

## TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

*Held at Flushing Meadow, New York, on Thursday, 22 September 1949, at 10.45 a.m.*

*President: General Carlos P. RÓMULO (Philippines).*

### **General debate (continued): speeches by Mr. Tsiang (China) and Mr. al-Jamali (Iraq)**

1. Mr. TSIANG (China) observed that the general debate at the beginning of an Assembly's session was the proper occasion for surveying the work of the Organization, particularly with reference to its main purpose, the maintenance of peace and security among the nations.

2. With regard to Europe, the past year had seen notable progress. Greece had been saved. The communist insurrection, aided by forces from outside, had reached the beginning of its end. Thanks to the sacrifices of the Greek people, the moral encouragement of the United Nations, and the moral and material support of the United States, Greece had been snatched from the jaws of the communist world empire. The Greek people were henceforth assured of their national independence and human freedom. That was a matter for rejoicing, not only among the Greeks, but among all freedom-loving peoples everywhere. The Chinese delegation extended its congratulations to Greece.

3. During the past year, western Europe had continued to make progress. It was not long since people everywhere had wondered whether Italy would not fall into the hands of the communists, whether France could be re-established as a bulwark of human freedom, and whether western Germany would not be a victim of the traps set by international communism. Those questions had all been answered. The immediate danger in western Europe had definitely passed. Instead of being a possible victim of communism western Europe might become the vanguard of democracy. The peoples and Governments concerned had done heroic work and the Government of the United States, through the Marshall Plan, had given them generous and effective aid.

4. With the coming into force of the North Atlantic Treaty, the grand design for the containment of communism had been completed so far as Europe was concerned. From Iran through Turkey, Greece and Italy to France and Scandinavia the dyke against the communist flood had been built and was in good, strong condition.

5. It was obvious, however, that if floods were contained on one side only, the destructive waters would flow and spread in other directions. Such was the nature of floods. Such was also the nature of communism. Communism was in itself a great menace, but also it was inseparably joined with the old deep-rooted Russian imperialism. Throughout the nineteenth century Russian imperialism had surged sometimes westward, sometimes eastward and sometimes in all directions at once. The Russian empire and Russian imperialism bestrode two continents—Europe and Asia.

6. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Russian imperialism in Europe had met with a check as a result of the Crimean War. During the very years of that war, however, Russian forces had invaded China and seized the northern bank of the Amur river and the eastern bank of the Ussuri river, including the great port of

Vladivostock. People should not forget that "Vladivostock" meant "Dominator of the East".

7. In the 1870's while the activities of Russian forces and diplomats in south-eastern Europe had culminated in the Russo-Turkish War, the Treaty of San Stefano and the Treaty of Berlin, other Russian forces and diplomats had been busy in central Asia, annexing a wide frontier belt of the Chinese province of Sinkiang.

8. At the beginning of the twentieth century, czarist Russia had undertaken wild adventures in Manchuria and Korea, which had led to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Checked in the East, Russian imperialism had swung back to Europe, and in a few years had become a prime mover in the plots and counter-plots in the Balkans which had finally resulted in the First World War.

9. After the so-called October Revolution of 1917, the new rulers of Russia had proclaimed to the world that the Soviet people were not only ashamed of czarist imperialism but were ready to give up the fruits of that imperialism. The people of China had heard the voices of Lenin, Joffe and Karakhan to that effect.

10. They had welcomed the new message and hoped it would be true. Hard and bitter experience had taught them, however, that the change from czarist imperialism to Soviet imperialism was entirely on the surface, and that at bottom the two brands of imperialism were really identical.

11. During the past two years, while the dyke from the Persian Gulf to Scandinavia was being built against the flood of communism, the Far East had been inundated. In Manchuria, the Soviet Union had obtained more than czarist Russia had ever tried to seize. Moreover, in the Chinese Communist Party, the Soviet Union had an instrument and a lever with which to undermine the independence and integrity of China and the peace of the Far East.

12. After V-J Day, the people of China had ardently desired to maintain peace at home and peace with neighbouring countries. The first great act of the Chinese Government, at the very moment of victory over Japan, had been to sign a treaty of friendship and alliance with the USSR, embodying the decisions of the Yalta Conference. That treaty had imposed heavy sacrifices on China, particularly in the northeastern provinces, frequently spoken of as Manchuria. The Chinese people had hoped that those sacrifices would not be in vain. The frontier between China and the Soviet Union extended from central Asia to the waters of the Pacific. It was longer than the frontier between Canada and the United States. The sincere desire of the Chinese people was that the frontier between China and the Soviet Union should be as peaceful and as free as that between Canada and the United States.

