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THIRD COMMITTEE, 425th

MEETING

Monday, 27 October 1952, at 3 p.m.

Headquarters, New York

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Chairman: Mr. S. Amjad ALI (Pakistan).

Freedom of information (*continued*): (a) Problems of freedom of information, including the study of the draft convention on freedom of information (A/AC.42/7, A/2172, chapter V, section VI, A/2181, A/C.3/L.239, A/C.3/L.242/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.243, A/C.3/L.244, A/C.3/L.252 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.255, A/C.3/L.256) (*continued*)

[Item 29 (a)]*

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. PAZHAWAK (Afghanistan) intended to confine himself to a general statement dealing with only two points, the need for the adoption of a covenant on freedom of information and the need to draft it at the current session of the General Assembly. He would speak on other aspects of the matter at a later stage, if necessary.

2. There was no need to retrace the regrettable history of the question; the Committee was well acquainted with the existing situation and with the reasons for it and was well aware how many steps had been taken contrary to the wishes of the majority in a direction which led to no progress whatsoever. At the sixth session he had stated that selfish political interests had opposed the adoption of the draft convention, that the major Powers were responsible for the situation and that if they did not change their attitude, the convention would certainly have no more chance of being adopted unanimously at the seventh session than at the preceding sessions. At the seventh and current session some delegations had contested the necessity of adopting a convention on freedom of information, or, in other words, had opposed something which the United Nations had been trying for several years to achieve

and which they themselves had championed when it had suited their interests.

3. He wished to comment briefly on the statement made by the United States representative (423rd meeting), whose good intentions he did not doubt, because it was most typical of the opposition view and warranted detailed analysis.

4. That representative had supported the Swedish representative, who obviously thought that the convention on freedom of information would be a convention making it possible to prevent the dissemination of information. Even if the existing text of the convention was likely to do so, it was still in the draft stage, and those two representatives were surely capable of improving it so that it would really safeguard freedom of information.

5. In the United States representative's opinion, international agreements were not a means of creating the desired conditions, at least at that time. It was impossible to conceive of any other means by which an international organization could accomplish anything worth while except by reaching agreement and embodying that agreement in some sort of international instrument. Legal instruments could not solve problems, but, without them, there was no way for an international organization to establish any principle. If the representative of the United States thought conventions useless, he was obviously attacking the very principle of unity which had brought together sixty Member States in the United Nations. If he thought that a convention on that particular point would not promote the desired conditions at that time, he should note the fact that international conventions were more than ever needed in times of disagreement and difficulty. A convention on freedom of information likely to change existing bad conditions into more favourable ones through understanding among governments and, what

* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

was more important, among peoples, seemed especially necessary at a time when the world had embarked upon an era of propaganda and in which the world Press had become an extremely dangerous weapon.

6. The United States representative had said that his first aim was security and that was his reason for thinking that the convention should not be adopted. The proponents of the convention had the same aim, but they believed that instrument to be essential.

7. The United States representative believed that the peoples of the free world differed on many points and should try to understand one another better. He should therefore perceive that if the United States of America, with the powerful media of information at its disposal, had fears, the smaller countries had even stronger grounds for fear and had reason for apprehension from several sides at once. The USSR representative had stated, at the 424th meeting, that the situation differed in his country; that might well be in so far as the USSR policy towards the Western bloc was concerned. But the situation of the small neutral countries was such that to refrain from taking sides and to desire only peace and justice seemed to be a crime.

8. The United States representative had acknowledged that complete freedom of information could lead to abuse in the United States of America, as elsewhere. Mr. Pazhwak agreed with what the representative of Egypt had said in that connexion (423rd meeting).

9. He had been extremely surprised to hear the United States representative welcome the appointment of the Rapporteur by the Economic and Social Council as a first step in the direction he had mentioned, whereas it had actually been a last step, intended to defer the study of a matter just when it was approaching its fruition. Even assuming that conventions were useless, it might be asked why work to which the United Nations had devoted several years should be discontinued and should be nullified at the last moment. The convention, when completed, would not be imposed on those who were unwilling to accede to it or did not need it, but it might be asked why obstacles should be put in the way of those who wished it to be adopted. The United States representative, a journalist himself, should concern himself with the needs of his colleagues' countries, and not regard his own interests alone.

