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Chairman : Mrs. Ana FIGUEROA (Chile).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Dehousse (Belgium), Vice-Chairman, presided.

Refugees and stateless persons (*continued*)

[Item 30]*

Problems of assistance to refugees : reports of the International Refugee Organization and of the High Commissioner for Refugees (A/1884 (chapter VI), A/1948, A/2011, A/C.3/563, A/C.3/L.199, A/C.3/L.200, A/C.3/L.201) (*continued*)

[Item 31] *

GENERAL DEBATE

1. Mr. ROCHEFORT (France) said that he would have difficulty in replying in ten minutes to the many slanderous allegations which certain representatives had chosen to make. If the Chairman could allow him a little extra time, he would not ask to speak again on the draft resolution submitted by the Byelorussian SSR ; otherwise, he would be obliged to intervene again in the course of the discussion.

2. The CHAIRMAN noted that a distinction should be drawn between the exercise of the right of reply and the right to speak on draft resolutions and amendments.

3. To meet the French representative's request, he asked whether the Committee wished to maintain the decision taken at its 378th meeting to allow each representative only ten minutes for the exercise of his right of reply under rule 114 of the rules of procedure.

The Committee's decision was maintained by 9 votes to 3, with 10 abstentions.

4. Mr. ROCHEFORT (France) said that the French delegation felt it to be necessary to reply to the Soviet allegations because, slanderous and mendacious as they

were, they were intended to buttress the much more serious accusation that France was preparing war, a charge which Mr. Robert Schuman, speaking in the General Assembly (348th plenary meeting) had recently declared to be monstrous and nonsensical. There seemed to be no other way of describing the attacks which had so frequently been made against France, as a country of asylum, as a member of the International Refugee Organization and as an occupying Power ; France had been accused of seeking to perpetuate the problem instead of solving it, of treating refugees like cattle, of detaining them by force, of isolating and starving them. It had been said that IRO was a mere centre of forced labour and recruitment for the armed forces and intelligence services and that France attracted refugees merely in order to obtain cheap labour. It had also been said that persons wishing to return to their countries were arrested at the frontier by the police and never heard of again.

5. He wondered how the countries of Eastern Europe could have so distorted a picture of France. He recalled the details he had furnished¹ regarding the visits of Soviet repatriation missions to the camps, the regular distribution of Soviet newspapers and the weekly broadcasts of messages in favour of repatriation. Those details, which completely demolished the Soviet accusations, had never been challenged in any way.

6. He could have enlarged upon the absurdity of accusations based only on letters and gossip ; he also could have produced written testimony and quoted newspaper articles, had he not had the critical sense indispensable in a country where the press was free and where the newspapers every day published both sides of almost every question.

7. It was an insult to the workers of France to allege that they had lent themselves to the exploitation of foreigners ; no French trade union would tolerate

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourth Session, Third Committee, 258th meeting.*

exploitation so prejudicial to the workers' interests and offensive to their sense of justice and working-class solidarity.

8. If it were really true that it was no more difficult to pass through the "iron curtain" in one direction than in the other, there was nothing to prevent refugees from asking the consulate or embassy of their country of origin to repatriate them instead of having themselves registered as refugees with IRO.

9. He gave some particulars concerning "Operation Samar", the transportation to France of a party of sixty refugees whom the French Government, in co-operation with IRO, had brought from the island of Samar in the Philippines. With the exception of two lepers, all the members of the party had been suffering from tuberculosis. The operation had, of course, been on a very small scale, but it had not been the first of its kind. The sixty new refugees had joined a group that was several thousand strong and consisted of the old, the sick and the incurable. Presumably it was for military purposes that France had given asylum to those old people, and received the cripples to whom IRO had, of course, endeavoured to restore the use of their limbs, merely in order to turn them into soldiers.

10. The lack of understanding shown by the representatives of the countries of Eastern Europe was due to the fact that they did not realize the importance which France attached to freedom. To them everything in Western Europe seemed absurd. They regarded employment as slavery, silence as a sign of terror and the Foreign Legion as forced enlistment.

11. The countries of Western Europe did not claim that they were offering refugees a paradise; they were merely giving them access to a world where good and evil existed side by side but where, on balance, the good outweighed the bad. The refugees did not enjoy perfect happiness but their lot was bearable. The proof was that they stayed in France. That could not be ascribed to constraint or propaganda.

