

Reorganisation of Secretariat 1960–1961: Reorganisation of Secretariat 1960...

HS L 179:99a



National Library
of Sweden

Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Reorganisation of Secretariat

24 - 25 April 61

- Gen. Considerations on Work and Organization of Secretariat (by L. M. Goodrich)
- Organization at the top level (by Mr. Venkatachar)
(working paper No 121-122)

L 179:99a

General Considerations on Work and Organization of Secretariat

(Leland M. Goodrich)

1. The Charter provisions envisage a Secretariat with a role roughly similar to that of the League Secretariat as it developed in practice. The significant difference was that the Charter envisaged a more important political role for the Secretary-General than his League counterpart had possessed.
2. In its recommendations for the organization of the Secretariat and staff rules and regulations, the Preparatory Commission was guided to a large extent by League experience, and more particularly by the conception of an international civil service which Sir Eric Drummond introduced and by the anticipated needs of the kind of organization provided by the Charter. These recommendations were accepted and put into operation by the first Secretary-General and the General Assembly. Since then the structure of the Secretariat has been substantially revised better to adapt it to new and increasing demands upon it and in the light of experience.
3. Since its establishment, the United Nations has undergone important changes which have affected the role of the Secretariat, imposed increased responsibilities upon it, and made necessary the review of its organization and functioning. These changes include the following:
 - a. The failure of the Security Council to fully discharge its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, due to the inability of the permanent members to reach necessary agreement on action to be taken, the assumption of increased responsibilities in this area by the General Assembly, and the consequent increase in the importance of the role of the Secretary-General and his staff in carrying out the resolutions of the political organs.
 - b. The increase in the membership of the Organization from 51 to 99, with further increases imminent. As important as the increase in the

number of members has been the fact that this increase has largely come from the new states of Asia and Africa.

c. The great change that has occurred is the nature of the activities of the United Nations as the result of demands that assist in achieving the independence of non-self-governing territories and the economic and social development of under-developed countries. This has placed heavy responsibilities on the Secretariat in the economic and social fields. The task of the Organization and of the Secretariat in particular is in a sense made more difficult by the highly fragmented nature of the United Nations system - the existence of a general international organization with responsibilities in the area and a number of autonomous specialized organizations with responsibilities in parts of the general field.

d. While the United Nations did not initially have the ideological and cultural homogeneity of the League of Nations in its early day, the tendency of the past fifteen years has been in the direction of sharpened ideological differences and greater cultural diversity.

4. It is necessary to consider how these changes in the United Nations have affected the role of the Secretariat and what changes, if any, need to be made in its organization and activities, to enable it to discharge its responsibilities efficiently and economically. It is not a question of what changes should be made in the Charter provisions, but rather a question of how these provisions are to be interpreted and applied to get the best results under the new conditions.

5. The development of the political role of the Secretary-General, whether in the exercise of his powers under Article 99 or of powers vested in him by resolutions of the political organs, imposes the necessity of considering how the staff of the Secretary-General should be organized so as to enable him to discharge these responsibilities more effectively. The report of the three past presidents of the General Assembly has dealt with this problem, more particularly the question of how the Secretary-General can be provided with the necessary top-level assistance in discharging these functions. Also, attention must be given to so organizing the top-direction of the Secretariat that the Secretary-General will have

the political guidance and support which will permit him to discharge his responsibilities without becoming involved in attacks damaging to the prestige and influence of his office.

6. The expansion of United Nations activities, and the changes in the nature and relative importance of these activities make it necessary to consider whether the existing structure and operating procedures of the Secretariat accurately reflect the importance of various aspects of its work and whether lines of responsibility and operating procedures are so defined as to achieve the more efficient use of available resources. This is particularly true in the economic and social field where the shift from emphasis on research and public policy to operations raises problems that were not faced at the time the Secretariat was first established.

7. The increasing role of the Secretariat in policy formation and execution, taken together with the increasing ideological and cultural heterogeneity of the organization, raises the question whether the conception of international civil service, recruited solely on the basis of merit, politically neutral, and protected against influence by governments needs to be revised in any of its essentials and in some respects better adapted to the needs of today. In this connection, there is the question of the extent to which wide geographical distribution should be emphasized as contributing to an effective international secretariat. Should permanent appointments with the prospect of promotion be the general, what exceptions should be made, and what is the optimum relationship of permanent to fixed-term appointments? Are not the problems with which the Secretariat has to deal of such a nature that in certain positions and at certain levels a more rapid turnover of personnel may be desirable than permanent appointments permit, with the resulting inflow of fresh ideas?

