

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED REQUESTING THE INCLUSION OF CERTAIN SPECIFIC
PROVISIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL BILL OF RIGHTS

Several communications have been received from Non-Governmental Organizations and Individuals requesting that certain specific provisions should be included in the International Bill of Rights. The substance of most of these communications has already been included in the documented outline prepared by the Secretariat. A précis of each communication is given below and the appropriate Article quoted in each case.

The communications are listed under the following headings, subdivided according to the source of the communication: (Non-Governmental Organization or Individual).

1. General Comments
2. Right to Life (Cf. Article 3)
3. Freedom of Movement (Cf. Article 9)
4. Freedom of Conscience (Cf. Article 14)
and of Religion
5. Prevention of (Cf. Article 45)
Discrimination
6. Women's Rights (Cf. Article 45)
7. Right to a Nationality (Cf. Article 32)

1. General Comments

Communications received from National Non-Governmental Organizations:

United States of America

American Law Institute

Letter dated 9 May 1946, addressed to Mrs. Roosevelt, Chairman of the
Commission on Human Rights.

/Subject:

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Subject: Summary of the views of the drafting committee of the Statement of Essential Rights of the American Law Institute emphasizing the importance of having a clear definition of human rights.

Philadelphia Archdiocesan Holy Name Union

Letter, dated 10 March 1947, addressed to Mrs. Roosevelt, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Resolution emphasizing the importance of drafting a complete and comprehensive Bill of Rights.

World Citizenship Movement

Letter, undated, addressed to Mrs. Roosevelt, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Advocation that a World Bill of Rights be adopted soon, guaranteeing to every individual certain basic human rights and suggesting that machinery be set up within the United Nations for its implementation.

2. Right to Life (Article 3)

"Every one has the right to life. This right can be denied only to persons who have been convicted under general law of some crime to which the death penalty is attached."

Communications from National Non-Governmental Organizations

Argentina

Comite permanente de Relaciones Espiritualistas

Letter, dated 8 February 1947, addressed to the Secretary-General.

Subject: Request that capital punishment be made unlawful in those countries where it still exists as any form of violent death is un-Christian.

3. Freedom of Movement (Article 9)

"Subject to any general law adopted in the interest of national welfare or security, there shall be liberty of movement and free choice
/of residence

of residence within the borders of each State."

Communications received from Individuals

In the United States of America

Letter, dated 4 August 1946, from Evanston, Illinois, addressed to Dr. J. Humphrey, Director of the Division of Human Rights.

Subject: Request that a "fifth freedom", the freedom of migration be granted to citizens of all nations.

Letter, dated 9 January 1947, from Minnesota, addressed to Mrs. Roosevelt, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Suggestion that freedom of movement should be included in the Bill of Rights, with special emphasis on the right of any individual to emigrate from a country where conditions have become unbearable to him.

4. Freedom of Conscience and of Religion (Article 14)

"There shall be freedom of conscience and belief, and of private and public religious worship."

Communications received from International Non-Governmental Organizations
Commission of the Churches on International Affairs

Letter, dated 4 March 1947, addressed to Dr. Humphrey, Director, Human Rights Division.

Subject: Expression of the desire of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs to co-operate with the Human Rights Commission in drafting the Bill of Rights.

Enclosure: Memorandum on Provisions for Religious Liberty in an International Bill of Rights.

Religious liberty should be interpreted in the International Bill of Rights to include all the rights and freedoms necessary to the full exercise of religion, either by a detailed statement enumerating all the rights and freedoms pertaining to religion, or by a broad statement wherein their

/recognition

recognition will be understood by implication.

The Bill of Rights should indicate further the relationship between provisions relating specifically to religious liberty, and provisions for such other rights and freedoms as are significant for the exercise of religious liberty.

References are given from the reports of conferences of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, and from the Statement on Religious Liberty, adopted by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and the Foreign Conference of North America.

War Resisters' International

Letter, dated 25 March 1947, addressed to the Secretariat of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Plea for the inclusion of a specific provision in the International Bill of Rights relating to conscientious objectors, granting the right to refuse military service in obedience to conscience.

Communications received from Individuals

In the United States of America

Letter, dated 23 December 1946, from Andover, Massachusetts, addressed to Mrs. Robsevelt, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Suggestion that in the Bill of Rights the rights of free thinkers should be protected. This protection should be in the form of an explicit declaration guaranteeing rights to free thinkers and anti-supernaturalism equal to those granted to religious persons and religion.

5. Prevention of Discrimination (Article 45)

"No one shall suffer any discrimination whatsoever because of race, sex, language, religion, or political creed. There shall be full equality

/before the law

before the law in the enjoyment of the rights enunciated in this Bill of Rights."

Communications received from Non-Governmental Organizations

International Organizations

Nordic Authors' Conference

Letter, dated 30 November 1946, addressed to the Secretary-General.

Subject: Support for those clauses of the draft declarations on an international Bill of Rights submitted by the Delegations of Panama, Cuba, India, which deal with racial persecution and national and religious persecution.

National Organizations

Argentina

Hebrew Society of Argentina

Cable, dated 7 November 1946, addressed to M. Spaak, President of the General Assembly.

Subject: Request that the United Nations should adopt an international convention declaring racial and anti-semitic demonstrations and all activities harmful to religious freedom, criminal and punishable.

6. Women's Rights (Article 45 See above paragraph 5)

Communications received from International Non-Governmental Organizations

Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations

Letter, dated 7 February 1947, addressed to Mrs. Roosevelt, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Request that "equality of persons of both sexes" be included in the Bill of Rights.

Expression of the hope that the opinion of the Liaison Committee and its affiliated Organizations will be considered by the Drafting Committee.

/ St. Joan's

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance

Memorandum, dated 26 April 1947, submitted to the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Request that the following points specifically relating to women's rights be included in the Bill of Rights:

1. No child or woman, whatever her race, shall be treated as a chattel to be sold by her father or alleged proprietor.
2. Every woman shall be permitted to choose her own partner in life despite any contract entered into in her name by any other person.
3. No marriage contract shall be made for any girl under fourteen, nor for any woman over fourteen without her consent.
4. There shall be no lending out of wives under any pretext.
5. Widows shall not be inherited. They should be free to dispose of themselves and their children as they think fit, remain with the husband's family, go back to their own, be independent, or remarry.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

(United States Section)

Telegram, addressed to Mrs. Roosevelt, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Expression of the hope that "equality of the sexes" will be included as a specific provision in all declarations or other actions of the Commission.

7. Right to a Nationality (Article 32)

"Every one has the right to a nationality.

Every one is entitled to the nationality of the State where he is born unless and until on attaining majority he declares for the nationality

/open to

open to him by virtue of descent..

No one shall be deprived of his nationality by way of punishment or be deemed to have lost his nationality in any other way unless he concurrently acquires a new nationality.

Every one has the right to renounce the nationality of his birth, or a previously acquired nationality, upon acquiring the nationality of another State."

Communications received from Individuals

In the United States of America

Letter, dated 16 February 1947, from Hartford, Connecticut, addressed to the Commission on Human Rights.

Subject: Request that the Bill of Rights should include a provision for freedom of nationality, for the protection of stateless persons. Individuals living without a national status are very often forgotten in declarations on human rights.
