SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

FACT-FINDING SUB-COMMITTEE

Draft Report, adopted by the Sub-Committee on 11 May 1946, concerning paragraph (e) of the terms of reference (E/REF/FACT-FINDING/1), that is to say corresponding situations in the Far East in connection with matters falling within paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the terms of reference.

The Sub-Committee has studied the Far Eastern aspect of the problem of refugees and displaced persons within the terms of reference noted above, and has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Information concerning refugees and displaced persons in the Far East is less complete and detailed than that relating to Europe. The Sub-Committee was furnished with available data by U.N.R.R.A., which information was supplemented by the representatives of China, the United Kingdom and of the I.G.C. The Sub-Committee examined this information and found that a substantial discrepancy existed between the number of Chinese now in China whose pre-war residence was outside of China, as submitted by U.N.R.R.A. on the one hand, and the figure submitted by the Chinese Government on the other hand. The first of these figures shown in January 1946 was approximately 700,000; the second supplied by the Chinese authorities on 7 May 1946 amounts to 1,320,000.

The difference may be explained by the fact that the latter figure includes an unknown number of persons who have not yet made known their intention to return to the country of pre-war residence. The Sub-Committee, with the larger figure in mind, has reached the tentative conclusion that the number of refugees and displaced persons in the Far East, is roughly 2,200,000. This number includes 200,000 refugees and displaced persons of European
origin, among them being 107,000 Dutch from the Netherlands East
Indies and 75,000 Nansen refugees of Russian origin.

2. Since the foregoing statistics are admittedly incomplete, the
Sub-Committee decided to propose to the Committee that the
Committee's report to the Economic and Social Council should
include the request that additional information be collected from
interested governments and organizations, so that these statistics
might be completed so far as possible. A similar suggestion will,
in fact, probably be made with respect to all information con-
cerning displaced persons and refugees, but it is particularly
appropriate in connection with the Far East.

3. The war having come to an end in the Far East later than in
Europe, obviously the organization of relief and other assistance
to displaced persons and refugees in the Far East has not
progressed to the same extent as in Europe. Therefore U.N.R.R.A's
activities in the Far East may continue after the work in Europe
has ceased.

4. There are in the Far East a number of serious obstacles to
speedy repatriation to be taken into account, notably lack of
adequate transport, particularly shipping. Possibilities of air
transport might well be investigated.

5. Refugees and displaced persons in the Far East, with the
exception of a small number, are anxious to return to their
countries of nationality or place of residence before the war.
One of the most important groups is composed of the Chinese whose
pre-war residence was, amongst other places, in Indo-China, Burma,
Malaya, Siam, the Netherlands East Indies, the Philippines and
Hong-Kong (see paragraph 1).

6. The Sub-Committee noted the fact, put forward by the Delegate
for China, that the problem of refugees and displaced persons
mentioned in paragraph 5 could not be solved through protection and financial support accorded them by the Chinese Government alone. The refugees and displaced persons in question require other forms of assistance or facilities which the new international body should be prepared to offer.

With these factors in mind, the Sub-Committee expressed the hope that the various governments concerned will be willing to facilitate the return to the places of former residence of all such persons who produce the requisite evidence; furthermore, that this will be done without any new restrictions on re-admission being imposed. The Sub-Committee also hoped that when these Chinese return to their pre-war residence, they will be welcomed by the governments concerned and that they will be enabled to resume their former occupation without delay.

The Sub-Committee recommends also that the new international body should give attention to the solution of the problem of the Chinese refugees and displaced persons from overseas.