8. The substantial increase in recent years of the normal expenses of the Organization, taken together with the extraordinary expenses in connection with the maintenance of peace and security in trouble spots such as the Congo, raises the question whether radical measures need not be taken to prevent the costs of the Organization from getting beyond the level that members are willing to bear. Such devices as the separation of administrative and operational budgets and a budget ceiling have been proposed. It must be recognized, moreover, that the level of expenses is determined by the organs which decide upon programmes and in the last analysis by governments.

This has been incorporated in the other paper

122/Rev.1.

Organization at the top level

(alternative paragraphs to Working Paper No. 122 suggested by Mr. Venkatachar)

1. The United Nations Secretariat was initially organized on the basis of two top echelons under the Secretary-General, that is, one echelon of Assistant Secretaries-General and one of Principal Directors. In his report on the reorganization of the Secretariat to the seventh session of the General Assembly, Mr. Trygve Lie, the first Secretary-General, proposed the creation of three posts of Deputy Secretaries-General to replace the posts of Assistant Secretaries-General, each one of whom would be placed, under the Secretary-General, in charge of a group of departments.
2. The present Secretary-General did not, after reflexion, find sufficient reason for his predecessor's suggestion for the grouping of departments under Deputy Secretaries-General mainly on the ground that by the introduction of a new level between the Secretary-General and the departments, procedures may be encumbered without adding compensative advantages.
3. The above view of the Secretary-General, which was formulated in 1953, has recently been reiterated by the three past Presidents in paragraph 33 of their report. They also have not favoured the idea of interposing Deputies between the Secretary-General and the heads of offices and departments. They go a little further and say that "indeed the establishment of a group of three top officials would tend to become a directorate of three and reduce the effectiveness of the actual heads of offices and departments".
4. In 1954 the Secretary-General explained that a major administrative weakness of the double echelon system was that "it led to a kind of diffusion of responsibility which meant that lines of authority both in the substantive and strictly administrative fields tended to become confused and uncertain". Consequently, the Secretary-General firmly held to the view that there should be at the top one echelon of officials instead of two. The officials occupying the top posts would primarily exercise administrative responsibilities. If they are called upon to exercise any political responsibilities, it will be by delegation from the Secretary-General.
5. An essential feature of the present organization, which is a single echelon system, is that 14 Under-Secretaries at Headquarters and a considerable number of other officials of comparable status, making a total of at least 30,

report either regularly or, when the need arises, directly to the Secretary-General. In the first place, this undoubtedly places on the Secretary-General an excessively heavy burden, which few incumbents would find it possible to carry. Secondly, it leads to the enunciation of the proposition that the Secretary-General should assume the fullest personal responsibility consistent with the full and administrative carrying out of his political and other Charter functions.

6. Apart from the very onerous and personal responsibilities which the Secretary-General under the existing system is called upon to bear, it seems to the Committee that there are certain defects in the working of this system. Fragmentation and division of responsibilities are implicit in it, even if overlaid by the personal responsibilities of the chief administrative officer of the United Nations. Secondly, it is necessary, in the best interests of the Organization itself, to break down the present illusion that power at the United Nations Headquarters is personalized and concentrated in the person holding the office of the Secretary-General and start substituting reality. Thirdly, it is much more realistic to think in terms of the corporate nature of the United Nations Secretariat, in particular at the top echelon. Such a system will have for its objective the bringing into existence of a group of senior colleagues able to stand by the Secretary-General and not be dwarfed by him as his subordinates. Fourthly, some form of collective activity at the top echelon should be seen in action, to screen the possible image that the Secretary-General is functioning through an entourage of a large array or disarray of officials.

7. In the preceding discussions on the reorganization of the United Nations Secretariat, there may seemingly appear to be two conflicting trends, namely, a single echelon of a large number of top officials or some form of regrouping of departmental activities headed by a fewer number of top officials. There appears to be no basic difference between what is termed a single and a double echelon systems. Nor are they rival or competing administrative systems. Under certain circumstances, they may even function as complementary to one another.

8. For, in any collective system comprising a group of senior advisers, there need be no real problem of double echelon. For one thing, the advisers will exercise a general supervision and co-ordination over the departments with which they deal, leaving the detailed work of administration or of substantive

character to the responsibility and initiative of the Under-Secretary or Under-Secretaries or of a Deputy. In other words, the work of the senior advisers will not primarily be related to the day-to-day direction of the work in the various departments. On the other hand, they will largely be concerned with the political, diplomatic and ad hoc work of a specialized character.

