

2-1211

POLITICS AND THE FUTURE OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

by

Norman J. Padelford



CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
CAMBRIDGE • MASSACHUSETTS

POLITICS AND THE FUTURE
OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

By

Norman J. Padelford

Center for International Studies
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts
October, 1960

CHANGING PATTERNS IN UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COLLABORATION

I

Introduction

The powerful forces of change moving through world affairs today are placing a deep imprint upon the United Nations in diverse ways. With the influx of the large number of new nations, each urgently in need of economic and technical assistance to consolidate the bases of their independence, the world organization is being called upon to aid in the planning and undergirding of economic and social growth on a scale unprecedented in the annals of international collaboration. Nothing in the history of the League of Nations, or heretofore in the activities of the United Nations, compares with the magnitude of the needs and demands that are confronting the United Nations in this connection.

The crisis in the Congo in the summer of 1960, and the admission to the United Nations on the opening day of the Fifteenth General Assembly of 13 newly independent nations in Africa, graphically underscored two facets of the changing patterns of politics bearing upon the future of United Nations economic collaboration.

The tragic events in the Congo had two consequences in this regard. The crisis, on the one hand, necessitated not only the hasty assemblage of the United Nations International Force to restore and maintain peace and order, but also the mobilization of a large team of technical and

economic experts from many agencies and countries to assist in public administration, public health, education, transportation, agriculture, and a wide range of other basic services. This had the immediate effect of compelling the United Nations to raise its sights on economic and technical assistance in Africa from the meagre \$2.5 million Special African Assistance Program which Secretary-General Hammarskjold was tentatively broaching to emergency aid on the scale of \$100-200 million for the Congo alone for the coming twelve months.

The admission of the 13 African states, plus Cyprus, underlined the politics of economic collaboration in a quite different way. It brought the number of African states in the United Nations to 17, and raised to 43 the membership of the Asian-African nations. If there are added to this number the 20 Latin American states, which also have an interest in economic and technical assistance, there can be said to be 63 Member states, not counting the Eastern European countries, with a direct interest in obtaining such assistance.

Taken altogether these states comprise just under two-thirds of the total membership of the General Assembly. Although this is not enough to hold a controlling majority, if all are united, it is sufficient to defeat any proposal which the great majority of these states may not like. With the admission of Nigeria and the Republics of Mali and Senegal, this combination will have just over two-thirds of the Assembly membership. There is no assurance, of course, that all or even the preponderant majority of these states will stand

together. They are hardly likely to do so on many, or even most occasions, judging from past voting records. Nevertheless, the changed political circumstances must be borne in mind. It is quite possible that some other Members of the United Nations may make common cause with some of these states on certain questions of economic and social cooperation. In any event, the countries that have a vested interest in economic and technical assistance are in a position to exert significant political leverage in the General Assembly if they can concert their forces -- or to the extent that they can do so.

These two episodes are but single elements, among others, providing a new focus for and a changing political framework within which the economic role of the United Nations must now function.

If the Congo situation has demanded that the United Nations re-assess the scale of its assistance to politically developing nations, the accession of new Members has added weight to the already serious problem of Asian-African under-representation on the Economic and Social Council. The large increment is bound to make the present representation arrangements appear more inequitable than they have seemed heretofore to the states of this large bi-continental area and to add impetus to the movement for amending the Charter to increase the membership of the Economic and Social Council.

In 1959 the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development made loans totalling over \$700 million to help create new industries, raise production, improve communication facilities, or assist agricultural

development. Beginning in 1961 the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance and the Special Fund for Economic Development^{will} have undertaken to operate on a "modest" target of \$100 million a year, toward which the United States has pledged \$40 million. This is but a proverbial "drop in the bucket" measured against the needs of the underdeveloped countries. This is evidenced by United Nations' statistics that the average of bilateral economic aid extended annually between 1954-1957 in grants and loans amounted to \$2,827 million.

That the United Nations must think in much larger terms was made clear by President Eisenhower in addressing the General Assembly on September 22, 1960, when he affirmed that the United States was ready to join in (1) expanding the functions of the Special Fund and the Expanded Technical Assistance Program, (2) expanding and placing on a permanent basis the United Nations Operational and Executive Personnel Program for making trained administrators available to the newly developing countries, (3) encouraging the International Bank and the International Monetary Fund to provide added counsel and assistance in shaping long-term African development programs as states qualify for their aid, and (4) developing an expanded program of educational assistance. Although his Five Point program was directed in first instance to the pressing needs of the new African countries, the President added: "We must carry forward and intensify our programs of assistance for the economic and social development in freedom of other areas, particularly in Latin America, Asia and the Middle East."