13. In order to secure domestic peace, to usher in an era of economic reconstruction and to make possible a rising standard of living for the people, the Chinese Government, after V-J Day, had quickly begun to demobilize the war-time forces

of the country. They had offered to solve all the problems between the Government and the communists through peaceful means. They had even been ready to consider a coalition Government, although they knew very well the dangers of such coalition. But the insistence of the Chinese communists on maintaining a large army had made all schemes of reconciliation impossible.

14. The Chinese Communist Party was an integral part of the international communist movement. It was as fanatical as communists elsewhere. Its propaganda was always in harmony with Moscow propaganda. Its action was always in step with Moscow action.

15. During the war, for a brief period, the Chinese communists had suddenly assumed the cloak of patriotism and had moderated their attitude towards class warfare. That brief period had misled many observers into believing that the Chinese communists were not communists at all but agrarian reformers. The real nature of Chinese communism had since become plainly visible to all who wished to see. The strident voice of Mao Tze-tung had announced that the Chinese communists were a new and mighty contingent in the armies of world revolution which was to spread to South-East Africa and finally to cover the whole world, and that in the event of a third war, communist China would fight on the side of the USSR.

16. China was fighting against that new evil as it had fought twelve years previously, and for over eight years, against Japanese aggression. The resistance of free China was as important as its resistance to Japan in the Second World War. Geography had placed China in the front lines of the world struggle. The ultimate outcome would decide not only the future of China but that of many neighbouring countries in Asia and even the future of the whole world.

17. Building the dyke on one bank of the river had forced the waters to overflow on the other bank. The Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty, while strengthening the forces of freedom in one part of the world, had really, though unintentionally, increased the dangers to the peoples living in the other part of the world. Mr. Tsiang appealed to the General Assembly to ponder over the situation in the Far East and the grave dangers to world peace and security, and to have the courage to embrace the vision of one indivisible world and not to retreat to the illusory security of half a world.

18. Since the conclusion of the Second World War, nothing that had happened in any part of the world was more serious than what had happened in China during the past year. The Assembly might close its eyes to those events and lull itself to sleep. The representative of China, in calling attention to the seriousness of the situation in the Far East, might incur the displeasure of some of his colleagues who, eager for peace, were only too ready to imagine that peace had already been achieved. Such colleagues might regard his survey of the situation as unpleasant or inconvenient, just as the voice of China in the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations in Geneva in 1931 and 1932 had been declared unwelcome by representatives of several countries. In the face of the Japanese aggression in 1931, many people had wished to be let alone, and to let the aggressor alone. The appeasement policy which the

Assembly of the League had pursued towards the Japanese had not stopped their aggression. In the end that aggression had destroyed the League of Nations and had engulfed many countries in southern Asia and around the Pacific. Could the United Nations maintain its prestige and develop its usefulness by ignoring what had taken place in China? The Chinese delegation was convinced that such a course of action on the part of the General Assembly would, in the long run, prove to be short-sighted. It requested the representatives of the nations gathered together to pay due attention to the storm that had reached China and would soon reach other countries.

19. The PRESIDENT pointed out that there was only one more speaker on the list for the morning meeting and inquired whether any other Member was prepared to speak. He added that the General Committee's report on the agenda was before the Assembly, and emphasized the need to expedite the work of the Assembly as far as possible.

20. MR. AL-JAMALI (Iraq) observed that in one generation the world had suffered the painful consequences of two world wars. The state of mind of the majority of mankind was still one of uncertainty, hopelessness and confusion. Man had begun to lose faith in himself and his fellow man. To cure those human ills, far-sighted statesmen like Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt had set a new moral and political pattern in international relations. President Wilson's Fourteen Points were well known; the principles underlying them constituted some of the most fundamental rules for settling international disputes.

21. After the First World War, the world had put its faith in the League of Nations, in the Permanent Court of International Justice, and in open diplomacy and parliamentary methods. For reasons well known to all, however, that world structure had crumbled beneath the weight of power politics and the desire for domination which had led to the Second World War. It was during that second war that the Atlantic Charter had been promulgated and that President Roosevelt had spoken of the Four Freedoms. The idea of the United Nations had been born. Those representatives who had been at San Francisco would remember the hard work, coupled with deep faith and bright hope, which had brought the United Nations Charter into being. Many had not been altogether satisfied with the formulation of the Charter, especially with the unanimity rule whereby the five great Powers in the Security Council controlled the right of recommendation and investigation—a weakness in the Charter which was becoming recognized more and more by all sides except the USSR and the other Members in the Soviet group. Some Members, including Iraq, had wanted the Chapters on Trusteeship to be more clear and positive about the future independence of the dependent Territories. Nevertheless, they had been pleased with the Charter. It was the best that could be achieved; it was the best possible under the circumstances.