Organization at the top level

(alternative paragraphs to Working Paper No. 122 suggested by Mr. Venkatachar)

1. The United Nations Secretariat was initially organized on the basis of two top echelons under the Secretary-General, that is, one echelon of Assistant Secretaries-General and one of Principal Directors. In his report on the reorganization of the Secretariat to the seventh session of the General Assembly, Mr. Trygve Lie, the first Secretary-General, proposed the creation of three posts of Deputy Secretaries-General to replace the posts of Assistant Secretaries-General, each one of whom would be placed, under the Secretary-General, in charge of a group of departments.
2. The present Secretary-General did not, after reflexion, find sufficient reason for his predecessor's suggestion for the grouping of departments under Deputy Secretaries-General mainly on the ground that by the introduction of a new level between the Secretary-General and the departments, procedures may be encumbered without adding compensative advantages.
3. The above view of the Secretary-General, which was formulated in 1953, has recently been reiterated by the three past Presidents in paragraph 33 of their report. They also have not favoured the idea of interposing Deputies between the Secretary-General and the heads of offices and departments. They go a little further and say that "indeed the establishment of a group of three top officials would tend to become a directorate of three and reduce the effectiveness of the actual heads of offices and departments".
4. In 1954 the Secretary-General explained that a major administrative weakness of the double echelon system was that "it led to a kind of diffusion of responsibility which meant that lines of authority both in the substantive and strictly administrative fields tended to become confused and uncertain". Consequently, the Secretary-General firmly held to the view that there should be at the top one echelon of officials instead of two. The officials occupying the top posts would primarily exercise administrative responsibilities. If they are called upon to exercise any political responsibilities, it will be by delegation from the Secretary-General.
5. An essential feature of the present organization, which is a single echelon system, is that 14 Under-Secretaries at Headquarters and a considerable number of other officials of comparable status, making a total of at least 30,

report either regularly or, when the need arises, directly to the Secretary-General. In the first place, this undoubtedly places on the Secretary-General an excessively heavy burden, which few incumbents would find it possible to carry. Secondly, it leads to the enunciation of the proposition that the Secretary-General should assume the fullest personal responsibility consistent with the full and administrative carrying out of his political and other Charter functions.

6. Apart from the very onerous and personal responsibilities which the Secretary-General under the existing system is called upon to bear, it seems to the Committee that there are certain defects in the working of this system. Fragmentation and division of responsibilities are implicit in it, even if overlaid by the personal responsibilities of the chief administrative officer of the United Nations. Secondly, it is necessary, in the best interests of the Organization itself, to break down the present illusion that power at the United Nations Headquarters is personalized and concentrated in the person holding the office of the Secretary-General and start substituting reality. Thirdly, it is much more realistic to think in terms of the corporate nature of the United Nations Secretariat, in particular at the top echelon. Such a system will have for its objective the bringing into existence of a group of senior colleagues able to stand by the Secretary-General and not be dwarfed by him as his subordinates. Fourthly, some form of collective activity at the top echelon should be seen in action, to screen the possible image that the Secretary-General is functioning through an entourage of a large array or disarray of officials.

7. In the preceding discussions on the reorganization of the United Nations Secretariat, there may seemingly appear to be two conflicting trends, namely, a single echelon of a large number of top officials or some form of regrouping of departmental activities headed by a fewer number of top officials. There appears to be no basic difference between what is termed a single and a double echelon systems. Nor are they rival or competing administrative systems. Under certain circumstances, they may even function as complementary to one another.

8. For, in any collective system comprising a group of senior advisers, there need be no real problem of double echelon. For one thing, the advisers will exercise a general supervision and co-ordination over the departments with which they deal, leaving the detailed work of administration or of substantive

character to the responsibility and initiative of the Under-Secretary or Under-Secretaries or of a Deputy. In other words, the work of the senior advisers will not primarily be related to the day-to-day direction of the work in the various departments. On the other hand, they will largely be concerned with the political, diplomatic and ad hoc work of a specialized character.

Organization of the Secretariat
at the top level

(Introduction)

1. The United Nations Secretariat is one of the principal organs of the Organization. It plays a very important role as it is the only permanently functioning body of the United Nations and carries out executive functions for the other organs of the Organization. The Committee took into account the great significance of the Secretariat in the work of the United Nations and agreed on the importance of ensuring that its structure and the nature of its activities should correspond to the tasks of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security and the development of co-operation among peoples in various spheres.