12. The fact that refugees remained in countries other than their own, that their number was steadily growing, could not be attributed to propaganda, for no propaganda was strong enough to banish homesickness. If the refugees remained, it was simply because they were free and the real reproof addressed to France was that it was doing nothing to prevent them from staying.

13. AZMI Bey (Egypt) drew attention to certain signs of ill will, not to say malevolence, which he had observed in the chapter on Egypt in the report *The Refugee in the Post-war World*² published by the United Nations in December 1951.

14. In that document Egypt was represented as a country given over to xenophobia, where foreigners were no longer wanted and where very many foreign refugees had beyond all doubt been refused employment for the sole reason that they were foreigners. Such statements were contrary to the facts; Egypt was a hospitable country and had for years recognized the necessity of associating foreigners in its economic life.

15. The same report indicated that there were 18,000 refugees in Egypt, including 12,000 of Armenian origin, 4,000 Palestinians, and 2,000 from various sources. The truth was that there were no Armenian refugees in Egypt; those placed under that heading in the report were in reality Armenians residing in the country, who had applied for naturalization. As the new law fixed the time limit for the consideration of such applications at twelve months, the status of the "12,000 Armenian refugees" would thus be finally settled within the next six or seven months. The expert assigned to study the situation of the refugees in Egypt seemed to have been guided by the preconceived notion that there existed in Egypt a category of persons classed as refugees and to have refused to bow to the evidence when he had realized that such a category could not be found.

16. Furthermore, the part of the report relating to Egypt was drafted in highly involved terms, with a multitude of impersonal expressions, indirect references and restrictive phrases. The report admitted, for example, that the new social security system applied in Egypt would bear comparison with similar systems in force in Europe, but it added that the system had been in force only nine months, and thus appeared implicitly to reprove Egypt for having been late in embarking upon social reform. Again, the report stated that naturalization cost 30 Egyptian pounds, but that, according to certain unconfirmed statements, as much as five times more was demanded. It was highly irresponsible — indeed it was not honest — to adduce unconfirmed statements in a United Nations document.

17. The United Nations High Commissioner was, he felt sure, in no way responsible for the facts mentioned, but it was to be hoped that, if the Fifth Committee decided to vote the credits for the establishment of branches of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the personnel selected would be of a different calibre from the experts who had been responsible for undertaking the enquiry into the position of refugees in Egypt.

18. Mrs. MARSHALL (Canada) stated that the Canadian Government categorically rejected the unfounded and abusive insinuations which the Byelorussian representative had made (376th meeting) concerning the countries which had received refugees. That representative had alleged that refugees had been deported against their will, and then enrolled in the armed forces or recruited as spies. The members of the Third Committee had thus been asked to believe that a person deported by force to Canada and therefore harbouring only feelings of distrust or of hatred towards his new country could play the part of a soldier or spy. That absurd supposition was indicative of the level of the charges made.

19. The Polish representative had suggested (378th meeting) that immigrants were working in unfavourable conditions in Canada. The Czechoslovak (378th meeting), Ukrainian (378th meeting) and USSR (377th meeting) representatives had made similar statements. As members of the Committee were aware, refugees who emigrated to Canada did so of their own free will, in the hope of finding in that country freedom and improved living conditions. If they were not

² Document A/AC.36/6 (Geneva, December 1951).

satisfied with the conditions they found in Canada, they were entirely free to leave the country at any time.

20. The Canadian delegation was proud to be able to state that thousands of persons had requested asylum in Canada and had found there the freedom and dignity which were the prerogatives of all Canadian citizens.

21. Mrs. ROOSEVELT (United States of America) recalled that as long ago as 1946, when opposing the report of the Third Committee, Mr. Vyshinsky had described as traitors and quislings all refugees who refused repatriation³, whereas the free countries had contended that no one should be compelled to return to his country of origin against his will.

22. The United Nations should make every effort to guarantee man's fundamental right to live where he desired and to decide whether or not he wished to return to his country of origin. She was convinced that, in spite of their desire to emphasize the right of repatriation, the Arab States would not lend their support to a draft resolution the objective of which was to deprive the individual of the right to decide whether he wished to return to his country or not.

