

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION

WEEKLY SUMMARY NO. 13

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Volume III

The International Week

The Atlantic Pact Finance and Defense Committees met to develop plans for arming the North Atlantic nations. Invitations were extended to the West German Republic and the Saar to join the Council of Europe as associate members. Meanwhile, Italy assumed provisional administration of its former Somaliland colony. In the Human Rights case, the International Court gave its advisory opinion 11-3 (USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia) that a dispute existed between the US-UK and Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria which were obligated by treaty to appoint representatives to a commission.

Results of European Council's Ministers meeting. The recent session of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers in Strasbourg was noteworthy chiefly for its failure to meet the pressing problem of growing friction between the Ministers and the Assembly. Even the positive achievement of a belated formal offer of associate membership to West Germany and the Saar had an anticlimatic flavor coming in the wake of strong German reaction to the ill-timed French-Saar agreements. The anticipated delay in German acceptance of the invitation and the close vote expected in the Bundestag will further weaken the stimulus which German participation in the Council could have given the cause of Western European integration.

Against this one positive action stands the Ministers' negative approach to the problems most directly affecting the future of the Council itself as an instrument for achieving European unity. The problem of the dynamic development of the Council has reduced itself to a struggle for power between the cautious national attitude of the Ministers and the bolder "European" approach of the Consultative Assembly. Assembly impatience with the inaction of the Ministers has crystallized in a proposal by the Assembly's General Affairs Committee for the creation of an Executive Committee composed of representatives of the members and the Assembly empowered to make decisions binding on member governments in a limited field. This attempt to grant the Council actual though limited powers in contrast to its present restricted authority to recommend, met the expected frosty reception in the Committee of

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Ministers. As a sop to Assembly sentiments, the Ministers proposed to create a mixed study committee to determine methods of improving cooperation between the Ministers and the Assembly. As envisaged by the British this committee would be purely advisory and could not even take a vote on problems under discussion. This plan is clearly a minimal concession to Assembly desires and will not succeed in heading off bitter criticism and increasingly insistent demands for a larger voice in the Council's functions when the Assembly next meets.