(Historical)

2. The United Nations Secretariat was initially organized on the basis of two top echelons under the Secretary-General, that is, one echelon of Assistant Secretaries-General and one of Principal Directors. The first Secretary-General proposed to the seventh session of the General Assembly the creation of three posts of Deputy Secretaries-General to replace the posts of Assistant Secretaries-General, each one of whom would be placed, under the Secretary-General, in charge of a group of departments. The General Assembly never considered this proposal.

3. In 1953, the present Secretary-General indicated that he did not find sufficient reason for the grouping of departments under Deputy Secretaries-General, mainly on the ground that by the introduction of a new level between the Secretary-General and the departments, procedures may be encumbered without adding compensative advantages. He explained that a major administrative weakness of the double echelon system was that "it led to a kind of diffusion

of responsibility which meant that lines of authority both in the substantive and strictly administrative fields tended to become confused and uncertain". Consequently, the Secretary-General firmly held to the view that there should be at the top one echelon of officials instead of two. The officials occupying the top posts would primarily exercise administrative responsibilities. If they were called upon to exercise any political responsibilities, it would be by delegation from the Secretary-General.

4. The three past Presidents in paragraph 33 of their report also rejected the idea of interposing Deputies between the Secretary-General and the heads of offices and departments. They went further and said that "the establishment of a group of three top officials would tend to become a directorate of three and reduce the effectiveness of the actual heads of offices and departments".

5. The organization of the Secretariat became a subject of debate at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly. In particular, declarations by the Soviet delegation drew attention to what it regarded as serious flaws in the structure and activities of the Secretariat. It pointed out that international developments in recent years, such as the establishment of a world socialist system, the collapse of colonialism and the declaration of independence of many former colonies and dependent countries, had changed the balance of forces in international life and that the structure of the Secretariat no longer corresponded to these new realities.

6. During the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, the Soviet representatives proposed the reorganization of the Office of the Secretary-General in order that the head of the executive organ of the United Nations should be not one person, the Secretary-General, but three persons who would represent what the Soviet delegates described as the "three basic groups of States". They felt that the entire structure of the Secretariat should be reorganized along similar tripartite lines and they felt that all practical measures for the reorganization of the individual parts of the Secretariat should be directed to that end.

(Present situation)

7. The Committee has examined the question from a purely administrative point of view, although in doing so, it took into account the political considerations advanced by one of its members. Furthermore, the Committee agreed that no two incumbents of so responsible a post as that of Secretary-General would think alike on matters of top-level organization. The broad set-up of the Secretariat has thus both organizational and political aspects, and the latter is more a matter for the Secretary-General and the General Assembly than for this Committee to consider.

8. There seem to the Committee to be three proposals:

- (a) to continue the organization more or less in its present form;
- (b) to remodel it on the lines suggested by the Soviet delegation at the fifteenth session of the Assembly;
- (c) to remodel it on a basis more on lines commonly adopted in the case of many other organizations both national and otherwise.

9. The present organization is a single echelon system, and one aspect of it is that 14 Under-Secretaries at Headquarters and a considerable number of other officials of comparable status, making a total of some 30, report directly to the Secretary-General. A system of this kind can and has functioned, but, in the Committee's view, undoubtedly places an almost intolerable burden on the holder of the Office of the Secretary-General, which few incumbents would find it possible to carry.

10. The Soviet expert on the Committee considered that the existing structure had a number of major defects -- unwieldiness, too large a number of staff involving high costs, a lack of clarity in the organizational structure and an excessive multiplication of divisions and departments in the Secretariat. He was particularly critical of the distribution of functions between the Offices of the Secretary-General and the other units of the Secretariat, as well as the handling by the Secretary-General's office of certain political questions which he considered as belonging to the sphere of activities of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. It was in the latter Department that in his opinion the implementation of decisions of the Security Council should be concentrated. He was also critical of a structural organization under which seven Under-Secretaries out of a total of 14 at Headquarters were included in the Offices of the Secretary-General. The Soviet expert insisted in proposing that the Office of the Secretary-General should be reorganized so that the head of the executive organ should not be one person but three persons who would represent "the three basic groups of States" and that the entire structure of the Secretariat should be so reorganized that these three formal groups of States would be represented within it on a basis of equality.

11. The other experts considered that such a solution would need a Charter revision and could thus not be considered by the Committee, and studied other possibilities of improving the Organization.