10. The work of the Rapporteur appointed by the Economic and Social Council would not be wholly useless, but, in his opinion, the idea should have come up at the proper time, at the beginning of the Third Committee's work. The essence of the Rapporteur's work was to collect the views of governments, organizations and journalists. That work had in fact already been done since the United Nations had first begun examining the question of freedom of information.

11. The United States representative had referred to the possibility of using technical assistance to improve the information media available to the under-developed countries. That was a very important point; it affected the economic aspect, which had been studied in less detail than the others. As a representative of a small country, he took a special interest in the matter and whole-heartedly agreed with the statement made by the representative of Egypt: technical assistance in the

United Nations meant the assistance that the United Nations should extend to the under-developed countries; undoubtedly the United States representative had meant the same thing. The possibility of such assistance depended first of all on an agreement among the Member States on freedom of information, in the absence of which such assistance would have no reasonable basis. The United States representative's suggestion proved once again that the delegations which needed an international agreement in the form of a convention were in the right. The smaller countries could not accept assistance without prior agreement nor find good grounds for obtaining it.

12. A security clause based on the absolute right of States to nationalize foreign enterprises and to regard such a procedure as a normal measure for safeguarding their national rights and interests should be included in the draft convention.

13. Finally, the United States representative had expressed the fear that the right of correction might become an instrument of propaganda. The Afghan delegation, which was submitting a proposal on the right of reply and correction, believed that the fear that a principle might be abused could not be adduced as an argument against it. What was required was agreement on the means to make such fears baseless; he agreed with many of the ideas on that subject expressed by the representative of France at the 424th meeting.

14. Turning to what the Third Committee should do, he explained that his view was based to some extent on the situation of his own country, which had not been represented in any of the groups, committees or commissions in which the draft conventions had been debated, so that the General Assembly was the only forum in which it could state its views. That did not mean that his country did not respect the decisions taken by the bodies which had studied the question; but in certain matters he felt that only the body with supreme authority, in which the largest number of opinions were represented, could arrive at a satisfactory decision. Thus, the main debate on the substance of the draft convention on freedom of information could take place only in the Third Committee. Even if a committee or commission set up for that purpose succeeded in drafting a text, the Third Committee could not adopt that text without exhaustive study. It seemed to him that the Committee could save time, work and money by beginning such a study immediately. It was true that some aspects of the task would be better suited to consideration by a smaller group; but there was a difference between having certain passages of the text redrafted by a small group selected from among the members of the Third Committee and having the substance of the text studied by a small group appointed outside the Third Committee. The basic work had already been done, and the General Assembly could finish the task remaining before it in one session, especially if it recognized the importance of the question of freedom of information and gave it the proper priority. Throughout the current session the General Assembly and the Third Committee should concentrate their attention on a few of the most important items on the agenda and settle their fate, rather than study all the items in an incomplete fashion and then

refer them to later sessions. The Third Committee should begin detailed consideration of the draft convention without further delay; and if the majority of the members supported that view, the Afghan delegation would appeal to all to co-operate in the task before them.

15. If that view did not prevail, his delegation would be forced to await the submission of other suggestions; but in judging such suggestions it would be guided by the principle that it could not accept any procedure which involved consideration of the draft convention by a smaller group prior to consideration by the Third Committee. The only other solution his delegation could accept would be the setting up of a more representative body which would study the draft convention in such a way as to obviate any dangers likely to delay its completion or restrict its universal character, and thus render it acceptable not only to governments but also to journalists throughout the world. By that the Afghan delegation meant a special conference at which representatives of the Member States would draft a convention on the basis of the work done by the United Nations, with the assistance of the specialized agencies and in the presence of observers from the non-governmental organizations and Press agencies, as well as from the non-Member States.

16. Mr. ULLRICH (Czechoslovakia) observed that the results obtained in the field of freedom of information were disproportionate to the amount of time the United Nations had devoted to the problem. That might be because some delegations approached the matter from too technical a point of view, while others approached it strictly from a point of view of propaganda.

17. In his delegation's opinion, a solution should be sought not in a spirit of individualism, but in accordance with the principles of the Charter and of General Assembly resolution 110 (II). The conflict between freedom of information and fascist propaganda and war-mongering was closely linked to the question of international peace and co-operation. Therefore any convention on freedom of information should include provisions prohibiting incitement to war, interference in the domestic affairs of States, lies and slander; without such provisions, the convention would be incomplete and unacceptable to the Czechoslovak delegation.