As the needs for assistance have grown, the importance of the Economic and Social Council in the total UN context has also risen. This seems likely to continue further in the years to come as a consequence of the heavy preoccupation the African, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American states have with economic growth and social advancement.

II

The Role of the Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council was designed by the founders of the United Nations to serve as a catalytic agent that would bring together states in need of assistance and states in a position to extend aid or to be of help in mobilizing resources and counsel for these purposes.

It was intended that this Council should become a center for international cooperation in solving a wide range of international problems of an economic, social, cultural, scientific and humanitarian character. And it was expected to promote and encourage as well "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."

No organ of the United Nations, other than the General Assembly, has a broader range of subject matter or duties imposed upon it than does the Economic and Social Council. It is not surprising that the Council, or its subsidiary committees, are active for a good part of each year.

Through its own actions, as well as those of the regional Economic Commissions which are responsible to it and the Specialized Agencies which are coordinated by it, the Economic and Social Council is in a strategic position to recommend, or to delay, UN activity on a host of projects relating directly or indirectly to economic and social progress.

Politics is inherent in the selection of items for the agenda of the Council, and in the resolution of views leading to votes on draft proposals. Political considerations are present in actions on development funds, literacy programs, technical assistance projects, as well as on disputed points of draft declarations and conventions relating to human rights and improvement of the conditions of labor.

Opportunities present themselves continually in the work of the Economic and Social Council, and its subsidiary and related bodies, for conflicting ideological and political systems to utilize these media for propaganda purposes. Decisions pertaining to the forms and extent of assistance become maneuvering grounds between the Western Powers, the forces of Communism, and governments that desire to remain outside of the East-West struggle.

Politics has always been present in the choice of members of the Economic and Social Council, as it has in selecting members of the Security Council and the Trusteeship Council, and in filling the General Assembly offices. There has been sharp rivalry for positions upon the Council among Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latin American states. Election to the Council takes a primary place in the objective of many of the underdeveloped

countries. In like manner the Western Powers and the Soviet Union have been eager to have seats upon this Council for it affords them the opportunity to present their respective views upon economic and social questions. All are aware that the distribution of membership has a direct bearing upon the course of political struggle within the United Nations.

III

Trends in the Composition of the Council, 1946-1960

Since the Charter lays down no criteria for selecting the eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council, the composition is left to the workings of international rivalry, diplomacy, and political action within the General Assembly.

It may be recalled that efforts were made at the San Francisco Conference in 1945 to write some guide lines into the Charter. One proposal was that the industrially important states should always be represented. Some attempts were made to set up a class of permanent members as on the Security Council. But these suggestions were rejected in favor of leaving complete discretion to the General Assembly. This was done in part to avoid invidious distinctions being drawn between those who were and were not economically and socially advanced. It was done in part to insure flexibility of choice under changing world circumstances. The only injunctions that were accepted were that the members should be elected by the General Assembly, for three year terms, one-third at each

session, and that retiring members should be eligible for immediate re-election.

The record of elections to the Council from 1946 to 1960 shows that this body has had a cross-section of industrially advanced countries and nations in need of economic and technical assistance. There has been a broad geographical distribution of the seats. And a wide diversity of races, religious persuasions, and cultural backgrounds have been brought to the Council to enable it to deal properly with questions of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Taking the fourteen year period of the United Nations as a whole, four features stand out about the composition of the Economic and Social Council.

The first of these is the continuous re-election of the five powers having permanent seats upon the Security Council. These have been re-elected each time their terms have expired. No other states have been similarly privileged. It is theoretically possible that the General Assembly might someday not re-elect one or more of these states. This is its prerogative. But the practice is now so firmly rooted that it is unlikely to be changed unless some state loses its power and influence altogether, or poses such a threat to others as to alter the fundamental bases of the organization. Even though no state has a veto right in the Economic and Social Council, and the Council may act without the presence or the vote of any one or all five of the Great Powers, important decisions are not likely to be taken, in practice, in the absence of the five or in

the face of their concerted opposition. But it is germane that none of them is given a right to block consideration or action on a proposal.