12. The Committee considers that, apart from the heavy personal responsibilities of the Secretary-General, the existing system has certain other defects. Fragmentation and division of responsibilities are implicit in it. Secondly, it reinforces the impression based on the provisions of the Charter that all authority at United Nations Headquarters is concentrated in the person of the Secretary-General. Thirdly, it weakens the concept of the corporate nature of the United Nations Secretariat, particularly at the top echelon. To counteract these weaknesses it seems desirable to the Committee to bring into

existence a group of senior colleagues able to stand by the Secretary-General and to give him the assistance he needs in carrying his responsibilities through direct contacts and an appropriate measure of delegation of authority.

13. In former discussions on the organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations, there appear to be two conflicting trends, namely a single echelon of top officials involving a rather large group, or some form of grouping of activities in departments headed by a fewer number of top officials who would also serve as advisers to the Secretary-General. For any system involving a group of senior advisers there need be no real problem of double echelon. For one thing, the advisers will exercise general supervision and co-ordination over the work of their departments, leaving the details of administration to the responsibility of the Under-Secretaries. Thus the work of the senior advisers will not be primarily related to the day-to-day direction of the various departments. They will be largely concerned with political, diplomatic and ad hoc assignments of a specialized character.

(Committee's proposals)

14. The present form of organization has remained largely unchanged for the last six or seven years. During this period, the membership of the United Nations has nearly doubled, and the scope and character of its activities have developed substantially. These trends will continue. There is no object in making changes for the sake of change, but perhaps arrangements which have met the needs of the past will not best meet those of the future. The Committee accordingly, within the scope and limitation of the preceding considerations, submits the following proposals:

15. It appears to the Committee that there would be practical advantages in a grouping of activities which would reduce to 7 or 8 the number of senior officials at Headquarters reporting directly to the Secretary-General. This group of senior officials in daily contact with the Secretary-General would act as his advisers in the discharge of the responsibilities vested in him by the Charter.

16. The 7 or 8 senior officials would be in charge of the following areas of activity:

- (a) Political (including missions, and as soon as feasible the political work of the Trusteeship Department);
- (b) Economic and Social (including Technical Assistance, and at the appropriate time, the economic and social activities of the Trusteeship Department);
- (c) Trusteeship (to be merged as soon as feasible with the Political and Economic and Social Departments);
- (d) Administrative and Budgetary (comprising the Office of the Controller, the Office of Personnel and the Office of General Services);
- (e) Conference Services;
- (f) Office of Legal Affairs, Human Rights, Narcotics;
- (g) Public Information.

17. Several members of the Committee considered that it would be preferable to group the Human Rights and Narcotics Divisions in the Economic and Social Department, with the possibility of separating the economic and social activities into two departments and setting up a separate unit, though closely integrated with the work of the Department, to deal with technical assistance matters.

18. The Committee realizes that the grouping of activities suggested within the Political Department could only be adopted if and when the difficulties which at present prevent agreement between the permanent members of the Security Council have been resolved. Until that time, unless the head of the Political Department is not a national of one of the permanent members of the Security Council, the missions and some of the political activities based on resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly should be maintained under the personal responsibility of the Secretary-General.

19. The 7 or 8 departments proposed above could be reduced to 6 or 7 if and when the work of the Trusteeship Department is divided among the Political Department and the Economic and Social Department. The grouping suggested by the Committee is not necessarily in its details the only one which could be adopted. The object has been to suggest that like or related activities be brought together and that the organization of the Departments should reflect the main divisions of United Nations work. The grade of Under-Secretary would be retained within the Departmental structure. The precise number of officials of this grade in each Department would be a matter for consideration.

20. It is suggested that the heads of the seven or eight Departments should be named Deputy-Secretaries-General. Their status would be between that of the Secretary-General and the present Under-Secretaries, and would bear an appropriate relationship to that of the heads of the specialized agencies. For these new posts, it will be necessary to seek men of eminence and high attainment, and each would take turns in deputizing for the Secretary-General in his absence.

21. The Chairman of the Technical Assistance Board and the Head of the European Office would also have the status of Deputy-Secretaries-General. The Deputy Secretaries-General should designate one of their Under-Secretaries to act for them in their absence.

22. The Deputy Secretaries-General would have fixed-term contracts, expiring with the terms of office of the Secretary-General. The date of expiration of the contracts of Under-Secretaries would be suitably spaced, in order to avoid too much dislocation at any particular time, and to ensure reasonable continuity of day-to-day administration. As a general rule, Deputy-Secretaries-General should serve for one term only.