22. It could be asked, however, whether the United Nations had so far fulfilled the hopes of the world. What were some of the points of its strength and weakness? The truth was that the United Nations was what its Member States made of it. It could be made a great force for

peace and prosperity for the world if all the Member States wished it to be so. If they did not wish that, it could become impotent and stagnant.

23. No one could deny that great work was being achieved by the United Nations in the social, economic and cultural fields and in the formulation of human rights. In the political field, however, it was still lagging and sometimes erring. The blunt truth was that the great Powers had not so far been able to make the Organization into a "united nations". There were signs of disunity. As for the smaller nations, the bitter fact was that the people of Iraq felt greatly disappointed in what the United Nations had so far effected in Palestine.

24. He would not have touched upon the subject of Palestine at that juncture had it not been for a statement issued by the Israeli delegation on the opening day of the current session, in which it had claimed that Israel could never consent to be separated from Jerusalem, and that Jerusalem would never cease to be part of Israel. It had further stated that it would pursue its efforts to emphasize the paramount duty of the Arab States to help to resettle the refugees who, it claimed, had been uprooted and dispersed by the action of those States.

25. That statement showed clearly that Israel was denying the natural, legal and human rights of the Arabs to their own country, which they had inhabited for thousands of years, and was trying to make Members of the United Nations forget their obligation to guard those rights. Unfortunately, the United Nations was faced at that very time with the task of relieving the miserable, starving, sick and homeless refugees. But who had brought that state of affairs about? Under what principles of human and political rights had those conditions been created? How could Arab rights to their own homes, which they had inherited in Palestine, be a matter of bargain and negotiation? It had been alleged that the Jews had not come to Palestine to dispossess the Arabs of their homes and that there was room in Palestine for Arabs and Jews alike; yet hundreds of thousands of Arabs were rendered homeless in neighbouring countries, while an average of one thousand Jews entered the country each day to replace them. That was happening under the very eyes of the United Nations and as a result of its decision, which had inevitably led to those sad and tragic consequences.

26. It had been stated that the Arabs of Palestine had left their homes of their own choice or that the Arab States had caused the exodus. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact was that a reign of terror had been inflicted upon the Arabs when acts of complete annihilation of masses of Arabs, including women and children, had been committed by the Jews. That truth had been well described in a statement by the Stern Gang leader, reported in the Washington, D. C., *Star* of 9 August 1948, according to which it was universally recognized that it had been the Deir Yasin attack that had struck terror into the hearts of the Arab masses and caused their stampede. The statement went on to speak of the attack as a "blessed miracle", which had dealt the enemy a far greater blow than all the combined wisdom of the Hagana commanders could have done.

27. That was the answer to the Israeli statement in which it absolved itself from any responsibility towards the refugees and denied their rights to settle in their own land.

28. When Hitler's atrocities had become known to the civilized world, all nations had been shocked. What was the attitude of the world towards the fact that the very people who had suffered at the hands of Hitler were applying his methods to the innocent Arabs of Palestine?

29. The Arabs of Palestine had a natural and legal right to their own homes in that country, a right recognized by all human, moral and legal codes of the civilized world. Such a right could be denied by no one but an aggressor who had no intention to abide by the United Nations Charter or by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

30. The Conciliation Commission for Palestine, which had been working on behalf of the United Nations in Lausanne, had created an Economic Survey Mission for the Arab States and Palestine. It was to be hoped that it was not intended thereby to evade the issue of a political settlement which must recognize the full rights of all the Arabs of Palestine to their own homes there. Iraq had not taken part in the Lausanne conferences, partly because it believed that there was no room for bargaining or haggling about such rights, partly because it believed that no political settlement could be valid or lasting which did not recognize such rights, but mainly because it had so far seen no sign of goodwill or readiness on the part of Israel to keep its word or to recognize Arab rights in Palestine. It was an excellent idea for the United Nations to help in the economic development of the Arab world, but it was fatal to the very principles of the United Nations to make that development a price for dispossessing hundreds of thousands of innocent and peace-loving Arabs of the right to return to their homes.

31. There could be no lasting peace in the Middle East until a just territorial settlement was made in Palestine. The human side of the refugee problem, which needed the most generous and most immediate consideration by the United Nations, should not supersede a fair and quick territorial settlement. But how was a political settlement to be achieved? The Conciliation Commission appointed by the United Nations had not, unfortunately, succeeded in effecting a territorial settlement, mainly because the Jews were not willing to abide by the decisions of the United Nations.

