

At the first meeting at which it dealt with this question, the Sixth Committee had before it the report of the Advisory Commission and that of the Supervisory Commission. It had also had the advantage of hearing a statement by Dr. Nansen. After a discussion, the Committee came to the decision that it was necessary for the High Commissioner to continue his work for the benefit of the refugees. At the same time, however, the Sixth Committee clearly expressed the opinion that it was desirable that the liquidation of this work should take place as rapidly as possible, the longest period contemplated being ten years.

The Sixth Committee then had to consider what form of administration would lead most surely to this result.

The two points which chiefly engaged its attention were :

(1) To find means of winding up the work in the most practical and rapid manner, while having due regard to the interests of the unhappy refugees ;

(2) To relieve Dr. Nansen in some degree of the enormous burden which he has shouldered for the last eight years on behalf of the League of Nations.

The Sixth Committee came to the conclusion that this result could better be attained by the incorporation of the services in question in the Secretariat than by the constitution of a temporary autonomous organisation in conformity with the Supervisory Commission's suggestion.

The problem having numerous administrative and financial aspects, the Sixth Committee applied to the Fourth Committee. At its meeting of September 17th, the Fourth Committee heard Dr. Nansen and the Rapporteur, and decided to set up a Sub-Committee to make a detailed study of the question. This Sub-Committee's report was submitted on September 19th to the Fourth Committee, which approved it.

This text is as follows :

“In examining the question of the future organisation of the services of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the Sub-Committee noted that the Advisory Committee for Refugees and the Supervisory Commission and the High Commissioner himself, whilst proposing different solutions, had the same end in view : namely, to carry through this organisation in such a way as to enable the High Commissioner's work to be terminated as speedily and satisfactorily as possible.

“The Sub-Committee discussed the two solutions proposed at great length. Both alternatives give rise to numerous administrative and financial questions, most of which call for exhaustive enquiries that could not be undertaken and completed during the present Assembly.

“For these reasons, the Sub-Committee proposes that the High Commissioner's central service should be placed for a period of one year, and as an experiment, under the administrative authority of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations. During this period, all the financial obligations of the High Commissioner and the funds accruing from external sources will be administered and controlled by the competent organs of the League in accordance with the Financial Regulations and the decisions of the Assembly, under conditions which will be subject to examination and approval by the Supervisory Commission. It is moreover understood that this temporary management will not affect the status of the personnel of the High Commissioner.

“The Secretary-General will thus be in a position to consider the whole of the questions relating to this problem, to report to the next Assembly on the experience thus obtained, and to make proposals for the administration of the refugees organisation during the whole period in which it is being wound up.”

The Secretary-General had no objection to the proposed arrangement, but he pointed out that the personnel thus incorporated in the Secretariat must be disregarded if a reckoning be made of the number of the different nationalities on the Secretariat. The Sub-Committee agreed to this view.

The Sixth Committee wishes to express its gratitude to the Fourth Committee and to the Secretary-General for the practical solution which has thus been found. Although in the nature of a compromise, it is not in contradiction to the principles on which the Sixth Committee laid stress with a view to attaining as rapid and effective a final solution as possible. The Committee expresses the hope, however, that it will be possible to arrange for the High Commissioner's staff to share in certain advantages of the Provident Fund.

Lastly, mention should be made of certain recommendations of a special nature submitted by the Advisory Commission for Refugees. Being anxious to improve the lot of refugees unable to work, the Advisory Commission proposes that the High Commissioner should be authorised to utilise part of the funds derived from the sale of the Nansen stamps to help the funds set up to provide relief for the refugees deserving of assistance. The Sixth Committee proposes that the Assembly should grant the High Commissioner the necessary authority.

The Advisory Commission also attaches great importance to the co-operation of the International Organisations of the Red Cross and of various private associations and individuals with the High Commissioner both for the colonisation and relief of refugees unable to work. The Assembly will certainly share this view and will authorise the High Commissioner to make a fresh appeal to these organisations to continue and develop their efforts in order to obtain the largest possible sums for the continuance of the work undertaken by the High Commissioner.

In conclusion, the Sixth Committee has the honour to propose to the Assembly the adoption of the following resolution :

“The Assembly,

“(1) Having examined the reports submitted by the High Commissioner, the Advisory

Commission and the Supervisory Commission on the question of Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees :

“(2) Thanks the High Commissioner and the Advisory Commission for the work accomplished ;

“(3) Decides that the refugees organisation should be wound up within a maximum period of ten years ;

“(4) Recommends that the work of winding-up should be methodically pursued in order that it may be possible subsequently to reduce this period of ten years ;

“(5) Decides that the High Commissioner's central service be placed for a period of one year, and as an experiment, under the administrative authority of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, subject to the condition indicated by the Fourth Committee ;

“(6) Requests the Secretary-General to report to the next Assembly on the experience thus acquired and to make proposals for the administration of the refugees organisation during the whole period in which it is being wound up ;

“(7) Requests the Governments to apply and adopt, either through the national authorities, or with the help of the High Commissioner's agents, the inter-Governmental arrangements of July 5th, 1922 ; May 31st, 1924 ; May 12th, 1926, and June 30th, 1928 ;

“(8) Sees no objection to part of the funds derived from the sale of the Nansen stamps being utilised to add to the funds created for the benefit of deserving refugees ;

“(9) Authorises the High Commissioner to make a fresh appeal to the International Organisations of the Red Cross and to various private associations and individuals to continue and develop their efforts in order to obtain the largest possible sums for the continuation of the work undertaken by the High Commissioner.”

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