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COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON CARTOGRAPHY
SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York,
on Thursday, 24 March 1949, at 2.30 p.m.

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Discussion of the organization of international co-operation for achieving that objective. (Cartography /W.7)

Chairman: Mr. R. H. RANDALL

Consulting Experts:

Mr. R. L. BROWN
Mr. C. LEITE DE CASTRO
Mr. W. SCHERMERHORN
Mr. R. VERLAINE

Expert from Government of Brazil:

Mr. A. H. de MATTOS

Representatives from Specialized Agencies:

Mr. S. V. ARNALDO United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization
Mr. E. R. L. PEAKE International Civil Aviation Organization

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Representatives from Inter-governmental organizations:

Mr. C. L. NICHOLS International Hydrographic Bureau
Mr. SIMONPIETRI Pan American Institute of Geography and History

Representatives from International Non-governmental organizations:

Mr. H. W. HEMPLE International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics
International Council of Scientific Unions
International Federation of Surveyors
Mr. O. S. READING International Society of Photogrammetry
Mr. M. S. WRIGHT American Congress on Surveying and Mapping

Secretariat:

Mr. G. DURAN Chief of the Cultural Activities Section
Mr. T. L. TCHANG Secretary of the Committee

CONSIDERATION OF HOW INTEREST IN AND REALIZATION OF THE NEED FOR A
GEODETTIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE WORLD SHOULD BE STIMULATED

DISCUSSION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR
ACHIEVING THAT OBJECTIVE (Cartography/W.7)

The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to a publication by the International American Statistical Institute, "Geodesy and Cartography for Census Purposes in Latin America", a survey of background material for the 1950 census. A copy was available to members of the Committee.

He then proposed that discussion should be opened on items III and VI of the project outlined by Mr. Schermerhorn (Cartography/W.7).

In reply to a question from Mr. SIMONPIETRI (Pan American Institute of Geography and History), Mr. DURAN (Secretariat) described the manner in which the reports of expert committees were usually treated. The report submitted by the present Committee to the Secretary-General ordinarily would be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council and the latter would probably consider it. All documents submitted to the Council were sent to the Governments of Member States. In that particular case, copies might be forwarded to individuals in those Governments particularly interested in cartography.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN pointed out that, for drafting purposes, the report should be regarded as intended to be read by non-experts.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN said that since the actual work of surveying and compiling the map could only be done by the people living in the particular area, namely, the agents of individual governments, the United Nations should establish a body to stimulate those governments to carry out the work and should also provide a system for training such agents.

Mr. WRIGHT (American Congress on Surveying and Mapping) asked whether there was some kind of committee on natural resources already established within the United Nations.

Mr. DURAN (Secretariat) explained that a conference would be held in August 1949 on utilization and conservation of natural resources. There were also the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on economic development of under-developed areas. Other current and planned events, and in particular the 1950 census, most opportunely lent weight to the argument that adequate cartographic services were now essential to international activity.

The CHAIRMAN added that the Committee should first define the cartographical task and then act through suitable organs to stimulate individual governments to carry out the work.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN said that there were already many examples of nationals of one State being trained in the scientific schools of another, in both commercial and governmental interest. There was a course in photogrammetry in the University of Zurich, for instance, to which students went from many countries of Europe. Perhaps some such centres might be established to deal with the present problem, on the same principle of serving both commercial and governmental interests. The United Nations would co-ordinate the training, encourage States to send students to the courses, and arrange exchanges of technicians, etc.

Mr. BROWN suggested that a forum where representatives of the various States could exchange ideas on cartography, compare results and learn by the achievements of others would be the best way to stimulate interest in the undertaking. The obvious place for such a forum would be the focal point of a region, and he therefore endorsed the suggestion that the Committee should include in its report a recommendation that the world should be divided into regions for cartographic purposes. Such regions

/were already

were already sufficiently clearly defined. The Baltic Geodetic Commission, for example, might be the focal point for the Northern European region. The Mediterranean region seemed already a cartographical unit while community of interests among the Arab States would appear to draw the Middle-Eastern region together. A meeting of governmental representatives annually or every two years would probably suffice for regional cartographic purposes.

Mr. SIMONPIETRI suggested that various regional technical bodies already in existence, such as the Baltic Geodetic Commission and the Mediterranean Commission for the Exploration of the Sea, might act as focal points.

Following a suggestion by the CHAIRMAN that the Committee should define the functions to be carried out by the regional body before deciding upon any definite organization to assume those functions, Mr. BROWN said that the regional body would be required only to co-ordinate programmes and maps and organize the meetings. He thought it important that the regions should not be definitely delineated; if the Committee indicated the focal point, he believed that States would group themselves into suitable regions.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN pointed out that, if the regional organization was to be successful it would be wisest to establish it on lines parallel to the existing political regions. In the Western Union, for example, there was a common cartographical interest. Where no suitable political group existed, a determined initiative by one State would stimulate others to follow its lead. He emphasized that the Committee should not try to delineate regions, but should leave them to grow up. He considered that much duplication of work would be avoided by the regional co-ordination of scientific work, both research and practical, without losing the valuable stimulus of competition. There were many examples of successful co-ordination in various scientific fields, such as on isostatic reductions and time-signals for longitude and latitude observations, which argued for the success of such a system as applied to cartography.

