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Agenda item 10

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN THE ERADICATION OF
PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION (E/NGO/CONF.2/7)

Statement submitted by the World Veterans Federation, a non-
governmental organization in category A consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following statement which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 28 and 29 of Economic and Social Council resolution 288 B (X).

Received: 27 January 1960

Discrimination for reasons of race, color and creed continues today in many parts of the world despite the determined efforts of the United Nations to eradicate this social evil and despite co-operation in these efforts by responsible public opinion organizations.

Recent outbreaks of anti-Semitism have shocked the world's memory into recalling the bitter results of this scourge prior to and during World War II when millions of innocent persons died solely because they were Jews. These outbreaks also recall the cruelties of communal conflicts in Asia since World War II as well as present inter-tribal disturbances in Africa, continuing repression in Europe and the Americas on the grounds of race, color, religion and political belief. It is well also to remember that in this century more human beings were slain or injured for reasons of race, colour, creed or origin than for any other cause.

Despite the great efforts put forth and the results achieved, the struggle against prejudice and discrimination in the world today is still only at its beginning.

Non-governmental organizations have a heavy responsibility in this area. Last year many of them met at Geneva in the Second United Nations Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations Interested in the Eradication of Prejudice and Discrimination, the report of which is before this body. Despite certain shortcomings referred to in the Preliminary Remarks of the Rapporteur (pages 9-11, E/NGO/Conf.2/7), this effort represented an advance over the results of the first Conference. Despite the fact that certain of the hopes there expressed have not been implemented, there are certain resolutions adopted at that Conference which, in our view, merit particular attention.

It must be noted with regret that the recent outbreaks of anti-Semitism involved young people who appeared to ignore contemporary history and the fact that racial and religious intolerance has led to mass extermination. In this connexion, we would like to draw the attention of the Sub-Commission to resolution 4 adopted by the Conference. This resolution calls upon the United Nations and Specialized Agencies to continue their efforts to educate the youth and the adults in order to show the importance which the active fight against all forms of discrimination represents for each country as well as for the international community as a whole.

The World Veterans Federation believes that the education of youth is an essential task in the fight for the eradication of discrimination and prejudice.

For several years the Federation, pursuant to the express wish of its members, has organized youth seminars specifically devoted to the problems of prejudice and discrimination. The last such seminar was held in August, 1959, in Aarhus, Denmark, under the sponsorship of the Danish Government and in close co-operation with UNESCO. This seminar, which united for a three-week period seventy-five graduate students from thirty countries and five continents, was organized jointly by the World Veterans Federation and our Danish affiliate. The specific duty of the seminar was to devise practical methods designed to fight discrimination and to eradicate the underlying causes of racial, religious and political prejudice.

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Conference resolution 9 is, in our opinion, of special interest to the United Nations. This resolution recommends, among other things, that efforts be made to enlarge advisory services available to States Members of the United Nations through its technical assistance programmes and that steps be taken by the United Nations and its specialized agencies to establish as a matter of fundamental policy that discriminatory practices in the use of manpower be prohibited in all direct employment on United Nations projects.

The World Veterans Federation recommends the endorsement of the text of the resolution by the Sub-Commission. We believe that the unanimous approval given this resolution by the participants in the Second Conference would ensure practical support should the necessary action be taken by the appropriate bodies of the United Nations.
