

**ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL**

E/CN.4/Sub.1/SR.5

24 May 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND OF THE PRESS

FIRST SESSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Wednesday, 21 May 1947, at 11:00 a.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Mr. G. J. van Heuven Goedhart	(Netherlands)
Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Lev Sychrava	(Czechoslovakia)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Geo. V. Ferguson	(Canada)
	Mr. P. H. Chang	(China)
	Mr. J. de Montoussé	(France)
	Mr. Chr. A. R. Christensen	(Norway)
	Mr. Lopez	(Philippine Republic)
	Mr. Fontaina	(Uruguay)
	Mr. A. R. K. Mackenzie	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. Z. Chafee	(United States)
	Mr. J. M. Lomakin	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
Specialized Agencies:		
	Mr. Gordon Williams	(International Monetary Fund)
	Mr. William Farr	(UNESCO)
Non-Governmental Organizations:		
	Miss Toni Sender	(American Federation of Labor)
Secretariat:		
	Prof. J. P. Humphrey	
	Mr. A. Hogan	(Secretary of Sub-Commission)

1. Consideration of Draft Agenda for the Conference on Freedom of Information

The CHAIRMAN suggested continuing the discussion as to whether there should be a questionnaire on freedom of information to be prepared by the

Secretary-General. He referred to UNESCO's questionnaire and proposed to

/postpone

26 MAY 1947

postpone discussion on the technical side of the questionnaire.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), pointed out the inconsistency of using the word "questionnaire". He thought it desirable to receive as much information as possible without asking specific questions.

The CHAIRMAN said he was willing to accept another word. It might be a "Written Report" containing answers to certain questions.

Mr. CHAFFEE (United States), suggested "Request for a Written Report" as a suitable phrase.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada), said that in order to compare the systems of information of the various countries, specific questions should be asked.

Mr. SYCHRAVA (Czechoslovakia), suggested the setting up of a small sub-committee to prepare the text of a request pointing out subjects on which information was needed.

The CHAIRMAN thought this would be difficult before the arrival of the UNESCO questionnaire, and suggested postponing the discussion of the technical side until the next day, and wanted to know whether Members were in agreement with the principle of sending out request for a written report.

As no Member objected, the CHAIRMAN said he considered the proposal as accepted.

2. Plan of Organization of Conference on Freedom of Information (document E/CN.4/Sub.1/8)

Mr. CHAFFEE (United States), thought it desirable to have five delegates from each country and five alternates as well. This would make it possible to give representation not only to radio, newspapers, publishers, etc. but also to groups of workers in this field and to consumers. The head of the delegation should be a government officer.

The CHAIRMAN wanted to know whether it was understood that the delegations might bring as many advisors as they desired.

Mr. CHAFFEE (United States), said that this was the case.

Mr. de MONTOUSSE (France), suggested that in order to keep attendance within reasonable limits the number of advisors should be limited, for

/instance to

instance to two advisors for each representative.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada), said he supposed that in practice small countries would send small delegations, and that larger countries with more difficult problems would send larger ones.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), thought it unwise to restrict the number of advisors, and favoured the United States proposal.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), said he agreed to the number of delegates and alternates. However, in order to facilitate the preparation of the Conference, he felt it useful to specify the number of advisors.

The CHAIRMAN believed the number would limit itself because of the special purpose of the Conference. Furthermore, he was doubtful as to the right of the Sub-Commission to limit the number.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), said that no direct limitation could be made, but for planning purposes it would be useful to have a general idea of the number likely to be present.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada), suggested that each State report the total number in its delegation three months before the Conference.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), thought it unreasonable to make this provision, and proposed a wording in a general way, for instance, "as soon as possible".

The CHAIRMAN said he took it as agreed that, as a gesture to the host of the Conference, Governments should be asked to send in details regarding their delegations as soon as possible.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), wanted a clarification of the question of the division within delegations between officials and non-officials, and suggested that each country have the right to decide this itself.

The CHAIRMAN thought it reasonable to leave this question to the Governments, and as no one objected, he took it as the decision of the Sub-Commission.

3. Consideration of Possible Co-operation of Appropriate Specialized Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations in the Planning of the Conference

Mr. HOGAN (Secretariat), referred to the participation of UNESCO, and added that the World Health Organization had asked to speak to the Sub-Commission. He also believed that the Telecommunications Union, Food and Agriculture Organization and International Labour Organization would be interested. There also were the International Organization of Journalists and regional information organizations such as the British Empire Press Union.

