

In spite of the opposition of the Eastern European States, who claimed that the matter was "entirely within the realm of domestic jurisdiction" and that the inclusion of this item was an attempt to use the United Nations "as a tool for intervention in the peoples' democracies," the Assembly by 30 votes (N.Z.) to 7 with 20 abstentions decided to admit the item to the agenda.

The *ad hoc* Political Committee devoted eight meetings to a study of this question. At the outset the representative of *Australia* proposed that Hungary and Bulgaria should be invited to participate without vote in the discussions, and this proposal was adopted by the Committee. These two countries, however, refused to send representatives, claiming that the action of the Assembly in taking up the matter was a flagrant violation of the Charter since it was an unlawful intervention in internal affairs.

The general debate was opened by a statement from Mr Costa du Rels (*Bolivia*), who confined himself mainly to the Mindszenty case. He declared that the case was a symbol of a most spectacular violation of human rights.

Cardinal Mindszenty was a Hungarian patriot and anti-fascist, but because his political views were not the same as those of the Hungarian Government the latter had attempted to brand him as a fascist and a common criminal. The activities of the Cardinal had been confined to ministering to his flock and safeguarding freedom of conscience and expression, but the police of the Hungarian People's Government had tried to "separate the prelate from the man in order to heap upon the latter charges falling within the scope of the penal code rather than in the realm of politics." The "People's Tribunal" which had judged the Cardinal had clearly been not a judicial organ but a political body, and the Cardinal's "confession" of guilt of non-existent crimes had been wrung from the accused by physical and psychological tortures worse than those of the Middle Ages. In Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania, where freedom of the press and of religion had been suppressed under conditions of terror, there were occurring the greatest possible violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms which it was the duty of the United Nations zealously to preserve.

The delegations of *Cuba* and other members of the Committee supported Mr Costa du Rel's appraisal of the case, but the representatives of the *Eastern European* States challenged it strongly. They claimed that the trials of Cardinal Mindszenty and the Bulgarian pastors had not had the anti-religious character attributed to them and that the religious activities of the accused had not been in any way at issue. Cardinal Mindszenty had been tried solely for his crimes just as any Hungarian citizen would be. The Cardinal, said the delegate of *Poland*, had been represented by the Anglo-American press as a martyr and hero of democracy, and yet he had praised the heroism of Japanese soldiers and aviators and had