In the second place, the Council has had a reasonably balanced composition along economic and social lines during the initial decade and a half. Its membership has extended along a broad spectrum ranging from the wealthiest, most technologically advanced Member states to countries that are way down the scale in national income and gross national product. The elections have brought together representatives of capitalism and communism; those favoring socialist practices along with adherents of private enterprise; those advocating strong guarantees of social and human rights together with those inclined to go cautiously or to resist international activity in this sphere.

The composite membership of the Council shows, in the third place, that the General Assembly has effected a certain amount of political balancing within the United Nations membership in the process of filling this organ. Some of the smaller states that are not in a position to make substantial contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security, and have not been elected either frequently or at all to the Security Council, have been elected in fair number to ECOSOC. Among these are, for example, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Denmark, the Sudan. Similarly, numbers of states not allied with one or another of the Great Powers, such as Afghanistan, Finland, Indonesia, have been placed on this Council where they have not been elected to the Security Council. There is a certain amount of 'rough-hewing' in the balancing process. For in any

given year current political considerations always influence the choices that are made. But taken by and large diplomacy has accomplished an eminently reasonable distribution of electoral honors among the UN Members taking all of the Councils, the International Court of Justice, the chief Assembly offices, and other commissions and agencies into account.

In the fourth place, the Assembly has given the Economic and Social Council a broadly balanced geographical membership. There has been a wide distribution of the seats among the principal regions and political groupings. Over the fourteen year period the older, non-Asian Commonwealth countries including the United Kingdom were elected to 12.7 per cent of the total seats on the Council. The Latin American countries held 20.6 per cent of the seats; the Western European states 19.6; the Eastern European states and the U.S.S.R. 18.6 per cent. The Asian, Middle Eastern, and African states combined, but not counting China, were elected to 17.6 per cent of the total places on the Council. The United States and China held the balance of the seatings.

By comparing these figures with the relative positions of the various groups in the overall membership of the United Nations, averaged between 1946 and 1959, the relative fairness of their representation, mathematically speaking, may be seen. This is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1

ELECTIONS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Year	Session	Common-wealth	Latin American	Western European	Eastern European	Afro-Asian	Others
1946	I - 1	U.K.(2) Canada(3)	Colombia(1) Cuba(2) Chile(3) Peru(3)	Greece(1) Norway(2) Belgium(3) France(3)	Yugoslavia(1) Ukraine(1) U.S.S.R.(2) Czechoslovakia(2)	India(2)* Lebanon(1)	China(3) U.S.(1)
1946	I - 2	New Zealand	Venezuela	Netherlands(2)**	Byelo-Russia	Lebanon Turkey	U.S.
1947	II	U.K. Australia	Brazil	Denmark	U.S.S.R. Poland		
1948	III		Peru Chile	Belgium France		India*	China
1949	IV	Canada	Mexico		Czechoslovakia	Iran Pakistan*	U.S.
1950	V	U.K.	Uruguay	Sweden	U.S.S.R. Poland	Philippines	
1951	VI		Argentina Cuba	Belgium France		Egypt	China
1952	VII	Australia	Venezuela		Yugoslavia	Turkey India*	U.S.
1953	VIII	U.K.	Ecuador	Norway	U.S.S.R. Czechoslovakia	Pakistan*	
1954	IX		Argentina	France Netherlands		Egypt	China
1955	X	Canada	Brazil	Greece	Yugoslavia	Indonesia	U.S.
1956	XI	U.K.	Mexico	Finland	U.S.S.R. Poland	Pakistan*	
1957	XII		Chile Costa Rica	France Netherlands		Sudan	China

Figure 1 - Continued

Year	Session	Common-wealth	Latin American	Western European	Eastern European	Afro-Asian	Others
1958	XIII	New Zealand	Venezuela	Spain	Bulgaria	Afghanistan	U.S.
1959	XIV	U.K.	Brazil	Denmark	Poland U.S.S.R.	Japan	
<u>Total Seats Held</u>		13	21	20	19	18	11

* Also member of Commonwealth.
resigned by Belgium.