18. That attitude was not shared by other countries, in particular the United States of America, which had made no secret of its plans of aggression, plans which had, indeed, often been confirmed in the statements of its representatives. In the field of information those plans included the financing of radio broadcasting stations such as "Radio Free Europe", which encouraged the formation of clandestine groups and issued instructions for the publication of clandestine newspapers. The American Press, which was controlled by monopolies, published distorted news about American troops in Korea and about the bacterial warfare being waged against women and children, and it remained silent concerning the replies of the North Korean authorities on the subject of prisoners of war. Those facts proved that the United States favoured freedom of information only in so far as it served its own interests and was compatible with its war preparations.

19. The capitalist Press also tried to make out that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was a defensive organization, although it had been set up on the basis of principles which were inconsistent with membership of the United Nations. It also systematically refrained from giving any information about the struggle of the Arab peoples against France and the efforts of the Malay people to gain independence. Czechoslovakia, which had for centuries fought for its freedom, protested against any efforts to stifle the voice of peoples who aspired to liberty. Such matters constituted an urgent problem which must be solved without delay. No longer should Press and radio be permitted to disseminate propaganda in favour of the nazi and fascist ideology and to praise weapons of mass destruction, thus acting counter to the aims of the Charter of the United Nations and the interests of mankind. Freedom of information must not be interpreted as freedom to spread hate among nations. Europe had not forgotten Hitler's propaganda in favour of war and inter-racial hostility. The people of Czechoslovakia had not forgotten the horrors of the nazi occupation and for that reason were fighting for international peace and harmony.

20. Consequently, Czechoslovakia had adopted a law prohibiting war-mongering and the dissemination of nazi and fascist propaganda. It had built up a socialist society, the internal policy of which was based upon a five-year plan designed to raise the economic, social and cultural level of the country. Within that society, the Press, free from the influence of capitalists and war-mongers, worked in the interests of reconstruction and the aims of the United Nations.

21. Despite General Assembly resolution 110 (II), condemning inciters to war, the situation had deteriorated since the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty. Freedom of information, which ought to be a means of defending the peace, had become a means of aggression and an instrument of imperialist policy. General Assembly resolution 110 (II), which should be the basis of world policy in the field of freedom of information, was not being respected, and the Assembly should demand its immediate implementation. For that reason, the delegation of Czechoslovakia welcomed the USSR draft resolution (A/C.3/L.255), which was based on the terms of that resolution. Czechoslovakia was convinced that the nations could live together in peace if they really wished to co-operate, that only the free exchange of information could strengthen peaceful relations among nations, and that the United Nations, created for the preservation of peace, should recognize the prime importance of that aspect of the problem of freedom of information.

22. Mr. GOROSTIZA (Mexico) declared that freedom of information was one of the most important questions facing the international community. It had occupied the attention of the General Assembly since the beginning of the latter's work, and the delegation of Mexico had always participated in a spirit of sincere co-operation in the debates on the question.

23. Several representatives had spoken of the high degree of freedom enjoyed by information services in their countries. He explained that all information media had complete freedom of action in his country.

The interest which Mexico took in the extension of freedom of information throughout the world arose from its desire to participate in an international undertaking which was of great importance to all mankind.

24. He recalled General Assembly resolution 426 (V), adopted in December 1950, recommending the calling of a conference of plenipotentiaries with a view to the framing of a convention on freedom of information. On 10 September 1951, the Economic and Social Council had decided by its resolution 387 A (XIII), not to convene that conference owing to the wide divergencies of view which existed. The Mexican delegation did not share the opinion of the Council, and its members had maintained at the time that a convention on freedom of information should be drawn up. In any event, the Council's decision marked the beginning of a period of crisis and confusion. The Mexican delegation relied upon the wisdom of the General Assembly to surmount the crisis. It could not logically be claimed, however, that the Council's decision was the cause of the crisis; it was, rather, the consequence. Several speakers had already implied the existence of deeper causes; the General Assembly could not hope to eliminate them through action in the field of information alone. It did not seem, therefore, that the Third Committee could obtain results of any value unless it first carried out an objective study of the facts.