23. It would be open to the Secretary-General to recruit Deputy Secretaries-General from the outside or from existing Under-Secretaries. He would have similar discretion in regard to the recruitment of Under-Secretaries. Recruitment would be on a wide geographical basis, taking into account the existing political trends. Under the suggested organization, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General would have no substantive responsibilities with respect to those matters vested in the six or seven Departments.

24. The Committee is fully aware of possible dangers of duplication and confusion of lines of authority at the top echelon as pointed out in the report of the past Presidents. However, it believes that by clearly defining as it has done the lines of responsibility and authority, these dangers would

be avoided. It also believes that its proposals would not interfere with the direct relationship existing at present between the accredited representatives of Member States and the Secretary-General and his senior assistants, but, would, on the contrary, assist the Secretary-General in more effectively maintaining contact with the increased number of permanent missions.

25. The organization suggested by the Committee would give the Secretary-General the possibility of using the heads of Departments for consultation on all political and diplomatic questions of concern to the United Nations and for special assignments, while ensuring that the administrative work of the Secretariat at Headquarters would not be disrupted. This would not preclude the possibility of the Secretary-General calling upon highly qualified men of eminence from outside the Secretariat for special ad hoc assignments.

26. The adoption of a reorganization on the lines suggested by the Committee would mean that the other officials of equivalent status to Under-Secretary would no longer report directly to the Secretary-General. Thus, the Directors-General of UNICEF, the Special Fund, the High Commissioner for Refugees, the four Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions would correspond with or report to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Economic and Social Department. The Directors-General of UNRWA and the heads of political missions would report to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Political Department. The reorganization would also involve a review of the organization of existing departments and offices and the fixing of new manning tables. In the fixing of new tables, regard would need to be had to the other proposals in the subsequent sections of the Committee's report.

Organization of the Secretariat
at the top level

(incorporates
Venkatachari's
& other members
"Suggestions")

(Introduction)

1. The United Nations Secretariat is one of the principal organs of the Organization. It plays a very important role as it is the only permanently functioning body of the United Nations and carries out executive functions for the other organs of the Organization. The Committee took into account the great significance of the Secretariat in the work of the United Nations and agreed on the importance of ensuring that its structure and the nature of its activities should correspond to the tasks of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security and the development of co-operation among peoples in various spheres.

(Historical)

2. The United Nations Secretariat was initially organized on the basis of two top echelons under the Secretary-General, that is, one echelon of Assistant Secretaries-General and one of Principal Directors. The first Secretary-General proposed to the seventh session of the General Assembly the creation of three posts of Deputy Secretaries-General to replace the posts of Assistant Secretaries-General, each one of whom would be placed, under the Secretary-General, in charge of a group of departments. The General Assembly never considered this proposal.

3. In 1953, the present Secretary-General indicated that he did not find sufficient reason for the grouping of departments under Deputy Secretaries-General, mainly on the ground that by the introduction of a new level between the Secretary-General and the departments, procedures may be encumbered without adding compensative advantages. He explained that a major administrative weakness of the double echelon system was that "it led to a kind of diffusion

1. No. 122/Rev.1. 2. Chart. 3. My exp. of double echelon. 4. Like the old (a) Cabinet (c) Adm. C (the (d) of ex. assistants.

of responsibility which meant that lines of authority both in the substantive and strictly administrative fields tended to become confused and uncertain". Consequently, the Secretary-General firmly held to the view that there should be at the top one echelon of officials instead of two. The officials occupying the top posts would primarily exercise administrative responsibilities. If they were called upon to exercise any political responsibilities, it would be by delegation from the Secretary-General.

4. The three past Presidents in paragraph 33 of their report also rejected the idea of interposing Deputies between the Secretary-General and the heads of offices and departments. They went further and said that "the establishment of a group of three top officials would tend to become a directorate of three and reduce the effectiveness of the actual heads of offices and departments".

5. The organization of the Secretariat became a subject of debate at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly. In particular, declarations by the Soviet delegation drew attention to what it regarded as serious flaws in the structure and activities of the Secretariat. It pointed out that international developments in recent years, such as the establishment of a world socialist system, the collapse of colonialism and the declaration of independence of many former colonies and dependent countries, had changed the balance of forces in international life and that the structure of the Secretariat no longer corresponded to these new realities.