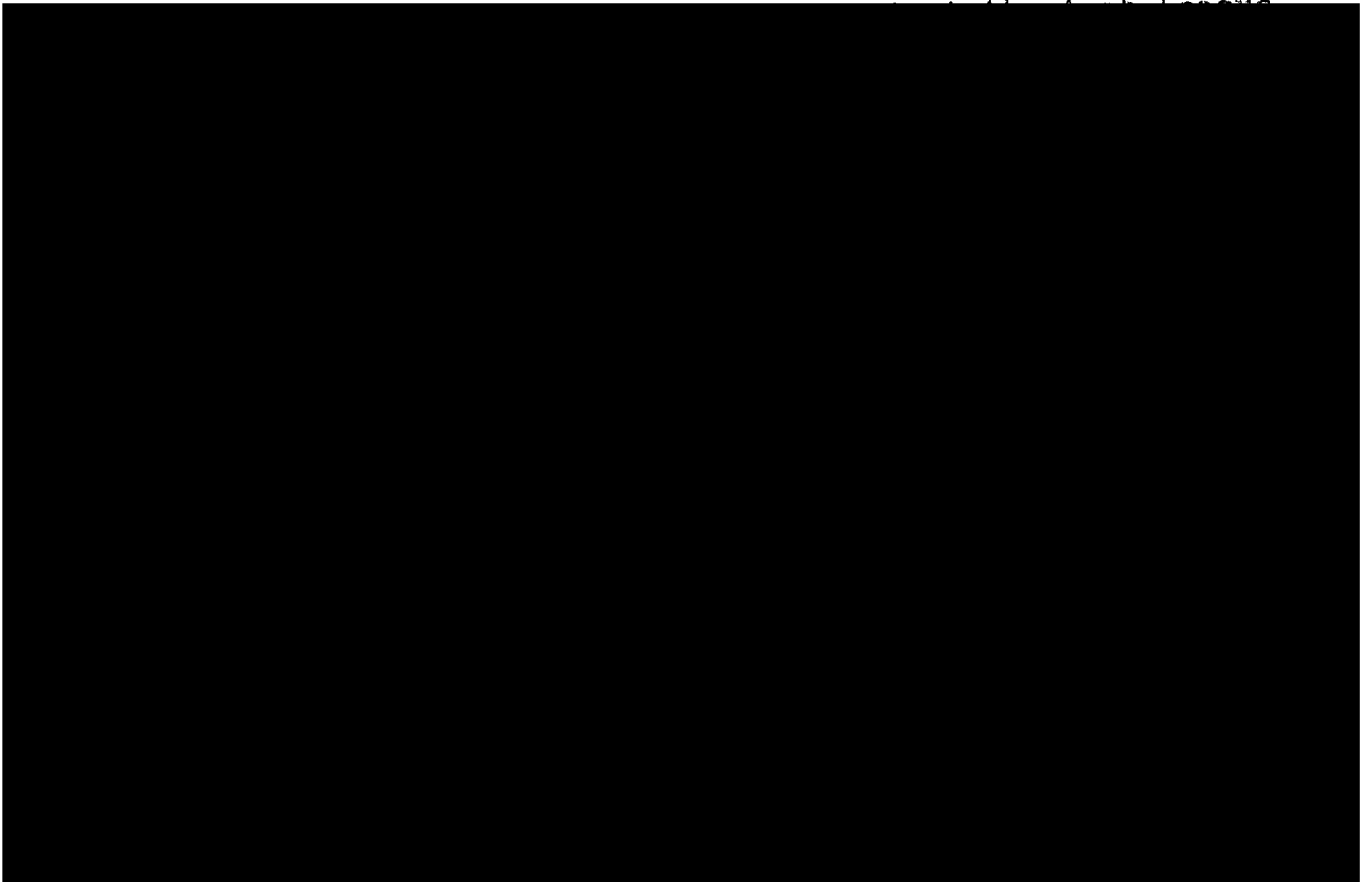
Lie's campaign to restore UN effectiveness. Reflecting concern over the prevalent stagnation at the UN and the continued Soviet boycott, SYC Lie has energetically taken a number of initiatives which he hopes will enable the UN to play a more effective role in reducing East-West tension. He has proposed: (1) a legal formula designed to resolve the impasse over the seating of the Chinese Communists at Lake Success; (2) recourse to Article 28 of the Charter authorizing periodic holding of Security Council meetings with Foreign Ministers sitting; (3) immediate creation of a small UN enforcement unit of two or three divisions. Since the suggestion for holding an effective high level SC meeting presupposes the return of the Soviet delegation, it implicitly calls for prior settlement of the Chinese question, a matter now uppermost in Lie's mind. In advancing these proposals, Lie has received some encouragement from past and present GA Presidents such as Romulo, Evatt and Aranha. It is altogether natural for high UN officials to develop a professional devotion to the organization transcending national viewpoints. This attitude understandably leads to an anxiety to bring pressure on the great powers to resolve their differences. The smaller powers tend to share this outlook in varying degrees. However in the face of the hard realities of the moment, it is unlikely that these proposals will exercise much immediate effect.

Intra-European tariff barriers criticized. As the OEEC nations consider further steps toward trade liberalization, particularly removal of additional quantitative restrictions, the question of tariff barriers as trade obstacles is acquiring increasing prominence. The low tariff countries, led by Belgium and the Netherlands, contend that the beneficial effects of eliminating QR's are largely nullified by the continued high tariff barriers in many OEEC countries (in a few cases these have even been raised to offset the removal of QR's). Several European countries now overhauling their tariff structures seem to be motivated at least partly by protectionist considerations. Therefore the Dutch and Belgians have raised this question both in the OEEC and at the

current GATT Session in Geneva and are calling for unilateral reductions by high tariff countries as a prerequisite to further removal of QR's. At their instance, the OREC will probably play an increasingly direct role in the removal of excessive duties hampering intra-European trade.

ECE effort to promote East-West trade a fiasco. The total failure of the recent ECE Agricultural Committee meeting to produce any constructive results evidently spells the end of recurrent ECE Secretariat hopes of promoting East-West trade through the medium of the Economic Commission for Europe. The Committee was originally established on Eastern European initiative and the Secretariat seized upon vague indications of Soviet interest to hope that it might prove an instrument for reviving East-West trade. However, Soviet and Satellite behaviour at the recent session demonstrate that the USSR is interested in the Committee only as a propaganda forum for the usual attacks on the Marshall Plan and pious plugs for the European small farmer.

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