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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL | CONSEIL ECONOMIQUE ET SOCIAL

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21 May 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND OF THE PRESS

FIRST SESSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOURTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, on Tuesday, 20 May 1947 at 2:30 p.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Mr. G. J. van Heuven Goedhart	(Netherlands)
Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Lev Sychrava	(Czechoslovakia)
Rapporteur:	Mr. George Ferguson	(Canada)
Members:	Mr. P. H. Chang	(China)
	Mr. J. de Menthon	(France)
	Mr. A. R. Christensen	(Norway)
	Mr. S. Lopez	(Philippine Republic)
	Mr. J. M. Lomakin	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
	Mr. A. R. K. Mackenzie	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. Z. Chafee	(United States of America)
	Mr. R. Fontaina	(Uruguay)
Representative of Specialized Agencies:		
	Mr. W. Farr	(UNESCO)
Consultants of Non-Governmental Organizations:		
	Miss Toni Sender	(American Federation of Labor)
	Mrs. Helen Fuhrmann	(International Co-operative Alliance)
Secretariat:		
	Prof. J. P. Humphrey	(Director, Division of Human Rights)
	Mr. C. A. Hogan	(Secretary of Sub-Commission)

/1. Specific Site

1. Specific Site of Conference - contd.

Mr. de MONTOUSSE (France), referring to the morning's discussion on the location of the Conference, wished it noted that should the Economic and Social Council decide upon Paris as the meeting place, the Government of France would be most happy to be host to the Conference.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) saw no objection to holding the Conference in Paris. He considered that countries which had fought Fascism merited having the Conference meet in their capitals, certainly excluding cities such as Berlin or Madrid.

2. Consideration of Recommendations Concerning Invitations to Non-Member States to the Conference on Freedom of Information (documents E/CN.4/Sub.1/4, E/CN.4/Sub.1/12).

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) referred to paragraph 23 of Mr. Cruikshank's paper. He expressed the view that a general recommendation be made to the Economic and Social Council, with no mention of specific countries.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) on the other hand, preferred a recommendation which would specifically enumerate those non-member States to be invited.

Mr. LOPEZ (Philippine Republic) thought it might be more practical to mention the countries which were not to be invited.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States of America) was not in favour of specifying those countries which would not be invited and suggested that the Sub-Commission might be guided by the list of States which had been invited to the International Health Conference.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay) agreed with Mr. Mackenzie that no particular names should be specified. He wished it stated that non-members should be invited but that the General Assembly make the decision as to the countries.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada) and Mr. CHANG (China) supported the proposal of Mr. CHAFEE (United States of America) that the precedent of the International Health Conference form the basis for the decision of the Sub-Commission.

/Mr. FERGUSON

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada) moved that the Sub-Commission recommend that membership in the proposed Conference should not be confined to members of the United Nations, and that the list of invitations issued to the International Health Conference might provide a suitable basis for the additional States to whom invitations might be extended.

DECISION: The motion, having been put to the vote was carried by 10 votes in its favour.

The CHAIRMAN then invited observations as to the rights and privileges of representatives of non-member States at the Conference.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States of America) said he thought that Rules 7, 8 and 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the International Health Conference might be applied to non-member States invited to the Conference.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay) and Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) supported this opinion.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) however, felt that it was more logical to grant invited non-member States full rights.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as a member, Mr. FERGUSON (Canada) and Mr. de MONTOUSSE (France) supported the proposal of the member from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The CHAIRMAN then proceeded to a vote on the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposals:

DECISION: The United States of America proposal was defeated by 6 votes to 5. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposal, to recommend that non-member States invited to the Conference be granted full rights of participation and voting was adopted.

3. Questionnaire on Mass Media of Information to be Sent to Member States (document E/CN.4/Sub.1/5)

The Sub-Commission then discussed whether or not to recommend that the Secretary-General be requested by the Economic and Social Council to circulate a questionnaire on mass media of information, the replies to which would furnish documentation of the agenda of the Conference.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN and Mr. CHRISTENSEN (Norway) were of the opinion that such a questionnaire would be of great value.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed doubts as the necessity and suitability of such a questionnaire. In his opinion, personal interviews with qualified representatives at the Conference would provide adequate and accurate information.

Mr. SYCHRAVA (Czechoslovakia) thought that it would be quite logical that Members invited to the Conference should be requested to send, ahead of time, to facilitate the work of the Conference, a report on the prevailing situation in their countries.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed that a general report or digest might be appropriate.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that general reports might be too broad and might therefore not cover the specific points required.

Prof. HUMPHREY (Secretariat), in reply to a query of Mr. Chafee explained that questionnaires had been formulated by UNESCO, the Status of Women Commission and the Trusteeship Council.

Mr. FARR (UNESCO) stated that UNESCO had drawn up a questionnaire covering 1500 questions in the field of film, press and radio for use by field surveyors in the following war-devastated countries: France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, Norway, Denmark, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Greece, China and the Philippine Republic.

In response to a question of the CHAIRMAN as to the possibility of extending the questionnaire of UNESCO so as to eliminate the preparation of a questionnaire by the Secretary-General, Mr. FARR (UNESCO) said that it would be impossible to do so in sufficient time to provide the required information for the forthcoming Conference.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay) felt that the UNESCO questionnaire would complement that of the Sub-Commission and not be a substitute for it. The questionnaire should not be sent only to governments, but should be distributed to organizations, radio stations, foreign correspondents, and

/news

news agencies.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada) suggested that the countries invited to the Conference be asked to send in information on the subjects being discussed at the Conference.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed postponement of the discussion until more information had been received from UNESCO.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada) stressed the fact that delegates to the Conference would want information beforehand and urged the Sub-Commission to decide upon the principle -- whether or not a questionnaire should be prepared. He felt that discussion of substance could be deferred until the UNESCO document was at hand.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) reiterated his desire to postpone the entire question so as to give members an opportunity to consider further the best methods for gathering information.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) and Mr. SYCHRAVA (Czechoslovakia) supported the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposal.

It was unanimously decided to adjourn the debate on the preparation of the questionnaire.

4. Plan of Organization of the Conference on Freedom of Information (documents E/CN.4/Sub.1/8 and E/CN.4/Sub.1/12).

The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of members to paragraphs 17 and 18 of Mr. Cruikshank's paper (E/CN.4/Sub.1/12) and paragraph 3 of the Secretariat paper (E/CN.4/Sub.1/8) and pointed out the slight differences in each.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) explained that Mr. Cruikshank wished Governments to decide upon the status of the various people on their delegations.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States of America) desired to discuss the composition of delegations but requested further study of the question before voting on it.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought it advisable to postpone discussion in order to examine more thoroughly the matter under consideration.

As several members agreed to postponement of discussion, the meeting was then adjourned at 4:40 p.m.