25. There were two distinct currents of opinion. One group of representatives, who supported the position taken by the Economic and Social Council, favoured proceeding slowly by gradual stages. The members of that group maintained that conventions were not indispensable; indeed, an attempt to adopt them too rapidly might have the effect of preventing the progressive application of practical measures which could help to clarify the situation and permit gradual action on a limited basis. Among such measures were the appointment of a rapporteur, the draft code of ethics for journalists, and the study undertaken by the Secretary-General, in co-operation with UNESCO, on the development of independent national information enterprises. Each of those measures had the warm support of the delegation of Mexico.

26. The second tendency, in opposition to the first, was to favour the rapid adoption of conventions. Those who held that view thought that a convention on freedom of information should be opened for signature as soon as possible.

27. Both standpoints merited close study. The differences dividing them were not so great as to obscure the essential unity of purpose of the two groups. Both were moved by a desire that all the peoples of the world should enjoy freedom of information. The unity of purpose was stronger than the differences, which did not concern principles, but only the practical measures to be taken for the application of those principles.

28. The Mexican delegation did not consider it impossible to reconcile the opposing views, as in fact there was no fundamental conflict between them. For its part, the Economic and Social Council could continue to follow the course of action it had set for itself while, on the other hand, the General Assembly could take all possible steps to hasten the adoption of conventions, either by appointing an *ad hoc* committee, or, if

possible, by convening a conference of plenipotentiaries. The two methods were not incompatible; one was designed mainly to produce practical results, while the other was directed towards the adoption of legal measures. The Mexican delegation was convinced that satisfactory results would be obtained in both fields.

29. A specific question had been raised by France and certain other countries, which proposed that the problem of the right of correction on the international level should be studied separately. The Mexican delegation did not oppose that suggestion. It agreed with the French delegation that if a number of countries recognized the right of correction on a reciprocal basis among themselves, the cause of freedom of information would benefit thereby. He personally could not say just then whether or not the Mexican Government would decide to adhere to a separate convention on the right of correction, but he did not see how his country could oppose the application of such a convention by other nations, a course of action which would, in the long run, be advantageous to all.

30. At the same time, he stressed the fact that his Government had always regarded the question of the conventions as a single and indivisible problem, and it would continue to do so as long as the adoption of a single unified resolution did not appear impossible.

31. In conclusion, he said that the Mexican delegation's position was clear as regards the concrete questions at issue. Mexico would support any constructive proposals which might be submitted, in order to advance the cause of freedom of information and ensure that that principle would be given effective application.

32. Mr. LUGO PORRAS (Colombia) had followed the debate on freedom of information with interest and had greatly appreciated the sincerity and honesty of the various speakers. He had the impression, however, that there was a certain amount of discouragement among the members of the Committee. Moreover, differences of opinion had been manifested; some representatives desired the early framing of conventions, while others, moved by considerations which were perhaps more realistic, favoured more practical measures.

33. He considered the draft convention on freedom of information final, but he feared that it might become an academic document without practical effect. Everything depended on the way in which it was applied. The existence of different political systems must be borne in mind; many of the provisions of the draft convention could be given different interpretations. It could be said without undue pessimism that the spirit of the draft convention might be distorted and that abuses might follow; but, were that to happen, it would not be in keeping with the intentions of the authors of the text, whose good faith was above question. In particular, the restrictions listed in article 2 — the part of the text which had been the greatest stumbling-block throughout the debate — might be interpreted in too flexible a fashion.

34. He emphasized the fact that Colombia recognized, and had always respected and applied, the principle of freedom of information. Although censorship existed in Colombia, it was of a minor and essentially temporary character. In point of fact, his

Government had been forced to impose that censorship against its will. The regrettable events which had occurred in recent years in Colombia, brought on by elements of the population which refused to respect the laws of democracy and sought to foment unrest in order to seize power by illegal means, had led the authorities to institute censorship. The Government of Colombia, however, did not intend to prolong that measure, and full freedom of information would be re-established in that country at the earliest possible moment.

35. Although inclined to doubt whether the draft convention on freedom of information would prove a practical and effective measure, he had no objection to its adoption. By guaranteeing freedom of information to the peoples of the world, the United Nations could help in substantial measure to alleviate their sufferings.

36. Mr. LOOMES (Australia) said that his country had an abiding belief in freedom of information and would certainly support any real effort to promote that freedom.