6. During the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, the Soviet representatives proposed the reorganization of the Office of the Secretary-General in order that the head of the executive organ of the United Nations should be not one person, the Secretary-General, but three persons who would represent what the Soviet delegates described as the "three basic groups of States". They felt that the entire structure of the Secretariat should be reorganized along similar tripartite lines and they felt that all practical measures for the reorganization of the individual parts of the Secretariat should be directed to that end.

(Present situation)

7. The Committee has examined the question from a purely administrative point of view, although in doing so, it took into account the political considerations advanced by one of its members. Furthermore, the Committee agreed that no two incumbents of so responsible a post as that of Secretary-General would think alike on matters of top-level organization. The broad set-up of the Secretariat has thus both organizational and political aspects, and the latter is more a matter for the Secretary-General and the General Assembly than for this Committee to consider.

8. There seem to the Committee to be three proposals:

- (a) to continue the organization more or less in its present form;
- (b) to remodel it on the lines suggested by the Soviet delegation at the fifteenth session of the Assembly;
- (c) to remodel it on a basis more on lines commonly adopted in the case of many other organizations both national and otherwise.

9. The present organization is a single echelon system, and one aspect of it is that 14 Under-Secretaries at Headquarters and a considerable number of other officials of comparable status, making a total of some 30, report directly to the Secretary-General. A system of this kind can and has functioned, but, in the Committee's view, undoubtedly places an almost intolerable burden on the holder of the Office of the Secretary-General, which few incumbents would find it possible to carry.

10. The Soviet expert on the Committee considered that the existing structure had a number of major defects -- unwieldiness, too large a number of staff involving high costs, a lack of clarity in the organizational structure and an excessive multiplication of divisions and departments in the Secretariat. He was particularly critical of the distribution of functions between the Offices of the Secretary-General and the other units of the Secretariat, as well as the handling by the Secretary-General's office of certain political questions which he considered as belonging to the sphere of activities of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. It was in the latter Department that in his opinion the implementation of decisions of the Security Council should be concentrated. He was also critical of a structural organization under which seven Under-Secretaries out of a total of 14 at Headquarters were included in the Offices of the Secretary-General. The Soviet expert insisted in proposing that the Office of the Secretary-General should be reorganized so that the head of the executive organ should not be one person but three persons who would represent "the three basic groups of States" and that the entire structure of the Secretariat should be so reorganized that these three formal groups of States would be represented within it on a basis of equality.

11. The other experts considered that such a solution would need a Charter revision and could thus not be considered by the Committee, and studied other possibilities of improving the Organization.

1. 12. The Committee considers that, apart from the heavy personal responsibilities of the Secretary-General, the existing system has certain other defects.

2. Fragmentation and division of responsibilities are implicit in it. Secondly,

3. it reinforces the impression based on the provisions of the Charter that all authority at United Nations Headquarters is concentrated in the person of the Secretary-General. Thirdly, it weakens the concept of the corporate nature

4. of the United Nations Secretariat, particularly at the top echelon. To counteract these weaknesses it seems desirable to the Committee to bring into

existence a group of senior colleagues able to stand by the Secretary-General and to give him the assistance he needs in carrying his responsibilities through direct contacts and an appropriate measure of delegation of authority.

1. 13. In former discussions on the organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations, there appear to be two conflicting trends, namely a single echelon of top officials involving a rather large group, or some form of grouping of activities in departments headed by a fewer number of top officials who would also serve as advisers to the Secretary-General. For any system involving a group of senior advisers there need be no real problem of double echelon. For one thing, the advisers will exercise general supervision and co-ordination over the work of their departments, leaving the details of administration to the responsibility of the Under-Secretaries. Thus the work of the senior advisers will not be primarily related to the day-to-day direction of the various departments. They will be largely concerned with political, diplomatic and ad hoc assignments of a specialized character.

(Committee's proposals)

14. The present form of organization has remained largely unchanged for the last six or seven years. During this period, the membership of the United Nations has nearly doubled, and the scope and character of its activities have developed substantially. These trends will continue. There is no object in making changes for the sake of change, but perhaps arrangements which have met the needs of the past will not best meet those of the future. The Committee accordingly, within the scope and limitation of the preceding considerations, submits the following proposals:

What plan about making modifications?

15. It appears to the Committee that there would be practical advantages in a grouping of activities which would reduce to 7 or 8 the number of senior officials at Headquarters reporting directly to the Secretary-General. This group of senior officials in daily contact with the Secretary-General would act as his advisers in the discharge of the responsibilities vested in him by the Charter.