Summarizing the discussion, the CHAIRMAN said that the Committee agreed that it was strongly to be recommended that a world organization

should stimulate and assist States to survey and map their own areas. It agreed, further, that the world organization should act through regional meetings, for which the world organization should send out the initial invitations. The meeting places should be selected by the Committee. They might be such cities as Capetown, Paris or Rome, Cairo, and Manila, for the various natural regions of the world.

Mr. BROWN pointed out that membership in one group would not preclude membership in a neighbouring association.

Mr. WRIGHT (ACSM) stressed the importance of educating the public in the need of, and uses for, maps and charts.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN agreed with Mr. Wright. It was vitally important to develop a proper understanding of the value of maps. Unless governments could be convinced of the need for furthering the science of cartography, the proposed regional meetings might never be held.

Mr. READING (International Society of Photogrammetry) suggested that in order to stimulate the interest of governments in cartography, international organizations such as the United Nations or the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development might insist upon the compiling of satisfactory topographic maps as a prerequisite to the approving of projected development programmes.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that certain expenses would be involved in the holding of conferences. He thought, however, that the participating nations would be willing to defray most of the expenses entailed. The United Nations might assume the expense of preparing the reports of the meetings.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN would prefer to have a percentage of the costs of the regional meetings met by the United Nations. That arrangement would emphasize the relationship between the international organization and the regional bodies. He supported the idea that a yearbook on the activities of the regional organizations should be prepared by a permanent United Nations committee on cartography.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN reviewed the organization of the first inter-American conference on cartography. That experience had shown that once a project was started, member governments were happy to co-operate. He therefore did not feel that the financing of the proposed regional meetings would prove to be a problem.

Mr. BROWN pointed out that in principle the regional organizations should have a maximum of autonomy. The United Nations might confine itself to inviting nations to provide necessary information in a certain form to be disseminated by the world organization.

The CHAIRMAN thought that in the field of cartography the main function of the United Nations would be to initiate the projected regional meetings and then to support their activities by disseminating the information they prepared.

Mr. VERLAINE suggested that the cartographic organizations should be set up in much the same way as regional organizations needing maps. There seemed to be a definite trend towards expanding regional approaches into broader, international concepts. The importance of that tendency and the role of the United Nations in its development should not be overlooked. In that connexion one of the United Nations' most important functions would be to co-ordinate the needs and integrate the activities of the nations comprising the regional groups. He would like to have some information from the Secretariat concerning the relationship between the Economic and Social Council and its Commissions.

Mr. DURAN (Secretariat) explained that while the functional Commissions operated on a world-wide basis, the Economic and Social Council had established regional economic Commissions to handle problems which had to be considered from a regional point of view. The Council supervised the work of the Commissions and co-ordinated the activities of the specialized agencies. There was a constant exchange of information between the various organs and detailed reports were submitted at regular intervals upon which the Council could make recommendations. Furthermore the specialized agencies could propose items for the Council's agenda. In turn, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination discussed items of interest to both the specialized agencies and the United Nations and in that way, effective co-ordination of the activities of the various organizations was achieved.

/Acting on

Acting on the premise that regional meetings would be called, the CHAIRMAN asked whether, in the opinion of the Committee, representatives of international organizations such as IHB and ICAO should be invited to attend.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN thought that the work of those organizations would be closely connected with that of the proposed regional associations and that they should be invited to participate.

The CHAIRMAN considered that representatives of IHB, IUGG and ICAO could represent their organizations as observers, but would not be under the obligation to submit their organizations to approval of anything transpiring at the meetings.

Mr. HEMPLE (International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, International Council of Scientific Unions) pointed out that the technical standards and specifications set up by IUGG would be of immense value to the regional organizations.

Mr. NICHOLS (International Hydrographic Bureau) said that while IHB was interested in the proposed regional meetings, it nevertheless would not wish to attend the meetings because it did not feel that it could afford to participate in the annual conferences. Furthermore IHB would not favour the organization of a hydrographic section within the regional association, as it might tend to duplicate the work of IHB.

The CHAIRMAN thought that since in many cases the regional hydrographer would also be the representative of IHB, attendance at the meetings would not prove too heavy a financial burden on that organization.

Mr. BROWN stated that it would be of great value for cartographers to know the cartographic needs and interests of hydrography.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN agreed that no separate hydrographic bureau should be set up within the regional organizations. He thought, however, that the relations of IHB and the proposed organizations might be modeled on the existing association between PAIGH and IHB.

Mr. SIMONPIETRI (PAIGH) explained that the PAIGH committee on hydrography had been formed to show member nations the benefits they could derive from such an association. Two of those members had later

/joined

joined IEB. Great care had been taken moreover to co-ordinate the work of the committee on hydrography with that of IHB, and the relations between the two organizations had been most cordial and satisfactory.

Mr. Simonpietri pointed out that in the interests of producing better maps, the co-operation of hydrographers was indispensable.

Mr. NICHOLS (IEB) stressed the desire of his organization to promote co-ordination of cartographic activity but added that it preferred to remain independent of any formal ties with other international organizations.

Mr. SCHERMERHORN pointed out that wide participation in the work of the regional meetings would permit the local representatives of IHB to attend not only meetings of its own organization, but also conferences of the regional organizations.

The CHAIRMAN thought it might be wise to limit the inclusion of hydrography to the agenda of meetings in those regions where little work had been done on hydrographic charts. Successful existing activities should certainly not be duplicated.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.