23. She was very familiar with the question of the children who had been deported during the Hitler regime and she knew the anguish of the mothers whose children had been taken from them during the Second World War. At the same time she recalled that it had been necessary to establish a special court to protect those children and to provide them with homes in other countries, when it had been discovered that certain applications for the return of children came from persons other than the real parents. Hitler had committed a crime in tearing the children away from their families. Another crime must not be committed by uprooting the children again in order to return them to an environment which was not that described by the applicants. In the case, however, of the Greek children held in countries where the USSR exercised a paramount influence, it could be proved that the parents were still alive and were ready to receive their children, or that their country was ready to care for them, and that it was a free country.

24. The Byelorussian representative had stated that the United States of America was seeking to buy the souls of his people. She would point out that the only countries where an attempt was made to work upon the souls of people were those in which communist ideology reigned, and that the object of the United States of America was to guarantee the freedom of the individual both on the economic and human level and in the field of spiritual values.

25. It was hardly worth while to reply to the accusation that countries which were resettling refugees in their territory were seeking only a supply of cheap labour. The trade unions in the United States of America were sufficiently strong for such a possibility to be immediately ruled out; the trade unions would not permit new-comers to be used as cheap labour in competition with American labour. The newspaper

extracts which the Soviet delegations had quoted were not convincing: in a big country there were, inevitably, isolated individuals whose standard of living was below the average. The refugees had never been represented as cheap labour; efforts might perhaps have been made to convince businessmen that the refugees possessed varied professional qualifications and would represent a valuable contribution. That had been necessary because the United States did not have any urgent need for additional labour and because it was difficult for the Government to obtain an increase in the immigration quotas. The United States of America had nevertheless felt that, for humanitarian reasons, it should admit as large a number of displaced persons as possible.

26. It had also been maintained that the United States of America had sought to recruit displaced persons by every means with the object of using them in the war which the United States was allegedly intending to unleash. She declared that her country had no intention whatever of unleashing any war. It was because the countries of Eastern Europe were steadily increasing their armaments that the United States had been obliged to rearm in order to defend the free world from the peril of aggression and to assist other countries in strengthening their own defences. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was a defensive organization, brought about by the provocative attitude of the Soviet Union. If the USSR and its satellites wanted peace, they would co-operate in the proposed disarmament commission, progressively reduce their armaments and co-operate in the establishment of a system of regulation and inspection which would give all countries the assurance of protection against aggression.

27. Finally, the Byelorussian representative and the representatives of the Eastern European countries had alleged that the occupation authorities in the American zones of Austria and Germany had been refusing to repatriate Soviet citizens who were in refugee camps, preventing them from reading Soviet newspapers or periodicals, and deporting their children overseas. She had got into touch with the United States missions in Bonn and Vienna and had received an assurance that those assertions were entirely false; she intended to issue the information she had received in the form of a Press release.

28. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) said that, in the course of speeches all containing the same baseless allegations, the representatives of the countries of Eastern Europe had called the representatives of the Western European countries assassins, saboteurs, war-mongers and slave-traders. He did not propose to refute the accusations point by point. If the USSR representative and his associates were serious in wishing to suppress the alleged wrongs to which they had referred, they would not have merely read out in a hurried and incomprehensible fashion the names of alleged victims; they would have taken action through the customary diplomatic channels. But their purpose was not redress, it was propaganda.

29. He outlined the reasons why, at the end of the Second World War, the great majority of displaced persons in Europe had refused to be repa-

³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, First part of the first session, Plenary Meetings, 29th meeting.*

triated. Poles who had been in Soviet concentration camps, Latvians who had seen their neighbours deported, Ukrainians who believed in the right to self-determination and, rightly or wrongly, hoped to see their country achieve independence, were afraid to return to homelands which were under the domination of the USSR; they had no guarantee that their lives would be safe. Half the population of the Baltic States had been removed to other parts of the Soviet Union. The small Chechen-Ingush autonomous Republic had been broken up by a decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its Moslem inhabitants deported to the wastes of Siberia and Central Asia. The Western Powers had been unable to agree to the Soviet Government's desire to organize the compulsory repatriation of its nationals. At great cost to themselves, they had set up the International Refugee Organization with a view to helping the largest possible number of those war victims and ensuring their resettlement.