32. The statement issued by the Israeli delegation, to which he had alluded, was proof of that. The truth was that unless and until the United Nations forced the Jews to recognize the Arabs' rights in Palestine and to abide fully by its successive decisions there was no hope of a settlement. Left to themselves, the Jews had unlimited ambitions; the demands of their extremists of thirty years ago were the achievement of today. The Jews did not wish to abide by the plan of partition approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947. They had rejected the Bernadotte plan. During the truce and the armistice they had occupied territories which had not been inhabited by Jews nor allotted to them by the United Nations decision. Some Jewish elements were already speaking of enlarging the Jewish State to include Jordan.

33. According to the Washington, D. C., *Star* of 9 August 1949, Jewish ex-terrorists who had made Palestine too hot for British rule were confidently planning a new campaign, their objective being Jewish control of Jordan.

34. It was the responsibility of the United Nations to enforce its authority on the Jews to make them abandon aggressive intentions and to bring about a just territorial settlement. Otherwise there could be no peace in the Middle East and, in such circumstances, the seeds of future trouble had a mysterious way of growing. The settlement should be such as to minimize the agony of injustice created in Arab hearts. It was by that means and that means alone that faith in the United Nations could be partly re-established in the Middle East.

35. If, on the other hand, the Jews, relying on the support which they could always secure in the way of charity and political influence from a great country like the United States, continued to flout United Nations decisions and to deny Arab rights to Palestine, the United Nations would have to face a great blow to its prestige. By a decision which had led to trouble and unrest in the most sensitive part of the modern world, it would have achieved the greatest blunder in its history.

36. Mr. al-Jamali reiterated that material help to the suffering refugees, no matter how vital and urgent, could never be a substitute for a just and speedy territorial settlement, which must be the first achievement. The question of settling refugees who did not wish to return to Palestine might well be considered after territorial settlement, for in his opinion the question of refugees would be largely liquidated if a just territorial settlement were to be effected.

37. Another question which was a test of United Nations goodwill was that of Libya. According

to the fundamental principles of the Charter, the valiant people of Libya, who had fought for nearly thirty years to win their freedom, deserved to be free and independent. The Iraqi delegation believed that the world still had a great reservoir of goodwill and sympathy for freedom-loving peoples and that the enforced mutilation of any country or people was not calculated to win the approbation of the civilized world.

38. Palestine and the former Italian colonies were examples of a score of problems which required the careful consideration of the General Assembly. The guide in approaching all those problems should be the letter and spirit of the Charter, not power politics, expediency or secret machinations. Mr. al-Jamali urged Members not to think in terms of domination of other peoples and other lands, or of great Powers and small ones, or of developed and under-developed countries, but to look at the world as an integral whole and to give each section of it, irrespective of might, race, wealth, geographical situation, colour or religion, the treatment, sympathy and co-operation that it needed, applying one code of human rights, one code of international justice. He appealed to them to be true to the Charter in deed as well as in word, and pledged his country's full co-operation.

39. The PRESIDENT, having noted that the list of speakers for the meeting was exhausted, proposed the adjournment of the meeting until the afternoon.

40. He suggested that the time limit for the inscription of speakers to take part in the general debate should be 6 p.m.

*The President's proposals were adopted.*

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

## TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

*Held at Flushing Meadow, New York, on Thursday, 22 September 1949, at 3 p.m.*

*President: General Carlos P. RÓMULO (Philippines).*

### Agenda of the fourth session: report of the General Committee (A/989)

1. The PRESIDENT proposed that the General Committee's report should be considered paragraph by paragraph.

#### I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

##### *Recommendations of the General Committee*

*The proposal contained in paragraph 1 was adopted.*

2. Mr. DROHOJOWSKI (Poland) wished to speak on paragraph 2, in which the General Committee recommended that item 27 of the provisional agenda and item 3 of the supplementary list should be combined to read: "Observance in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania of human rights and fundamental freedoms". The subject had been considered very briefly by the General Committee and he thought that the majority of the members had taken it for granted that they were bound to include the item in the agenda because of resolution 272 (III) adopted by the General Assembly on 30 April 1949. Examining the text of that resolution, he noted that the only decision

it contained was to retain the question on the agenda of the fourth regular session of the General Assembly. The resolution did not, neither could it, in any way imply that the accusations against the Governments of Bulgaria and Hungary were true. The Assembly had certainly expressed its concern at the accusations, but all false accusations were surely bound to occasion concern. There was nothing in the resolution which could be taken as meaning that the debate should be reopened at the fourth session or that a report should be submitted.

3. He emphasized the fact that the entire problem arose out of the peace treaties—a question with which the Assembly was not competent to deal. It was a well established principle that the right of giving an authoritative interpretation of a legal rule belonged solely to the person or body which had the power to modify or abolish it. Any question arising out of the peace treaties, therefore came solely within the province of the contracting parties. If a treaty was clear, no interpretation was needed; if not, only the contracting parties could deal with it. Any interpretation of a