** Elected for 2-year term to fill out seat

Figure 2

COMPARISON OF GROUP REPRESENTATION ON ECOSOC 1946 TO 1959
WITH AVERAGED RELATIVE POSITION OF GROUP IN
UNITED NATIONS MEMBERSHIP

	% of total ECOSOC seats held by group 1946-60	Averaged % of group in UN membership, 1946 and 1959
Commonwealth	12.7	7.5
Latin American	20.6	30.3
Western European	19.6	16.6
Eastern European	18.6	11.5
Asian-African	17.6	29.4

Thus, it will be seen that there has been a relatively close correspondence in the case of the Western European states between their averaged percentage of the UN membership and the percentage of the seatings they have held on ECOSOC. The Eastern European states and the Commonwealth have enjoyed a preferential place upon ECOSOC in terms of their percentage of the UN membership. The Asian-African and the Latin American states, by contrast, have had a notably "under-represented" place in terms of their averaged percentage of the UN membership, even before the admission of the new African states in 1960.

If the General Assembly were seeking to have the Economic and Social Council composed upon a purely pro-rata basis, the Eastern European-Soviet bloc states should have fewer seats and the Latin American and Asian-African combinations more. There is no precise definition of what constitutes "under" and "over" representation, but it is obvious that the Eastern European states have had a most generous seating upon this Council.

Taken by and large the General Assembly has managed to reconcile fairly well the needs and desires of most groups of Members for participation in the Economic and Social Council. The main exception exists in the case of the Asian and African countries of which we shall speak presently.

Each of the groups has some problem with respect to representation upon ECOSOC. In most instances this is not insoluble and is in the process of being worked out. The Commonwealth members face a question of how to

handle the election of their Asian and African partners. Up to this time they have preferred to stand for election as Asian or African states. But with the large increase in the numbers of Members from these regions now in process, it may be necessary, or expedient, for India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Malaya, Ghana, and others destined to follow shortly, to stand as Commonwealth nominees at least until the Council can be enlarged. This would mean longer intervals between participation in the Council for the older members of the Commonwealth. But this may have to be faced until a suitable enlargement of the Council can be obtained through amendment of the Charter in order to facilitate somewhat more equitable Asian-African participation.

The Latin American states face the problem of distributing their seatings so that the Central American and Caribbean republics, which are in need of economic and technical assistance, can sit more frequently on the Council.

For the Western European states, which have rotated smoothly, the principal question is one of making adequate provision for the inclusion of the Southern European countries, and such neutrals as Austria and Ireland, in the scheme of rotation.

The Eastern European states face somewhat the same type of question with respect to the Balkan satellites in their round of representation. They also must consider making some concession from their relatively large proportionate representation to accommodate the under-represented Asian-African states or be willing to amend the Charter to enlarge the Council.

It may be interesting to call attention in passing to Finland's election in 1956 on the Western rather than the Eastern European quota one year after its admission to the United Nations. Aside from the fact that the Scandinavian seat happened to be up for election that year, and that the naming of Finland to fill this was appropriate in view of its membership in the Nordic Council, there can be little doubt that this was intended as a testimonial of the esteem in which this nation is held by the Free World. It was also a token that the majority of the United Nations regard Finland as a part of the Western European community in the broadest sense.

The Problem of Asian and African Representation

The major problem concerning the composition of the Economic and Social Council is how to afford the now greatly enlarged circle of Asian and African countries a proportionate representation.

When the United Nations was formed there were eleven countries from the Asian-African area, including the Republic of China, among the 50 original Member states. By the end of 1946 the number had grown to fourteen, or 25.4 per cent of the then total membership of 55 states. In composing the Economic and Social Council during the initial elections, three of the 18 seats were voted to states of this part of the world, exclusive of the seat that went to China as one of the powers having a permanent seat on the Security Council. This seemed a fair arrangement. It gave these states the same number of seats that were accorded to the Latin American and Western European states. This was not as favorable a ratio as the Eastern European states received, but it was mathematically more advantageous than the four seats that had to be shared among the 20 Latin American republics.

Aside from China, which has been continuously re-elected to the Council along with the other Sponsoring Powers of 1945, the African and Asian representation has been divided so that there has regularly been one Middle Eastern state, one Asian Commonwealth power, and a third party from somewhere in the area upon the Council. The latter seat has fluctuated between a Far Eastern state, a second Commonwealth country, a Middle Eastern or an African nation.

