

**United Nations**  
**ECONOMIC**  
**AND**  
**SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**Nations Unies**  
**CONSEIL**  
**ECONOMIQUE**  
**ET SOCIAL**

UNRESTRICTED

E/AC.7/SR.18  
7 August 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

**SUMMARY RECORD OF EIGHTEENTH MEETING**

Held at Lake Success, on Monday, 4 August 1947, at 3:00 p.m.

**Present:**

Chairman:	Mr. Moe	(Norway)
	Mr. Kaminsky	(Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)
	Mr. Smith	(Canada)
	Mr. Larrain	(Chile)
	Mr. Sun	(China)
	Mr. Osuna	(Cuba)
	Mr. Stolz	(Czechoslovakia)
	Mr. Boris	(France)
	Mr. Ahmad	(India)
	Mr. Van Heuven	(Netherlands)
	Miss Hampton	(New Zealand)
	Mr. Sur	(Turkey)
	Mr. Lomakin	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
	Mr. Mackenzie	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. Stinebower	(United States of America)
	Mr. Zuloaga	(Venezuela)

**Representatives of Specialized Agencies:**

Mr. Arnaldo (UNESCO)

**Consultants of Non-Governmental Organizations:**

**Category (a)**

Mr. Gervan	(AFL)
Mr. Cape	(WFTU)
Mr. Campbell	(International Co-operative Alliance)
Mr. Serrarena	(World Federation of Christian Trade Unions)

**Secretariat:** Mr. Stanczyk (Representing the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Affairs)  
Prof. Humphrey (Director, Division of Human Rights)  
Mr. Hogan (Division of Human Rights)  
Mr. Dumontet (Joint Division of Co-ordination and Liaison)

1. Consideration of Provisional Draft Agenda for International Conference on Freedom of Information (Documents E/441, E/441/Add.1, E/AC.7/30 E/507, E/508, E/510, E/511, E/AC.7/33, E/AC.7/35)

Chapter I, Item 2 (document E/441, page 12)

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that this item on the agenda submitted by the Sub-Commission had come about as a result of a proposal he had made himself, but the basic points of his proposal were lacking, and there was no reference, for instance, to the necessity of unmasking the remnants of fascism or to the development of friendly relations between nations. Accordingly he would suggest that the item be replaced by paragraph II (A) as given on page 4 of the statement submitted by his delegation (document E/AC.7/30).

- DECISION: 1. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics amendment was rejected by eight votes to two, with four abstentions.
2. Paragraph 2 of the provisional draft agenda suggested by the Sub-Commission was accepted by eleven votes to one, with two abstentions.

## Chapter II

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should first discuss the note which prefaced the chapter, and introduced the United Kingdom amendment to this note (document E/508).

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) explained that the note had been placed at the head of Chapter II since members of the Sub-Commission had felt that for the purpose of discussion of Chapter I, information should have a wider context. There had been a division of opinion in the Sub-Commission regarding the inclusion of books in the note, but his delegation felt that the subjects to be discussed at the Conference should not be restricted. A separate conference to discuss books had been suggested, but world conferences were not easy to organize. He pointed out that the resolution of the General Assembly instructing that the Conference be called was wider than the Sub-Commission's definition. Another argument against books was that economic difficulties would be raised, but here he would point out that other economic matters were on the agenda. If conventions governing the flow of information were eventually arrived at, an artificial situation would be created if channels were opened in press and radio but the position regarding books and pamphlets remained unchanged.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States of America) agreed that the Conference should cover a wide variety of subjects, but considered that introducing books and pamphlets would bring up a different range of questions such as copyright and foreign exchange, which the Conference might not be well-equipped to discuss. His delegation maintained that the Conference agenda should be pointed towards news and current information. The subject of books could be dealt with at the annual conferences of UNESCO.

- DECISION: 1. The United Kingdom amendment was rejected by eight votes to two, with five abstentions.
2. The text of the note as contained in the Report of the Sub-Commission was accepted by eleven votes in favour with four abstentions.

## Item 3

Mr. BORIS (France), in introducing his amendment to this item contained in document E/510, pointed out that for some people the title of journalist was only a disguise, and that privileges such as those already referred to should only be extended to qualified newsmen. The establishment of an

international professional card would assist in that necessary discrimination. It would emphasize the idea of responsibility, and it was the French Government's view that it could be a step toward the establishment of an international statute and code for international newsmen, such as proposed by the Commission on Freedom of the Press in the report published under the authority of the University of Chicago and entitled "Peoples Speaking to Peoples".

DECISION: The French amendment, providing for a new paragraph (b), was adopted by six votes to two, with eight abstentions.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested deleting 3 (a) and 3 (b) of the Sub-Commission's agenda. Free travel for correspondents was permissible when they had special tasks to perform, but it would be unwise to grant unlimited facilities. As regards the expulsion of correspondents, he maintained that correspondents were never expelled on account of responsible behaviour. Item 3 (b) might give correspondents an opportunity to violate their responsibilities.

