

Poland, Soviet Union, United States, and Venezuela, to complete the existing draft and to submit it, together with the recommendation of the Commission of Human Rights thereon, to the seventh session. The Commission of Human Rights at its third session did not discuss the report of the *ad hoc* committee in detail, but expressed the opinion that it represented an appropriate basis for decisive action by the Council and the Assembly during their coming sessions.

The Council was likewise unable to discuss the *ad hoc* committee's report at its seventh session, but an opportunity was given to members to make statements. The New Zealand representative emphasized that the problem of genocide could not be isolated from the historical, social, and economic backgrounds of the countries in which acts of genocide take place. He suggested that a realistic approach to the problem required the removal of those insecurities which breed fear and hate and lead finally to complete disregard for human life. The New Zealand delegation doubted whether the Convention was the most appropriate answer to the problem of genocide, but would do all it could to make the Convention as effective as possible.

This statement formed the basis of the New Zealand delegation's attitude to the Convention when it was discussed by the General Assembly. The delegation gave its strong support to the objectives of the draft Convention, and at the same time sought to ensure that it became a realistic document, including only generally acceptable principles and operating within clearly defined and attainable limits.

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,* as finally adopted by a unanimous vote of the General Assembly, makes genocide a crime under international law. For the purposes of the Convention, genocide is any one of a number of acts "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such. . . .". Of the five specific acts enumerated, the first is that of killing members of the group. The definition covers what is known as "physical genocide," and not the less concrete concept of "cultural genocide." This last, defined as "any deliberate act committed with the intent to destroy the language, religion or culture of a national, racial or religious group" was rejected by the Sixth Committee in the face of strong support from the Eastern European States. There was some controversy as to whether or not "political" groups should be included. Division of opinion in the Committee led to their omission.

The question whether the Convention should provide for some form of international criminal tribunal to punish acts of genocide was also considered. Although the present text of the Convention

* The report of New Zealand delegation on the first part of the third regular session of the Assembly (E.A. Publication No. 75) reproduces the full text (Appendix III).