30. The representative of the United Kingdom asked why the Soviet delegation had brought up the subject of refugees each year. It could hardly be because they expected any practical results because they could not hope that refugees enjoying the high standard of living prevailing in other countries would wish to return to the conditions existing in Poland or the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the USSR Government had never gone so far as to make respect for the family one of the principles of its policy; it had not endeavoured to secure the return of the Greek children to their families and it was common knowledge that it had deliberately prevented Soviet wives from living with their British husbands.

31. It must therefore be concluded that the USSR delegation's attitude had its origin in a feeling of shame and humiliation. The USSR could not admit to the world that workers should try to flee from the so-called Soviet paradise, and it must therefore try to persuade the world that they were acting under pressure from foreign Powers. It could not acknowledge without shame that, in spite of all that the communist security police could do, about 2,000 refugees managed to escape to the free countries every month.

32. The representatives of the Eastern European countries imputed to the others the motives which inspired their own governments. They accused them of being slave dealers; but the great concentration camps of forced labour were not in the Western countries; they were in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria.

33. The United Kingdom delegation, which had consistently opposed the attempts of the USSR to abolish IRO and thus to starve the refugees into submission and return, refused for the same reasons to agree to the Byelorussian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.201), which in effect would abolish the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and leave the refugees without protection.

34. Mr. DA COSTA REGO (Brazil) said that the Byelorussian representative's assertions (376th meeting) that Soviet citizens working in Brazil had been paid very low wages and been subjected to ill treatment and

strong pressure to prevent them from returning to their countries, were incorrect; those errors could be rectified by reference to the facts.

35. In the first place, Brazilian undertakings, whether Brazilian or foreign-owned, were not free to fix wage rates; they must conform to the labour and social security laws. Those laws provided, among other things, for a minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, a night differential, workers' profit-sharing, the eight-hour day, a weekly break and paid annual leave, security of employment, medical assistance, old-age pensions, sickness, accident and life insurance, and the right to strike. The system was in effective operation. Only two weeks previously the President of the Republic had signed a decree increasing the minimum wage.

36. Secondly, the entry and departure of foreign workers were controlled by an immigration board. The Brazilian Government, which took a keen interest in the matter because of its close connexion with development, had introduced special measures in favour of immigrants. They were given free subsistence for three days after arrival. They were granted cultivable land in salubrious districts, upon which to found communities, and were exempted from all federal, state or municipal taxes for the first three years. They were allowed free medical assistance until the community was able to meet its own needs. In the first year the Brazilian Government gave them the necessary seed, equipment, agricultural machinery and dairy animals, besides free transport from the railway station or port to the community. That was the manner in which Brazil received its refugees. Not only did it never force them to remain; sometimes it even encouraged the departure of certain refugees whom it was found impossible to assimilate.

37. Mr. HARRY (Australia) endorsed the replies of the United States and United Kingdom representatives to the attacks upon the general attitude of their countries and of Australia to the refugee problem. He felt bound to answer the accusations which the Ukrainian representative (378th meeting), with spurious precision, had made against Australia.

38. According to the Ukrainian representative, 95 per cent of the families of refugees arriving in Australia were separated and lived in miserable conditions. On the contrary most families were accommodated together under good conditions. Mr. Harry explained that refugees were taken to reception centres where they were supplied with the necessary clothing and taught the rudiments of the language. The authorities found work for the head of the family: that did not take long, because there was no unemployment in Australia. In some cases, the head of the family could be accommodated with his family in a house found by the employer or by the Government. If private accommodation could not be found for the family near his place of work, his wife and children were housed in the nearest Government centre. If the worker had to be moved, his family was sent to the centre nearest his place of work. If, in certain cases, that situation involved hardship for the refugee, it was not the fault of the Australian Government's policy, for the latter did its utmost to avoid separating members of a family or at least to make the period of their separation as short as possible.

39. As to housing conditions, he recalled that the representatives both of IRO and of the countries with which Australia had negotiated immigration agreements had found them very satisfactory. It might have been the case that members of some families, in order to be together, had preferred to live in less comfortable accommodation, but they had done so of their own free will and, if they had not yet found the housing conditions they had hoped for in Australia, at least they had found freedom.