Prominent in the record is the fact that up to 1960 only one wholly African country had been a member of the Council: the Sudan, elected in 1957. The Sudanese precedence over two original Members of the organization, Ethiopia and Liberia, can be attributed to the fact that it is a member of the League of Arab States and had their energetic backing, while the others were not members of a comparable political action grouping.

In nearly every election since 1950 a multi-sided contest has developed among the Asian-African countries for the available seat. Notwithstanding the extensive caucusing of these countries prior to elections, sharp competitions have occurred in the balloting.

It was possibly a mistake at the beginning to treat the Asian-African area as one for purposes of filling seats upon the Economic and Social Council. It encompasses two continents. As someone has said, six Europes could be fitted into it. In addition to sheer size and diversity of races, religions, languages and economic conditions, there are wide differences in the interests of the states in the area.

The Asian and African Governments have lent credence, nevertheless, to the notion of their compromising a meaningful combination by their own continual talk of Afro-Asian collaboration, by the Bandung Conference, and by their active and well organized caucus. Furthermore, they have sought on many occasions to speak with one voice in UN affairs. Thus, the grouping has been intentionally perpetuated. It is a question how long this may continue in the light of the increase in the number of African states. For these countries have their own problems and interests that are distinct from

those of the Asian states, as manifest by the formation of their own caucus and the African collaborative movement.

A moment's reflection upon the membership situation will show why disparities exist in representation upon this Council and why pressures for change are beginning to mount.

In 1956 there were 25 Asian and African Member states, not counting China or Israel. Following the admission of the new states on September 20, 1960, the bi-continental presence in the United Nations numbered 43, again not counting China and Israel, out of a total UN Membership of 96 states. With the three or four other African countries to be admitted before the end of 1960, the grand total will stand at or close to one hundred, of which the Asian-African Members will comprise 46 or 47, with more to follow in the next year or two.

In short, from the beginning of the Fifteenth Session of the General Assembly the Asian-African states constituted 44 per cent of the membership of the United Nations. On a population basis, using the 1958 UN demographic estimates, and excluding the peoples of China, the Asian and African peoples account for at least 50 per cent of the population of the United Nations.

Such figures afford strong arguments for the Asian-African states having more than three seats plus that of China on the Economic and Social Council.

However desirable it may be to do something about the composition of

other elective organs of the United Nations,¹ early readjustment of the representation on the Economic and Social Council is almost a necessity. The large needs of the underdeveloped countries for assistance in advancing their economic and social progress underline their eagerness to have a larger representation upon the Council. The multiplication in Asian and African membership, compared with all other groups, supplies a powerful case either for some reallocation of the existing seats or an enlargement of the Council.

How much of a change is needed to afford what might be deemed a reasonable representation for the Asian-African states?

One might suppose that there should be enough places so that there could regularly be at least one Far Eastern State, an Indian Ocean country, a Middle Eastern state, a North African state (comprising those lying between Morocco on the West and Somalia on the East), and one West or Central African state on the Council at the same time, aside from China. In other words, five seats instead of the present three. If all of the African political entities that are in being or in prospect come into the UN within the next two years, the African Members could conceivably argue that they should have not less than four seats for their own representation. They could base their argument on the ratios of representation previously employed for Western and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Commonwealth.

1. See Norman J. Padelford, "Politics and Change in the Security Council," International Organization, Summer, 1960, pp. 381-401.

If the principle of equitable geographical distribution is to be observed, the Asian and African states taken together should be afforded a minimum of two more places on the Economic and Social Council than they now have. And it would hardly be unreasonable in them if they should ask for more than this by 1962.

There are two things that might be done to accord fairer representation to these states. One would be to redistribute the existing seatings. In general, the group that should be prepared to make the first and principal concession in this direction should be the Eastern European-Soviet bloc states which have had the largest proportionate representation to UN membership. A temporary expedient that might be attempted within the limits of the present arrangement, if the parties concerned would agree, would be to make two additional seats available to the Asian-African combination by a rotating relinquishment involving the present seatings of the Eastern European, the Western European, and the Commonwealth states. By careful arrangement this could be done without requiring either of these groups to curtail its own representation by a full place all of the time. To succeed, such an arrangement would demand willingness by the members of each group to forego one place in turn. Refusal by any state in line for election to postpone its candidacy could throw the entire scheme off. Such relinquishment or delay might seem disadvantageous or intolerable at some times. The chances of such an expedient succeeding are hardly bright.