Mr. BORIS (France) pointed out that the agenda contained special reservations in that respect, as for instance in Item 4, which mentioned the needs of national security. Those reservations should prove sufficient.

DECISIONS: 1. The proposal to delete 3 (a) was rejected by fourteen votes to three.  
2. The proposal to delete 3 (b) was rejected by fourteen votes to three.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that paragraphs 3 (1) and 3 (2) on pages four and five of document E/AC.7/30 be substituted for 3 (a) and 3 (b) of the provisional draft agenda submitted by the Sub-Commission.

DECISIONS: 1. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposal was rejected by ten votes to three, with four abstentions.  
2. Item 3 as a whole, as amended by the French proposal, was adopted by fourteen votes to two with one abstention.

#### Item 4

Mr. STINEBAUGH (United States of America), in introducing the amendment to Item 4 (a) submitted by the United States Delegation, (document E/511), remarked that the changes proposed were dictated first of all by the fact that the Conference should aim at multilateral or universal agreement regarding the elimination of censorship rather than at "agreements". As regards the phrase concerning the demands of public decency, he considered that these were not justifiable restrictions on the international transmission of information as distinct from domestic news. The requirements of national security furnished the only legitimate excuse for peacetime censorship, and should be mentioned

in the second part of the agenda item rather than in the first.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) said he would accept the United States proposal as a clarification of the item.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the question of censorship should be deleted from the entire agenda. Since the Committee had not adopted points which would place an obligation on correspondents to send reliable and objective information, countries should not be prevented from imposing restrictions on the dissemination of libellous information. Present-day censorship was the result of the activities of unreliable and dishonest correspondents, and as correspondents improved their work censorship would be eliminated of itself.

Mr. AHMAD (India) said he was not convinced by the argument of the United States representative that the requirements of national security should be the only consideration in censorship, and that the demands of public decency and libel were only domestic concerns.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States of America) explained that he had not intended to suggest that there should be a domestic rule in such matters and another rule governing the international transmission of information.

- DECISIONS:
1. The proposal of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to delete 4 (a) was rejected by fourteen votes to two, with one abstention.
  2. The United States proposal regarding 4 (a) was adopted by nine votes to two with six abstentions.
  3. The wording of 4 (a) (i), 4 (a) (ii) and 4 (a) (iii), as contained in the draft agenda proposed by the Sub-Commission was accepted by fifteen votes to two.

Item 4 (b)

DECISION: Item 4 (b) of the provisional draft agenda suggested by the Sub-Commission was adopted by seventeen votes to none.

Item 4 (c)

Mr. AHMAD (India), in introducing the amendment proposed by his delegation (document E/AC.7/35) admitted that the word "protection" had special connotations, but said that it was not the intention of the Indian amendment to debar foreign news agencies. Under the present unequal conditions, some news agencies had been able to build themselves up while others, through no fault of their own, were in an undeveloped state. Competition was a basic principle of freedom of information; where there was a tendency for power to concentrate, freedom of information could not prevail. Some national agencies should be assisted and their development assured, with due consideration to the principle of free competition between agencies. He would like to make it clear that he was not thinking of high

tariff walls or of excluding any agencies.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States of America) said he would support the remarks of the representative of India regarding measures to prevent cartelization, but pointed out that the whole item referred to international transmission. The effect of the addition proposed would be to suggest the possibility of utilizing discriminatory transmission rates to sustain local agencies.

Mr. BORIS (France) agreed with the representative of India that certain measures should be taken at least provisionally to assist new agencies. France had been forced, for instance, to grant subsidies. However, he also appreciated the point of view expressed by the representative of the United States, and suggested that the Indian amendment should be reworded slightly to emphasize that any measures taken should be provisional only, and that it should be incorporated later in the agenda.

Mr. AHMAD (India) said he would accept the suggestion of the French representative.

Mr. VAN HEUVEN (Netherlands) suggested that the Committee should not make too many amendments to the provisional draft agenda. That could be left to the Conference itself.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) pointed out that the whole of Item 5 (b) was concerned with increasing the amount of information available.

DECISION: No objection being raised, the Chairman declared that Item 5 (c) had been accepted.

#### Item 4 (d)

DECISION: The Committee rejected by thirteen votes to two, with two abstentions, a proposal made by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to delete item 4 (d).

The Committee adopted by fourteen votes to two with one abstention the text of item 4 (d).

#### New Item 4 (c) Proposed by the Representative of India (Document E/AC.7/35)

Mr. AHMAD (India) explained that his proposal was directed against the increasing power of cartels which he felt endangered freedom of the press.

In answer to the representative of the United Kingdom, who thought this point was covered by Items 5 (a) (vi) and 5 (b) (iv) of the draft agenda, Mr. Ahmad said he felt it should be asserted more affirmatively as an item for discussion at the World Conference.