40. Mr. PAVLOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt obliged to reply to a series of statements directed against his country and the proposals he had supported.

41. He would not dwell on the New Zealand representative's statement (378th meeting) which was slanderous and contained unprovoked assertions against the Byelorussian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.201) without even attempting to cite a single fact in support.

42. If, as the United States representative had stated, it was true that the United States of America was not preparing a war against the peoples' democracies, he wondered why it had not accepted the USSR proposal that the atomic weapon should be prohibited, and had not agreed that the five major Powers should sign a peace treaty, and why it recruited spies and parachuted them into USSR territory.

43. The United Kingdom representative had been offended by the words used to describe those who were conducting a campaign against the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies. The spies who had been parachuted into the Soviet Union and Romania had, however, been supplied with poison and explosives and had been sent to organize terror in those countries. Such spies could not be considered as refugees.

44. Replying to the Lebanese representative (377th meeting), he pointed out that Armenian refugees had a homeland, namely the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia. In that case, as in others, the USSR was in favour of repatriation as it was the only possible solution for the refugee question.

45. Some had maintained that many refugees refused to return to their countries because they were afraid that they would be persecuted for their anti-Soviet opinions and activities. It was much more probable, however, that those who refused to be repatriated were traitors or criminals, as, for example, the former chief of a Lithuanian committee, whom he mentioned as a case in point. They should be extradited in accordance with international agreements and handed over to their country of origin.

46. Mr. KUSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the New Zealand representative had been unable (378th meeting) to support any of the statements he had made against the Byelorussian draft resolution and had merely obeyed the orders of those who were trying to perpetuate the refugee problem. None of the arguments advanced so far invalidated the contention that rapid repatriation of all refugees was the only possible solution of the problem.

47. Replying to the statements as to the reasons why displaced persons refused to be repatriated, he cited letters from refugees who had returned to the Soviet Union from the United States occupation zone in Germany and had found work and housing without difficulty in the USSR. Soviet citizens who still remained in camps, or who were in a state of slavery in overseas countries, wished to return to their homeland and should be allowed to do so.

48. The French representative had not yet replied to the questions put to him concerning Mr. Zaitzev. Perhaps the truth was that the Samar refugees were simply wounded soldiers from Indo-China.

49. Replying to the Canadian representative, he emphasized that he had not been lacking in logic, for he had always made a distinction between the two types of refugees — those who had been transported by force and were being exploited and those who were traitors to their countries and should have been handed over in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement. He asked for the conviction of the guilty and the repatriation of those detained in exile.

50. He was sorry that the time limit of ten minutes allowed each speaker did not permit him to reply to the Greek representative (378th meeting) concerning the Greek children; he was ready to do so as soon as he had an opportunity.

51. Mr. ALFONZO-RAVARD (Venezuela) said that the allegations made against Venezuela by the Ukrainian representative at the 378th meeting were totally illogical as it was impossible to draw any conclusions from the two cases mentioned. He saw little value in an argument which quoted two or three special cases to describe the situation of the 17,293 refugees received by Venezuela. It was, moreover, unimaginable that cases like those mentioned by the Ukrainian representative should exist in Venezuela, cases in which refugees were subjected to forced labour and received 3 or 4 bolivars a day. He wished to reassure his Ukrainian colleague that forced labour was unknown in Venezuela.

52. The minimum daily wage of unskilled labourers in the oil industry was fixed at 16 bolivars a day, and that of skilled labourers at 33 bolivars. Many special allowances were paid in addition to the sums mentioned. In the oil industry, the leading industry of Venezuela, the average daily wage paid was currently 17.98 bolivars, and social security, housing and other allowances brought the wage up to an average of 49 bolivars (\$ US 15.93) per working day. That was one of the reasons why immigrants came to Venezuela, a rapidly developing country which extended them a cordial welcome.

53. The Ukrainian representative had also mentioned a highly qualified engineer who, it was alleged, had had to accept the most humble tasks in order to earn a living in Caracas. Anyone who had visited Caracas knew that it was a thriving city where there was at the time great activity in the building trade. Engineers were needed there and it was impossible to imagine that any would be unemployed. Foreign engineers naturally had to prove that they were duly qualified, and perhaps

the engineer in question had not complied with that formality.