Mr. CHAFFEE (United States), said he understood that there was already in existence a list of organizations brought into relationship with the Economic and Social Council. He thought not all of them would be interested, and proposed that invitations be sent to those organizations which had been brought into relationship with the Economic and Social Council and which had expressed an interest in freedom of information.

The CHAIRMAN stated that he had the list, and said that the International League for the Rights of Man might also be interested.

Mr. SYCHRAVA (Czechoslovakia), stated that a Conference will take place in London on 16 June 1947. The programme was identical with that of the Conference on Freedom of Information, and the organization was directly concerned with this work.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), felt that the largest organization which would be interested was the World Federation of Trade Unions which represented millions of workers.

Mr. CHAFFEE (United States), said this organization was included in the list of organizations in Category A, and agreed it should be asked.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that there were seven organizations in Category A the Inter-Parliamentary Union, International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, International Chamber of Commerce, American Federation of Labor, International Co-operative Alliance, and the World Federation of Trade Unions. He assumed that the United States proposal included all of them.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), asked for a list of names in order to consider the qualifications properly.

Mr. HOGAN (Secretariat) explained the distinction between Category A and Category B organizations.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) wanted to know whether these organizations should be invited to participate in the preparation of the Conference or if they only should be invited to attend.

The CHAIRMAN explained that it was his intention first to decide which organizations should be invited, and then to determine which of these should be invited to participate in the preparation.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States), was in favour of asking them both to assist in the preparation and to be present.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), submitted a proposal that a Sub-Committee of three be set up to consider the question and to report back to the Sub-Commission.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States), supported this.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), was also in favour of this, but said he would like a definition of the word "assist". He pointed out that the Sub-Commission had the task of preparing the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the recommendations of the Sub-Commission would be sent to these organizations requesting their comments before the next session of the Sub-Commission. He agreed with the view of Mr. Cruikshank that the report should be provisional. It should be reconsidered after the Economic and Social Council had gone over it.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), explained that his proposal was to set up a Sub-Committee to consider which specialized agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations should be invited, as well as to consider their status. Following unanimous adoption of his proposal, Mr. Lomakin suggested Mr. de Montoussé (France), Mr. Sychrava (Czechoslovakia) and Mr. Lopez (Philippine Republic) as members of the Sub-Committee. These members were elected unanimously.

4. Structure of the Conference

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), pointed out that Mr. Cruikshank's proposal was very similar to that of the Secretariat. The differences were that his paper did not provide for a legal committee, but, instead, for a committee on other media. He therefore proposed the addition of a legal committee to Mr. Cruikshank's paper or a committee on other media to that of the Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that this would extend the number of committees to six, which might create some difficulty in view of the fact that there would be only five delegates.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States) thought it best to decide the question of committees after the agenda had been drafted. It would then be easier to divide the work. He, himself was going to propose an item regarding news features of motion pictures, and he thought the Conference would be more effective if it confined itself to news and ideas closely related to news. Therefore, a functional organization of committees might be better; for example, a committee on collection of news, a committee on transmission of news and a committee to consider news coming into a country.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay), said he would like to know what was meant by "general matters concerning freedom of information", an expression used to define the task of one committee.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), replied that he would like a committee to clarify the concept of freedom of information. That was the reason why this committee had been proposed.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), was not in favour of postponing the decision on committees. There was sufficient material to set up an outline for future work.

The CHAIRMAN thought that for practical reasons it would be wise to delay a decision on committees and pointed out that discussion could be carried on on other subjects.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), said that he also regretted delay, but felt that should await the proposal of Mr. Chafee, before they took any decision.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that there was no definite proposal from Mr. Chafee, and that they should decide upon the matter at a later time.

Mr. de MONTOUSSE (France), asked Mr. Lomakin whether he had any definite proposals on this subject.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), remarked that the inconsistency was due to inadequate preparations, and asked the Secretariat for more detailed information.

The CHAIRMAN explained that it was Mr. Cruikshank's paper which had brought up the question of six committees. The Secretariat paper proposed only five committees and five delegates.

Mr. CHANG (China), proposed to put to the vote Mr. Chafee's proposal to postpone the decision on the committees.

DECISION: The proposal was accepted by 9 votes to 3.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States), asked the Secretariat whether it was the usual practice to have one committee for each delegate, or whether it was possible for one delegate to serve on more than one committee.

Prof. HUMPHREY (Secretariat), explained that he thought it convenient to have the number of delegates correspond to that of the committees.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), remarked that small countries often had to use the same delegates for more than one committee.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 a.m.