DECISION: The Committee decided by twelve votes, with five abstentions, to include a new Item 4 (e) as proposed by the representative of India.

#### Item 5 Heading

DECISION: The Committee decided by twelve votes with three abstentions

/to adopt

to adopt the shorter heading as proposed by the representative of the United Kingdom (document E/AC.7/33).

Item 5 (a)

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) said that the first phrase of this Item was superfluous and proposed its deletion, as put forward in document E/AC.7/33.

Mr. STOLZ (Czechoslovakia) thought that the deletion would result in too much emphasis being laid on the rest of the sentence.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that the deletion would throw the sentence out of balance. He was in favour of cutting out all unnecessary words everywhere but thought that all items of the agenda were too long.

DECISION: The Committee decided by ten votes to five with one abstention to omit the first phrase of the sentence.

The introduction to Item 5 (a) was adopted as amended.

Item 5 (a), Sub-Paragraph (i)

DECISION: Sub-paragraph (i) was accepted.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished it to be recorded that he voted against the introduction to Item 5 (a) and against sub-paragraph (i).

Item 5 (a), Sub-Paragraph (ii)

DECISION: The Committee rejected by fourteen votes to two with one abstention a proposal made by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics representative to delete this sub-paragraph.

Sub-paragraph (ii) of the draft agenda was accepted by fourteen votes to two, with one abstention.

Item 5 (a), new Sub-Paragraph (iii) Proposed by the Representative of the United Kingdom (Document E/AC.7/33)

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) pointed out that the right of persons to own radio sets of their own choice had been overlooked at the meeting of the Sub-Commission, and he emphasized the importance of this principle. It was especially important at the present time in view of the shortage of newsprint and consequent dependence of people on news by radio.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States of America) pointed out that if the addition were accepted it would be necessary to change the heading of Item 5 to include "and reception of news".

Mr. BORIS (France) pointed out that the wording of the sub-paragraph as proposed was not good, as it implied the right to choose any make of receiving set from any country in the world which might be economically impossible.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) agreed that the wording should be amended.

DECISION: The Committee decided by fifteen votes with two abstentions in favour of the principle of the addition, and requested the United Kingdom representative to redraft the text.

/The Committee

The Committee decided to add "and reception" to the heading of Item 5.

Item 5 (a), Sub-Paragraphs (iii), (iv), (v)

DECISION: Sub-paragraphs (iii), (iv) and (v) were accepted unanimously.

Item 5 (a), Sub-Paragraph (vi)

In answer to a question put by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) explained that this sub-paragraph had been included to ensure that the World Conference would study the question of the availability of news to the people of all countries.

DECISION: The Committee accepted Sub-paragraph (vi) by fifteen votes with two abstentions.

Item 5 (a), Sub-Paragraph (vii)

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that a distinction should be drawn between foreign correspondents and correspondents working in their own country and that a clause should be inserted stating that such distinction should be in accordance with the laws of the country. He withdrew his proposal when the Chairman pointed out that it involved the substance of the item on the agenda which was for the World Conference to discuss.

DECISION: Sub-paragraph (vii) was adopted.

Item 5 (b)

DECISION: Sub-paragraph (i) was adopted.

Item 5 (b), Sub-Paragraph (ii)

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed the deletion of this sub-paragraph on the grounds that it implied interference in the internal affairs of States.

DECISION: The proposal to delete this paragraph was rejected by thirteen votes to two with one abstention.

Sub-paragraph (ii) was accepted by fourteen votes to two with one abstention.

Item 5 (b), Sub-Paragraph (iii)

Mr. BORIS (France) said that he wished to reserve the right of his Government to introduce before the Conference a proposal to create a common fund which would enable more journalists from countries with weak currencies to work in strong currency countries.

DECISION: Sub-paragraph (iii) was adopted.

New Sub-Paragraph Proposed by the Representative of India

Mr. AHMAD (India) proposed the addition of a sub-paragraph to read:

"considering the present unequal development of news agencies in certain countries and recommending measures which may be provisionally necessary to foster the development of national news agencies till such time as they are capable of meeting international competition."

/Mr. MACKENZIE

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) felt that the proposed text went much further than the original Indian proposal. He approved of the general principle that the World Conference should be made aware of the problems of different countries but he did not think the Conference should be asked to tell countries how to improve their domestic affairs.

Mr. AHMAD (India) felt that the matter merited discussion at an international forum.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States of America) proposed that the Indian addition should be incorporated in the middle of sub-paragraph (iii).

DECISION: The Committee decided to leave the point temporarily and requested the representative of India to redraft his text.

Item 5 (b), Sub-Paragraph (iv)

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed the deletion of this sub-paragraph, stating that it concerned the internal affairs of every government.

DECISION: The Committee rejected the proposal to delete the sub-paragraph by thirteen votes to three.

Sub-paragraph (iv) of the draft agenda was accepted by fourteen votes to two.

The meeting rose at 5:35 p.m.

-----