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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Observations of specialized agencies on the report of the Committee  
on Freedom of Information of the Commission on Human Rights  
(E/CN.4/762 and Corr.1)

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

Report of the Committee on Freedom of Information (E/CN.4/762)

Observations of UPU

Annex A, pages 16 and 17

Postal and transport facilities for information material

At the beginning of this section the following statement appears: "On the basis of UNESCO's suggestions the Universal Postal Congress revised the Universal Postal Convention ... to permit the mailing of books, newspapers and other publications at half the ordinary rate for printed matter."

This statement is not entirely accurate and should be amplified by the following remarks:

1. Postal Administrations may accept newspapers, periodicals, books or other publications at half the ordinary rate for printed papers but this is, in accordance with the provisions of the Universal Postal Convention, an option and not an obligation.
2. This option was granted by the Stockholm Universal Postal Congress in 1924, many years before the Brussels Congress of 1952 and before UNESCO came into existence, but it was then applicable to certain senders only (publishers, learned institutions, etc.).

3. This limitation was removed, so far as books were concerned, by the London Congress in 1929 and, so far as newspapers and periodicals were concerned, by the Brussels Congress in 1952; the reduced rate may therefore be granted to any sender including private individuals.

In view of the foregoing, the sentence quoted should read as follows:

"On the basis of UNESCO's suggestions, the Universal Postal Congress which met at Brussels in 1952 revised the Universal Postal Convention to permit the extension to all newspapers and periodicals, regardless of the sender, of the reduction of 50 per cent of the ordinary rate for printed papers which Postal Administrations have the option of conceding to such items."

In the third paragraph of this section, it is stated that "After the Ottawa Congress, UNESCO will submit to its member States an analysis of the Congress decisions and recommendations concerning their application as a means of effectively promoting a greater flow of information."

In this connexion, it should be noted that the analysis was sent by UNESCO to its member States on 24 April 1958.

Annex A, page 28

(III) UPU

In connexion with the last sentence of this section, it should be pointed out that the UPU Congress at Ottawa ended on 3 October 1957, some time before the publication of the report of the Committee on Freedom of Information (15 January 1958). The sentence should therefore read as follows: "Finally, the series of twenty-one proposals transmitted by UNESCO to its member States for submission to the UPU Congress held at Ottawa in 1957 were prepared in agreement with UPU."

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