ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

CONSEIL ECONOMIQUE ET SOCIAL

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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND OF THE PRESS

FIRST SESSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success on Thursday, 22 May 1947 at 11:00 a.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Dr. G. J. van Heuven Goedhart	(Nethlerlands)
Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Lev Sychwava	(Czechoslovakia)
Rapporteur:	Mr. George Ferguson	(Canada)
Members:	Mr. P. H. Chang	(China)
	Mr. de Montoussé	(France)
	Mr. C. 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)
	Mr. R. Fontaina	(Uruguay)
Representatives of Specialized Agencies:		
	Mr. William Farr	(UNESCO)
Consultants of Non-Governmental Organizations:		
	Miss Toni Sender	(AFL)
Secretariat:	Prof. J. P. Humphrey	(Director, Division of Human Rights)
	Mr. C. A. Hogan	(Secretary to Sub-Commission)

1. Consideration of Status of Specialized Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations Invited to the Conference on Freedom of Information

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that no rule existed for the status of specialized agencies at a conference. He suggested that the Conference on Freedom of Information grant to the specialized agencies the same status as that accorded to them by the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) supported the suggestion of the Chairman.

It was unanimously agreed to grant to the specialized agencies invited to the Conference, namely, ILO, FAO, UNESCO, and ICAO, the right to participa in the discussions and propose items for the agenda, but not the right to vote. This status would be given to the four specialized agencies and to such others as might have concluded agreements with the United Nations by the time the Conference convenes.

The CHAIRMAN noted that the International Organization of Journalists, though in Category (B), had a special interest in the forthcoming Conference and urged that this organization be accorded privileges equal to those of the specialized agencies.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), felt that the IOJ, as regards this conference, should have the same rights as organizations in Category (A).

Mr. HOGAN (Secretary), explained that organizations in Category (A) had the right to participate in debates only with the permission of the Chairman. They could not, on their own initiative, propose items for the agenda, as the specialized agencies could, but were permitted to propose agenda items through a Member of the United Nations, by transmitting a recommendation to the President of the Council or to the Secretary-General or by addressing a request to the Economic and Social Council's Non-Governmental Organization Committee.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), thought that those non-governmental organizations invited should sit as observers. He felt that the work of the Conference would be delayed if organizations were allowed to change or amend the agenda. The IOJ, in his opinion, should not be granted any special rights but should be invited to attend in an advisory capacity.

Mr. CHAFEE (United States), was in favour of the IOJ being given Category (A) status during the Conference.

Mr. SYCHRAVA (Czechoslovakia), believed the Sub-Commission would be justified in recommending Category (A) status for the IOJ.

/Mr. CHRISTENSEN

Mr. CHRISTENSEN (Norway), on the other hand, proposed that the IOJ have the same rights as the specialized agencies, inasmuch as this organization was very much concerned with the work of the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN considered the Norwegian suggestion to be an amendment to the proposal of the United States Member and proceeded to vote first on the Norwegian amendment, which was lost.

DECISION: It was unanimously agreed to grant the International Organization of Journalists the same privileges as those organizations in Category (A).

It was agreed that the Non-Governmental Organizations in Category (A) attending the Conference should have equivalent status, and that the rules of procedure of the Conference be amended to conform with the decisions taken.

It was also agreed that Specialized Agencies concluding agreements with the United Nations before the Conference be granted equivalent status.

2. Examination of Draft Agenda for the Conference on Freedom of Information (Documents E/355, E/CN.4/Sub.1/9, E/CN.4/Sub.1/12)

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Sub-Commission first consider as agenda items measures that could be taken to facilitate the gathering and transmitting of news.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), desired a general exchange of opinions and co-ordination of the three proposals.

The CHAIRMAN explained that a document was forthcoming which compared the points of the three proposals.

Mr. FERGUSON (Canada), thought it would be of value to have preliminary statements from the three representatives who had presented the proposals.

Mr. de MONTOUSSE (France), and Mr. CHANG (China), suggested that the French draft might be used as a basis for discussion. Prof. Chafee and Mr. Mackenzie could enlarge upon specific points where necessary.

Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom), thought the French document was narrower in its concept than either the United Kingdom or the United States draft and added that the Secretariat paper might prove a valuable aid to discussion.

/Mr. CHAFEE

Mr. CHAFEE (United States), said that he would prefer to delay the question of texts until the arrival of the Secretariat paper.

Mr. LOMAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), favoured postponement of the discussion.

It was decided to await the arrival of the Secretariat document before continuing discussion. The meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.