An arrangement that would give the Asian and African states an improved representation without requiring others to forego what they have

been accustomed to for fifteen years would be preferred by many. This can be done only by enlarging the Council. Such an enlargement can be accomplished only by amending the Charter. To do this requires approval by the General Assembly and ratification by two-thirds of the Member states, including all five of the powers having permanent seats upon the Security Council. To date the Soviet Union has categorically opposed amendment of the Charter. At the 1959 General Assembly the Soviet delegation stated it would not consider any amendment until Red China is admitted to the United Nations and has had a chance to act on the matter. Conceivably the USSR would change its position if an amendment to enlarge the Council were passed by the General Assembly and ratified by two-thirds of the Member states including the other permanent members of the Security Council. But again it might not do so. It has it within its power to frustrate the entire membership of the United Nations if it chooses to do so. It has shown few qualms about doing so in the past. So long as it adheres to its present stance there can be no adjustment of the representation situation through enlargement of the Council. The United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the overwhelming majority of UN Members have stated their belief that something should be done and the readiness of their Governments to proceed. The world waits upon Moscow.

Premier Khrushchev's ostentatious professions of support for the former colonial peoples at the Fifteenth General Assembly, together with his unrealistic proposals for changes in the office of the Secretary General, could herald a change in the Soviet position. But until this is

spelled out in positive terms on specific proposals for enlargement of the Council there can be no certainty that the Premier's performance represents anything more than a propaganda barrage at one extreme or a deliberate game to undermine the basic foundations of the United Nations.

V

Moves to Bring Council Abreast of Present UN Membership

The principal move so far for enlarging the Economic and Social Council was initiated at the 1956 session of the General Assembly by a group of sixteen Latin American states and Spain. This began the year after it became obvious that it would not be practicable to convene a General Charter Review Conference as originally contemplated at the end of ten years. The Hispanic-American proposal called upon the General Assembly to consider amending the Charter to increase the size of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the International Court of Justice in the light of the then expanded membership of the UN.² The proposals have consistently called for an addition of six new seats to increase the Economic and Social Council to 24 members.

In opposing the proposal the Soviet Union and its satellites have argued that the organization in its present form meets the "essential purposes" of the United Nations. They have insisted that no amendment can be considered in the absence of Red China. Since it has not been possible to

2. See Document A/3139, June 26, 1956.

budge the Soviet Union from this position, many of the Asian states have preferred to put off a direct vote on the question. Thus, the proposal has been reintroduced and debated each year but no final action taken.

The debates have revealed nevertheless the existence of a widespread feeling that the membership of the Economic and Social Council should be expanded at the earliest possible date. Assembly resolutions have recorded this sentiment. And as the Sudanese delegate remarked at the Fourteenth Session, simply because the Soviet Union does not like the exclusion of Red China from the United Nations is no fair ground for refusing to accord Member states that are in no wise responsible for the Chinese situation equitable representation upon the principal organs of the United Nations.³

There is a sharp distinction of course between the functions and powers of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. Many of the matters dealt with in ECOSOC are of a technical nature and the Council has no power to bind Member states by its decisions as can the Security Council. Having such considerations in view, many delegations, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have taken the position that an amendment to increase the size of the Economic and Social Council can be regarded as "essentially a technical adjustment" to help this organ function more effectively. The Soviet Union has not been prepared, as yet, however, to go along with such a move.⁴

3. Special Political Committee, 130th meeting, October 17, 1959.

4. See Document A/SPC/SR 128, October 15, 1959.

It is no satisfactory answer to say, as delegates from the Soviet Union have done, that the Asian and African countries can attend Council meetings whenever there is a matter of particular concern to any of their number. This privilege does not give them a vote. And any self-respecting group of states would regard indefinite impotence on the sidelines as an intolerable indignity. One can imagine the Soviet reaction if it were compelled to go for years without opportunity of membership on ECOSOC or other organ of the United Nations.

