

REPORT OF THE NEW ZEALAND DELEGATION ON THE FIRST PART OF THE THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD AT PARIS, 21 SEPTEMBER TO 12 DECEMBER 1948

I. INTRODUCTION

I have the honour to present the report of the New Zealand delegation on the work of the first part of the third regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, held at Paris from 21 September to 12 December, 1948.

I shall add little by way of introduction. The purpose of the report is to give a coherent account of the work of the session, and to reproduce adequately the speeches made and votes cast by the representatives of New Zealand. It is not a short document, nor could it be such if it is to describe, however succinctly, twelve weeks of intensive labour by the Assembly with its numerous committees and sub-committees.

I, myself, was able to be in Paris for only about half of the session. It would not be fair to contrast the harmonious discussions of the Commonwealth meeting in London with the disputatious atmosphere of the Palais de Chaillot; but coming from one to the other I could not but note the difference. It is true that conflicts of interest, with the bitterness which they engender, cannot be kept away from the United Nations: it is because of conflicts that the United Nations was created. But certain principles are laid down in the Charter which, if observed, would greatly circumscribe the area of international disputes. Unfortunately, some members of the United Nations fall far short of their duty of using the United Nations as a "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations."

Not being subject to the veto, the Assembly was able, in spite of the unfavourable atmosphere, to reach a large number of decisions, some of importance. The outvoted minority, however, used every kind of delaying tactic to prevent decisions, and this was the chief cause of the excessive length of the session. The freedom of the Assembly to discuss all matters within the field of the Charter is a foundation stone of the United Nations; and at San Francisco the New Zealand delegation played no small part in making it secure. But this freedom does not require that the Assembly should patiently accept the constant repetition by some delegations of speeches several hours in length on the same item of the agenda; the abuse of points of order; the harrying