As is demonstrated in document A/C.5/577, expenditures for 1954 are expected to be approximately one million dollars below the appropriations. The Secretary-General undertook last year to try to accomplish a saving of this amount and he deserves the gratitude of member states on achieving it.

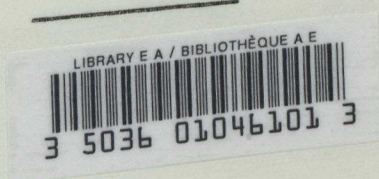
I should like to mention in passing that this document, A/C.5/577, which shows 1954 Budget expenditures to 31 August, 1954 and anticipated total requirements for 1954, is a most useful aid to a proper study of the budgetary situation. My delegation made a particular point of suggesting at the eighth session of the General Assembly that such a document be prepared and we are very grateful to the Secretariat for the trouble taken to make it available to members of delegations in advance of the Budget debate.

The Budget Estimates for 1955 show a substantial decrease in staff costs, from the level of 1954, of the order of \$900,000, and we note that the Secretary-General expects the estimates for 1956 and 1957 to provide for further reductions under this heading, the eventual gross saving being estimated at \$2,000,000. If this expectation is realized, an important part of the Budget will, we hope, be stabilized. And if this stabilization of staff costs is accompanied by a net increase in the efficiency of the Secretariat, as we are assured it will be, a most important contribution to the health of the Organization will have been made.

The Canadian Delegation, Mr. Chairman, has always been amongst those who stressed the importance of stabilizing, as far as possible, the budget of the United Nations. We are fully aware that this is a dynamic Organization, that it is a living and growing thing in a changing world and that absolute stabilization is neither desirable nor possible. Nevertheless, there are limits to the activities that the Organization can usefully undertake and there are limits to the resources that member states can place at its disposal. To keep within those limits it is essential that the principle of stabilization of expenditures be kept constantly in mind.

In the budget estimates for 1955 there is reflected a large measure of stabilization. My delegation is pleased to note the Secretary-General's statement that his purpose has been to achieve stabilization in all items of expenditure other than staff costs and congratulates him on the degree of success he has attained. We hope he will continue his efforts in this direction. In the over-all budget, including staff costs, the Secretary-General has of course gone beyond stabilization at the existing level and has effected a net decrease in expenditure of the order of \$1,000,000.

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recommends reductions in the appropriations proposed by the Secretary-General totalling \$420,000. I do not intend to discuss these recommendations in detail at this time, but I would like to explain the basic approach of my delegation to the Advisory Committee's proposals. Every year the Advisory Committee reviews the budget estimates in detail, to a degree that is not practicable in this committee. We believe experience has shown that it carries out this task with diligence and objectivity and we are convinced that its conclusions should not be lightly set aside. Although we may have some comments, at a later stage, on particular items in the budget, my delegation will support, in general, the Advisory Committee's recommendations.



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The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recommends reductions in the appropriations proposed by the Secretary-General totalling \$20,000. I do not intend to discuss these recommendations in detail at this time, but I would like to explain the basic approach of my delegation to the Advisory Committee's proposals. Every year the Advisory Committee reviews the budget estimates in detail, to a degree that is not practicable in this committee. We believe experience has shown that it carries out this task with diligence and objectivity and we are convinced that its conclusions should not be lightly set aside. Although we may have some comments, at a later stage, on particular items in the budget, my delegation will support, in general, the Advisory Committee's recommendations.