The argument that a council of twenty-four would be unwieldy carries little weight. The regional economic commissions operate with memberships as large as or larger than this. The Economic Commission for Europe has twenty-nine members. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East has twenty-four. The Economic Commission for Latin America has twenty-four.⁵ The Governing Body of the International Labor Organization has forty members. The Executive Board of UNESCO has twenty-four members. The Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization has representatives of twenty-four governments on it. The Board of governors on the International Atomic Energy Agency has twenty-three members. Each of these Commissions and Specialized Agencies which reports to the Economic and Social Council considers matters of the same nature as the Council itself. In fact, they consider many matters in first instance that later come to the Council, or act on recommendations of

5. The Economic Commission for Africa originally had 15 regular and 8 associate members. This presumably will be changed following the admission of the new states in 1960.

the Council. They manage to function adequately with a membership approximating that proposed for ECOSOC.

The addition of six elective seats would permit the allocation of two or three more places to the Asian-African states. One seat could appropriately be allocated to the Western European region for assignment principally to the states of Southern Europe. One could be assigned to the Latin American states, and one could be considered as a floating seat to be open to general election or to balance representation wherever it may be needed.

This would result in a Council having something like five or even possibly six Asian-African members, four or five Latin American, four Western and Southern European states, three Eastern European, and one or two Commonwealth countries, together with the United States, the United Kingdom, France, China and the Soviet Union.

Some such distribution would bring the representation on the Economic and Social Council more nearly into line with the actualities of today's UN membership and the problems that face the organization in the next five years. It would alleviate one of the principal organizational shortcomings today.

VI

Possible Effects of Change -- U. S. Interests

There is no dilemma posed by an enlargement of the Economic and Social Council comparable to that which exists with respect to an increase in the

membership of the Security Council. In this case there is no issue over an extension of the veto power. There is no comparable problem regarding the election of countries that are pursuing neutralist or pacifist policies. The main questions that have to be considered are what the possible effects of an increase would be on the business of the Council and on the outcome of its deliberations.

More would doubtless be heard in an enlarged Council about increasing the amounts of economic and technical assistance to underdeveloped economies. This is likely to happen in any event. Proposals would probably be pressed for larger measures of assistance to be channeled through the United Nations rather than via bilateral arrangements. This again will probably occur regardless of enlargement. Pressures might be mounted to put the Council on record in favor of the establishment of larger capital funds for short-run projects along the lines of the United Nations Special Fund, or for long-term capital grants according to less precise criteria than those demanded under the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. But again this seems likely to happen in the General Assembly even if the Council is left as it is. More commissions, agencies and instrumentalities might be sought. Votes on questions relating to principles of economic and social advancement, where lines might become drawn between private enterprise and state planning, would become closer than they have been for most of the newer governments are wedded to the notion that socialist or neo-socialist type planning and control holds assurance of the most

rapid economic and social advancement for their countries. And conceivably efforts would be made to get more sweeping declarations voted on human rights about which certain quarters in the United States have expressed considerable hesitancy.

The question that will concern governments mainly will be what the probable consequences of an enlargement will be upon the voting patterns and balance of strength within the Council.

It is difficult to predict precisely how the membership of an enlarged Council would vote on various questions. Much will depend upon who is on the Council at the time, what the nature of the proposal in question is, who has introduced it, and what views are held on the matter by the various powers and how strongly they are pressed. There might be divisions of something like 14 to 10, generally speaking, in favor of a stand on which the United States felt strongly and made particular appeals for support, as a consequence of some division of the Asian or African vote and possibly some split in the Latin American voting. Should the Commonwealth or the full Latin American vote be cast on the opposite side, the margin would become narrower of course and might even place the United States in the minority. It will be remembered that only a simple majority of those present and voting is needed for action in this Council.

Although the Economic and Social Council can only make recommendations, governments will nonetheless be concerned with outcomes with respect to important issues. This will be especially true of governments that are sensitive to collective opinion and are large contributors to UN funds and pro-

grams. For no country relishes the prospect of being outvoted or finding itself in a minority position.

Most of those who would be added to the Council would listen with attention to American and Western European views and are not likely to force proposals to a show-down that would embarrass the United States or fail to receive tangible support from it -- unless perhaps a "colonialism" issue is involved. For Members are aware of the extent to which the United States is supporting the organization.