37. At the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information in 1948, Australia had given its full support to the principles contained in the draft convention on freedom of information. Unfortunately, difficulties had arisen in the attempt to translate those principles into legal texts. Article 2, in particular, was open to serious objections. It contained so many "escape clauses" as to invite government censorship and restrictions which might render meaningless the freedom it was intended to promote. He was sorry to say that the problem was no closer to solution than it had been in 1948.

38. With regard to the Convention on the International Transmission of News and the Right of Correction, he recalled that the instrument as a whole had been approved by the General Assembly in 1949, by its resolution 277 C (III). Australia had on that occasion voted with the minority for the proposal that the convention should be opened for signature, but that proposal had been rejected. He saw no good reason why that part of the already approved Convention on International Transmission of News and the Right of Correction relating to the right of correction should be isolated from the convention as a whole and proposed for signature as a separate instrument. He was in sympathy with the aims of the sponsors of that proposal, who were anxious to make some sort of progress, but he saw no advantage in the piecemeal approach and possibly harm in making the attempt when the climate was, to say the least, not favourable.

39. His delegation was not too dismayed by the position reached by the United Nations in the field of freedom of information. The Commission on Human Rights at its eighth session had approved, by a large majority, article 16 of the draft covenant on civil and political rights.¹ That article had been supported by Australia. The text was not perfect, and did not go into as great detail as the draft conventions before the Third Committee, but it affirmed unequivocally the principle already proclaimed in article 19 of the Uni-

versal Declaration of Human Rights, to wit, that everyone had the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

40. Apart from that, it was surely too early to say that no progress was to be expected from the work of the Rapporteur appointed by the Economic and Social Council. The Rapporteur had already given to the Committee an outline of his work programme (421st meeting). The Australian delegation would support any proposal to afford him a chance to carry out his task, one which would be difficult enough even in the most favourable circumstances.

41. In short, the Australian delegation felt that reasonable progress had been made. The draft covenant on human rights was one example, and the appointment of the Rapporteur was another. Proposals leading nowhere might prove harmful. He recalled that in 1950 the General Assembly had decided, by its resolution 426 (V), to appoint an *ad hoc* committee to revise the draft convention on freedom of information. The re-draft had not been strikingly different from the 1948 draft, and the Economic and Social Council had decided that it would be pointless to convene a conference of plenipotentiaries. The Australian delegation thought that the decisions taken by the Council at its thirteenth and fourteenth sessions were wise, and therefore urged the Committee to approve them.

42. Mr. ADAMIYAT (Iran) said that the United Nations had to consider the problem of freedom of information in all its aspects, in the various fields of its activity. The question was, however, linked to the more general problem of increasing goodwill and understanding in the international community and therefore deserved to be studied apart from all the other problems before the United Nations.

43. The term "freedom of information and the Press" meant primarily that the Press, the radio and the cinema must give the peoples of the world an exact and impartial account of international events. There were two types of obstacles to the free flow of information: technical difficulties, which could be surmounted with relative ease, and ideological difficulties, which were far more serious and which the United Nations must endeavour first to analyse and then to remedy. After five years of work, the United Nations had made no real progress in that direction, and it had to be admitted that international tension and ideological and political conflicts presented a well-nigh insurmountable obstacle. The Press of the various countries bore its share of responsibility for that state of affairs; far too many journalists disregarded the principle that they were bound by the facts and free in their comments, and led public opinion astray.

44. He would confine his remarks to the one aspect of freedom of information to which his country attached the greatest importance—the right of correction.

45. Iran had recently proceeded to a revision of the laws and decrees relating to the Press and had prepared a draft law intended to facilitate the free flow of information and to guarantee the freedom of the Press. The authors of that draft, desirous of securing the support and approval of those most directly interested in the dissemination of information, had submitted that text to the public for study and criticism before

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 4*, para. 244.

introducing it in Parliament. Jurists, writers, teachers, journalists and information centres had been invited to submit their views to the special commission which would draft the final text of the law. It was difficult to conceive of a more democratic procedure for drawing up provisions of such unquestioned social significance.

46. The draft law established a series of measures guaranteeing the accuracy of news and objectivity of comments. Article 12 provided that any person or public institution subjected to false accusations or slanderous allegations by a journalist had the right to reply in writing to the newspaper concerned, which must immediately publish the reply. That provision also applied to newspapers and reviews which borrowed such accusations or allegations from other sources. Furthermore the draft law established sanctions for authors of articles injurious to the honour or reputation of persons: if the author was unable to prove the truth of his statements he had to pay damages to the injured person, while the periodical was suspended for two months.

