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UN/Secretariat matters 1955

San Francisco statement

16 March

1 letter from D.H. - to Henry Cabot Lodge (Perm. Repr.
of the USA to the UN)

over

16 March 1955

Dear Cabot,

I refer to your letter of 14 March regarding plans for the San Francisco commemoration.

In connexion with the question of admission to the meetings it might be useful to inform you of the situation as it exists now. When Mayor Robinson was here there was discussion regarding this question. Reference was made to the confused situation that existed at the time of the Japanese Peace Conference when, in the first days of the Conference, both the Mayor's office and the State Department had responsibility for admission. The situation was chaotic and was finally resolved by placing the responsibility directly in the hands of the State Department. Mayor Robinson has agreed, for the commemorative meetings, that the United Nations should have the sole responsibility for admission, with the understanding that his office would have a daily quota of tickets, the names covering the quota to be forwarded to our officials at appropriate times in advance of the meetings. We have heard that Governor Knight of California will also wish to have a guaranteed daily quota. The Governor of Nevada has also informed us of a similar desire. The NGO'S have made like requests. In addition we have a very considerable number of individual requests on file in my office. If it becomes known that any considerable number of top people have guaranteed quotas there will no doubt be overlapping requests, with the same individuals applying to several blockholders for admission.

His Excellency
Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr.
Permanent Representative of the United States
of America to the United Nations
2 Park Avenue
New York 16, N. Y.

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The second question in connexion with tickets is raised in your second paragraph. It would seem to be much more desirable to give written assurances to individuals that they would be guaranteed the opportunity to attend meetings, either one or more -- in certain cases all of them -- rather than to distribute the actual tickets for given seats far in advance of June 20th. It happens frequently in General Assembly meetings here that people in the City of New York who apply for tickets the day before do not actually turn up for the meeting the next morning. It is even more probable that persons scattered all over the country, having been given tickets weeks in advance of the meetings, would not turn up, but the ticket having been assigned, it would create difficulties for those who would have the responsibility for filling the Hall. We do not want any considerable number of empty seats when we know that the immediate pressures for attendance will be more than adequate to fill the Hall. My staff is working on procedures to handle this problem.

As for your specific request for a daily quota of 250 tickets, I shall give it my earnest consideration in the hope that your needs may be met quantitatively and in accordance with procedures which will produce the maximum satisfaction.

As for the question raised in your last paragraph regarding the role of NGO's, you may know that the Advisory Committee has definitely cancelled out any role for these organizations and feels that the meetings should be limited to the speeches of representatives of members. The desire of the NGO's, however, for some kind of collaboration in the commemorative meetings has been strong and persistent. In keeping with the position of the Advisory Committee, we have therefore tried to elaborate a policy which would provide some measure of satisfaction for these

organizations. In brief what we have said to them is as follows:

1. The commemorative meetings as outlined by the Advisory Committee would be restricted in participation to members of the United Nations, its organs and agencies;
2. The desire of NGO's for supplementary meetings and events would seem to require as a first step a close co-ordination of their joint efforts so that separate and unrelated programmes do not spring up everywhere in the San Francisco area during this period. I understand that progress has already been made in this direction. The AAUN, the United States Committee for the United Nations, the Women United for the United Nations, the Council on World Affairs and possibly one or two other organizations are working together on a common programme. These efforts are also being co-ordinated between New York and California NGO representatives;
3. That their programmes should be arranged in such a way as to mesh, and not to conflict with the programmes of the United Nations;
4. We have undertaken to present to this group the names of those representatives and members of the Secretariat as it becomes certain that they will attend the San Francisco meetings. The representatives of the group will then contact the representatives and the Secretariat staff whom they might wish to include in their programmes;
5. It has been suggested to them that their joint programme be printed and widely circulated as soon as it is completed. Their programme and our own programme, which should be circulated as well, would then provide the basis of full information to those people in this and other countries who might wish to

attend the meetings.

Of course if these arrangements are not satisfactory to the NGO's, the Advisory Committee may wish to raise the question again as to some other arrangement. I would assume that if the present policy is continued it might be useful, in expediting NGO plans, to circulate the above five point outline to interested NGO leaders.

Very sincerely yours,

Dag Hammarskjold
Secretary-General