16. The 7 or 8 senior officials would be in charge of the following areas of activity:

- (a) Political (including missions, and as soon as feasible the political work of the Trusteeship Department);
- (b) Economic and Social (including Technical Assistance, and at the appropriate time, the economic and social activities of the Trusteeship Department);
- (c) Trusteeship (to be merged as soon as feasible with the Political and Economic and Social Departments);
- X (d) Administrative and Budgetary (comprising the Office of the Controller, the Office of Personnel and the Office of General Services);
- (e) Conference Services;
- (f) Office of Legal Affairs, Human Rights, Narcotics;
- (g) Public Information.

17. Several members of the Committee considered that it would be preferable to group the Human Rights and Narcotics Divisions in the Economic and Social Department, with the possibility of separating the economic and social activities into two departments and setting up a separate unit, though closely integrated with the work of the Department, to deal with technical assistance matters.

Fig.

18. The Committee realizes that the grouping of activities suggested within the Political Department could only be adopted if and when the difficulties which at present prevent agreement between the permanent members of the Security Council have been resolved. Until that time, unless the head of the Political Department is not a national of one of the permanent members of the Security Council, the missions and some of the political activities based on resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly should be maintained under the personal responsibility of the Secretary-General.

19. The 7 or 8 departments proposed above could be reduced to 6 or 7 if and when the work of the Trusteeship Department is divided among the Political Department and the Economic and Social Department. The grouping suggested by the Committee is not necessarily in its details the only one which could be adopted. The object has been to suggest that like or related activities be brought together and that the organization of the Departments should reflect the main divisions of United Nations work. The grade of Under-Secretary would be retained within the Departmental structure. The precise number of officials of this grade in each Department would be a matter for consideration.

Unit and
un. general

sic!

20. It is suggested that the heads of the seven or eight Departments should be named Deputy-Secretaries-General. Their status would be between that of the Secretary-General and the present Under-Secretaries, and would bear an appropriate relationship to that of the heads of the specialized agencies.

For these new posts, it will be necessary to seek men of eminence and high attainment, and each would take turns in deputizing for the Secretary-General in his absence.

21. The Chairman of the Technical Assistance Board and the Head of the European Office would also have the status of Deputy-Secretaries-General.

The Deputy Secretaries-General should designate one of their Under-Secretaries to act for them in their absence.

22. The Deputy Secretaries-General would have fixed-term contracts, expiring with the terms of office of the Secretary-General. The date of expiration of the contracts of Under-Secretaries would be suitably spaced, in order to avoid too much dislocation at any particular time, and to ensure reasonable continuity of day-to-day administration. As a general rule, Deputy-Secretaries-General should serve for one term only.

23. It would be open to the Secretary-General to recruit Deputy Secretaries-General from the outside or from existing Under-Secretaries. He would have similar discretion in regard to the recruitment of Under-Secretaries.

Recruitment would be on a wide geographical basis, taking into account the existing political trends. Under the suggested organization, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General would have no substantive responsibilities with respect to those matters vested in the six or seven Departments.

24. The Committee is fully aware of possible dangers of duplication and confusion of lines of authority at the top echelon as pointed out in the report of the past Presidents. However, it believes that by clearly defining as it has done the lines of responsibility and authority, these dangers would

Handwritten note:
Voting

Handwritten note:
This new
S.G.
now

be avoided. It also believes that its proposals would not interfere with the direct relationship existing at present between the accredited representatives of Member States and the Secretary-General and his senior assistants, but, would, on the contrary, assist the Secretary-General in more effectively maintaining contact with the increased number of permanent missions.

25. The organization suggested by the Committee would give the Secretary-General the possibility of using the heads of Departments for consultation on all political and diplomatic questions of concern to the United Nations and for special assignments, while ensuring that the administrative work of the Secretariat at Headquarters would not be disrupted. This would not preclude the possibility of the Secretary-General calling upon highly qualified men of eminence from outside the Secretariat for special ad hoc assignments.

26. The adoption of a reorganization on the lines suggested by the Committee would mean that the other officials of equivalent status to Under-Secretary would no longer report directly to the Secretary-General. Thus, the Directors-General of UNICEF, the Special Fund, the High Commissioner for Refugees, the four Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions would correspond with or report to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Economic and Social Department. The Directors-General of UNRWA and the heads of political missions would report to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Political Department. The reorganization would also involve a review of the organization of existing departments and offices and the fixing of new manning tables. In the fixing of new tables, regard would need to be had to the other proposals in the subsequent sections of the Committee's report.

1/27!