

**ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL****CONSEIL  
ECONOMIQUE  
ET SOCIAL**E/CN.4/Sub.1/18  
19 May 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

## COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
AND OF THE PRESS

Text of Statement Made at the Second Meeting of the First  
Session of the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information  
and of the Press by Mr. G.J. van Heuven Goedhart  
(Netherlands)

Speaking as a Member of the Sub-Commission, I would like to make a few remarks on the difference between the name of the Conference and the name of the Sub-Commission.

The Sub-Commission is a Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press, while the Conference is indicated as a Conference on Freedom of Information only. In my opinion - and I would not be surprised if many journalists would agree with me - there is a distinction between freedom of information and freedom of the press. There are really two freedoms. As far as I can see, freedom of information has to do with the free flow of the news from its sources to the different means of distributing the news to the public, while freedom of the press has to do with the second section of the itinerary of the news, going from the distributing organizations to the public.

The distinction of these two rights has perhaps a practical advantage in so far as the Sub-Commission could first of all consider the practices and conditions that should prevail if freedom of information could be said to be present. That means that the Sub-Commission could consider which conditions should be fulfilled should there be a question of freedom of information, freedom laying between the source of the news and the newspapers, the radio companies, and the film producers who pass the news on to the public. Secondly, the freedom of the press and the freedom of the radio and the

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freedom of the films are freedoms which have much more to do with the individual. Principally, as far as I can see, freedom of the press has always been defined as the right of the citizen, not as the right of the newspapers or the press, but as the right of the citizen to express freely his feelings and his opinions. That has historically and practically always been considered to be freedom of the press. The word is not quite exact, in my opinion.

Freedom of information, on the other hand, is a freedom that has to do with what operates in the field of the news agencies and other news gathering and news transmitting organizations.

In my opinion it is regrettable that the indications of the Sub-Commission and of the Conference are not identical. I would have preferred the Conference to be indicated as Conference on Freedom of Information and of the Press. But we could perhaps keep in mind that it is clear from the documents that have been submitted to us that it was the meaning of the Commission on Human Rights and of the Economic and Social Council that freedom of information should include the freedom of the press. Perhaps it would help our discussions when we separate those two freedoms from each other and discuss the freedom of information and the freedom of the press separately.

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