47. In taking such measures, the Iranian Government showed its awareness of the important part played by the Press in moulding public opinion and establishing friendly relations among nations—a principle which was generally recognized.

48. It had not yet been determined, however, how the dissemination of false reports and lying propaganda was to be stopped. The journalistic world must, first of all, be made to understand that the media of information, and in particular the Press, had a large share in shaping the destiny of nations and to bear constantly in mind that integrity and respect for the truth were prerequisites for any journalist worthy of his profession.

49. In that connexion, he noted that the draft code of ethics for journalists was an interesting project. Nevertheless, while the Iranian delegation realized that the code gave expression to noble thoughts and high ideals, it doubted that the code could lead to any results in the absence of sanctions or a permanent organ controlling the application of the principles set forth. Such journalists as were not concerned with impartiality and objectivity would probably remain deaf to its exhortations. The United Nations should take concrete measures to combat the falsification of news; those who opposed the implementation of such measures and the promulgation of legislation ensuring the exercise of the international right of correction, not only hindered the dissemination of true news but indirectly encouraged those journalists who were not conscious of the nature of their responsibilities.

50. The Iranian delegation was convinced that, in order to implement the principle enunciated first at the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information and then at the third session of the General Assembly, an article should be inserted in the draft code of ethics dealing with the international right of correction and providing for the creation of a permanent agency to ensure the exercise of that right. His delegation fully approved of the proposal that the draft convention on the international right of correction should be opened for signature, as in its view that was the only way to promote freedom of information and,

in consequence, mutual understanding and trust among nations.

ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

51. The CHAIRMAN read out the list of speakers for the two following meetings.

52. He remarked that the Committee should take several procedural decisions. First, the time had come to close the list of speakers in the general debate; secondly, the Committee might wish to set a time limit for the submission of draft resolutions; lastly, the Committee should decide whether it wished to discuss the various draft resolutions before voting on them—a procedure which might reopen the general debate—and, if so, whether it preferred to discuss them separately or together.

53. Mr. KAYSER (France) did not think it possible, once the general debate was over, to proceed to vote on the draft resolutions without first discussing them; at the same time, that discussion should not serve as an excuse for reopening the general debate.

54. In the light of those considerations, he suggested that the list of speakers in the general debate should be closed and that the Committee should decide to discuss the draft resolutions one after another, the time of each speaker being limited. If that procedure was accepted, he would reserve the right to make a brief statement during the discussion of the draft resolutions on the right of correction. If the Committee should decide not to discuss the draft resolutions, he would ask to speak once more in the general debate.

55. Mr. SPRAGUE (United States of America) thought that it was too early to set a time limit for the submission of draft resolutions, and would prefer to wait until the end of the general debate.

56. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) proposed that all draft resolutions should be submitted within twenty-four hours after the end of the general debate.

57. The list of speakers in that debate could be closed at once, and Wednesday, 29 October, might be set as the time limit for the submission of draft resolutions. Representatives who spoke before then could comment on the draft resolutions already presented, thus saving considerable time.

58. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) felt that there should be no overlapping between the general debate and the discussion of draft resolutions. The sponsors of the various draft resolutions could present them at the end of the general debate, at which time the Committee could discuss them.

59. Mr. AZMI (Egypt) asked whether, after the list of speakers had been closed, representatives would be granted the right of reply to criticism of their delegations.

60. The CHAIRMAN said that he would grant the right of reply in accordance with rule 114 of the rules of procedure.

61. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) proposed that half a day should be allowed after the close of the general debate for the submission of draft resolutions and that the possibility should be considered of limiting the

length and number of speeches on those draft resolutions.

62. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) also felt that comments on draft resolutions should not be made in the course of the general debate. He would prefer the draft resolutions to be examined in succession.

63. Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) pointed out that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/L.256 called for the discussion of the draft convention on freedom of information. That discussion might give

rise to new draft resolutions, so that it was impossible to set a time limit for their submission as yet.

64. The CHAIRMAN declared the list of speakers in the general debate closed.

65. He proposed that the discussion of the time limit for the submission of draft resolutions and of the manner in which they would be discussed should be postponed until the following day.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.