The tragic events in the Congo and the urgent need for economic, technical, and administrative assistance on an unparalleled scale have changed the magnitude of the economic and social problems confronting the United Nations. It will not be surprising if the costs for one year of emergency assistance to the Congo run to considerably over \$100 million. They may come to a good deal more. And something on the order of \$50-100 million a year may be needed for some time before the Congo is ready to function adequately with its own trained personnel and facilities.

The magnitude of the problem such a development poses is realized when it is recalled that the total the United Nations has been raising annually from contributions for its regular activities has been a little over \$58 million. Special assessments and in addition special voluntary contributions will have to be resorted to for support of the Congo activities as they were for Suez and other operations. These may fall short of what is needed, as have the assessments and contributions for the UN

Emergency Force in Egypt. Nor is this the end. Secretary-General Hammarskjold has signalled the need for a Special Fund for Africa to aid other new nations in this continent. With so many peoples intent on telescoping time in acquiring independence and advancing the material aspects of their societies to higher standards of living, emergencies may arise calling for larger and exceptional forms of assistance elsewhere.

As Mr. Hammarskjold pointed out when he asked for support of United Nations action in the Congo: a solution to problems of this nature may be "a question of peace or war" and not limited to one territory or nation. For "values immeasurably greater than any of those which such action may be intended to protect" may be at stake -- literally world peace, human freedom and progress.

Whether the Economic and Social Council is increased in size or not, the powerful forces of change that are sweeping through Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world as well are bound to press upon the United Nations for larger and larger assistance. What has transpired in the Congo may become an important turning point in various facets of international relationships. It is almost certain to mark a stepping stone to an era of heavily expanded economic and technical assistance. This will magnify the importance of the deliberations that take place in the Economic and Social Council, and increase the weight of its recommendations to the General Assembly, the Specialized Agencies, and to Members of the world organization.

VII

Conclusions

Taking the various factors into consideration, it seems to the present writer that on balance the time has come to move forcefully in the direction of increasing the size of the Economic and Social Council. This should, in my judgment, be limited to an additional six seats making a Council of 24. And it should be done with a prior understanding among the UN Members on the general lines of allocation as suggested on a preceding page.

It is my opinion, weighing the elements involved, that the United States will find sufficient friends upon an enlarged Council, composed along the lines mentioned, to support on most occasions positions to which it attaches vital importance. Its views will continue to command attention. And, barring the unforeseen, its influence will remain high in an enlarged Council in consequence of its experience, its financial and other resources and contributions, and its support for the rights and independence of young and small nations. It must expect to have to employ the arts of persuasion and play the game of politics. Indeed, whether the Council is enlarged or not, it must be prepared to encounter stiffer opposition and more difficult times than in the past. These cannot be dodged; they are built into the circumstances of our times.

There is nothing to be gained, in the opinion of the writer, in delaying action upon an enlargement of the Council. It will probably take a minimum of one to two years to obtain the necessary ratifications

after an amendment is voted upon by the General Assembly.

A consideration that will figure prominently in the minds of many at the United Nations will be an assurance that a proposal voted upon favorably by the General Assembly will be laid at once before the Congress of the United States and supported by the Executive branch of the Government for early ratification. Such an assurance should be conveyed to other delegations by the United States, and made clear at the earliest possible date by the successful candidate in the Presidential election.

The Soviet Union may not be persuaded even by a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly to change its stand on amending the Charter. The exigencies of politics could conceivably compel it to modify its stand if an actual vote were taken upon a draft amendment restricted to enlargement of this particular organ. Only the presentation of an actual test will confront the nations with the need of making a definitive decision. If the U.S.S.R., or other Member states, find that their interests cannot be squared in final analysis with approval and ratification of an amendment to improve representation upon the Economic and Social Council, this cannot be helped. It is their right to take such a decision. But it will be clear, at least, what can and cannot be done. Diplomacy will have been given its full opportunity to operate, which it has not been up to this time. And if there is unmovable opposition when the cards are down, this will stand revealed for what it is.

The membership of the United Nations has nearly doubled in size since the Organization was founded. It is time that the elective organ primarily

concerned with the advancement of international economic and social cooperation, and with the promotion of higher standards of living, were enlarged to keep step with the characteristics of the United Nations and of world needs today. By enabling more of the states in Asia and Africa to have seats upon the Economic and Social Council, the representation of other regions can at the same time be improved. In the process, habits of collaboration for search of solutions to international economic and social problems through the United Nations mechanism will be encouraged.