54. The representative of Venezuela was certain that the 17,293 refugees residing in Venezuela were living under conditions which made them regard it as a new homeland.

55. The CHAIRMAN said that the United States representative had waived her right to a second reply, but that the representatives of Turkey, France, Poland and the Ukrainian SSR had asked to speak. He read rule 114 of the rules of procedure, which, he said, took the matter out of his hands and left the decision to the Committee. He warned the Committee, however, that the debate might drag on forever if every reply was to be countered by another.

56. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) suggested that it would be suitable to limit replies to those made in answer to statements in the general discussion: rule 114 gave the Chairman discretion to that effect.

57. The CHAIRMAN replied that rule 114 read as follows: "...He may, however, accord the right of reply to any member if a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable". Unfortunately it did not rest with the Chairman to pass on the desirability of replies; he was therefore compelled to give the floor to all members who had asked to speak.

58. Mr. VALENZUELA (Chile) said that it was obviously unfair to bar representatives of countries which had not yet intervened in the discussion from speaking; but everyone was acquainted with the stratagem of alluding to new countries in each speech and then speaking again in reply to any rejoinders which those allusions had necessitated, thus turning the discussion into a battle of words. The delegation of Chile therefore proposed the closure of the debate in conformity with rule 116.

59. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had before it a motion for closure; he would allow only two members to speak against it.

60. Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) did not think that the current discussion could be regarded as the continuation of the debate. The debate was closed, all members on the list having spoken. A distinction should be made between delegations asking to reply for the first time and those which wished to reply to a reply.

61. Mr. FRIIS (Denmark) asked what was the situation with regard to the High Commissioner's reply.

62. The CHAIRMAN replied first, that the word "debate" should not be interpreted too strictly and secondly, that the High Commissioner, who was not a member of the Committee, was not affected by the motion for closure. His right of reply was, of course, safeguarded.

63. Mr. PAVLOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Chairman had interpreted rules 114 and 115 incorrectly. Before the Committee could take a decision, the real meaning of rule 114 must be clarified.

After the general debate was closed the Chairman could grant the right of reply to members requesting it. If in those replies attacks were made on States, those States should be able to reply in their turn. The question of the closure of the debate had nothing to do with the right of reply. Replies had been made to statements made in the course of the general discussion, and rule 114 did therefore not apply. Moreover, the Chairman could ask members who had asked to speak not to insist on exercising their right of reply.

64. The CHAIRMAN thought that the USSR representative was mistaken on a number of different matters. It was not rule 115 but rather rule 116 that dealt with the closure of debate. Rule 116 read: "A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate...". Rule 114, it was true, affirmed one of the prerogatives of the Chairman, but rule 116 gave the Committee certain rights. He would therefore allow two members to speak against the motion for closure.

65. Mr. ROCHEFORT (France) thought that it was only fair that delegations which had been insulted for hours on end should be given a little longer to reply, and should be allowed to offer additional explanations if they were insulted again. For example, he would have been glad to be able to deal with the case of Mr. Zaitzev. He had been accused of failing to reply to certain accusations, and had been about to do so. Yet the same delegations which had brought the charges had voted in favour of limiting speakers' time. He took note of that inconsistent attitude.

66. Mr. HARRY (Australia) thought that to accept the motion for closure during the exercise of the right of reply would establish an unfortunate precedent. Any representative, however, could assert that it was undesirable to continue to hear replies, and it then rested with the Chairman under rule 114 to take the necessary decision.

67. The CHAIRMAN repeated that unfortunately rule 114 did not empower him to close the debate.

68. Mr. PAVLOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), on a point of order, said that he was anxious to avoid an undesirable precedent. The general debate was over; the point at issue was the exercise of the right of reply, and the closure was therefore out of order. He urged the Chairman not to insist on his interpretation, which would compel him to move the suspension of the meeting under rule 117.

69. The CHAIRMAN replied that the USSR representative's statement related to a matter which had already been decided. Since there was a difference of opinion, he would put to the vote first the question whether the Chilean proposal was in order, and secondly the motion for closure.

It was decided by 20 votes to 5, with 19 abstentions, that the Chilean proposal was in order.

The motion for closure was adopted by 18 votes to 3, with 20 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.