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Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

AGENDA ITEM 55

**Public information activities of the United Nations:
report of the Committee of Experts on United Nations
Public Information, and comments and recom-
mendations thereon by the Secretary-General (A/
3928, A/3945, A/C.5/757, A/C.5/764, A/C.5/L.527,
A/C.5/L.529, A/C.5/L.530) (continued)**

1. Mr. VENKATARAMAN (India) thought the report of the Committee of Experts on United Nations Public Information (A/3928) one of the ablest ever submitted to a United Nations body. The fact that it had been adopted unanimously enhanced the value and importance of its recommendations. The General Assembly had the right and the duty to see that the sums voted for the information services of the United Nations were used with proper economy and maximum efficiency. It was fitting, therefore, that the Fifth Committee should take the opportunity offered it of exercising control over administrative expenditure, as it was supposed to do, by subjecting the useful recommendations of the Committee of Experts to a detailed and impartial examination. To that end, the violent criticism raised by the publication of the report—criticism of a severity that could only be attributed to a superficial reading of the report—must be refuted.

2. The Indian Government stood committed to the fundamental principle of freedom of information. In the view of the Indian delegation, the task of the Office of Public Information was governed by the following principles: first, there must be the widest possible promotion of public understanding of the United Nations; secondly, the United Nations must at all times be in a position to give full and objective information regardless of national points of view; thirdly, the mass media of information should be helped to report fully and objectively; fourthly, all Governments should do what they could to secure public confidence and support for the United Nations, and should take care not to place barriers in the way of the free flow of United Nations information into their territories; lastly, the United Nations should not engage in any propaganda. Those principles had not been in any way challenged by the Committee's report.

3. It had been said that the Committee recommended a change in the basic policy in regard to information; he felt that there was nothing in the report to justify that statement. For example, far from disputing the principle that the United Nations could not achieve its purposes unless the peoples of the world were informed of its aims and its work, the Committee, in paragraph 227 of its report, based its directives on a specific reaffirmation of that principle.

4. The second paragraph of the basic principles adopted in 1952^{1/} was extremely important and worthy of most careful scrutiny. It defined the task of the Office of Public Information as not only to disseminate information or provide access to meetings, to documentation, press releases and so on, but still more, to develop an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations among the peoples of the world. In other words, it must arouse and sustain public interest in the complicated work of the United Nations, and also give people a sense of identity with the Organization. That meant that the information material produced by the United Nations must be really utilized and assimilated by those for whom it was intended—a highly difficult process needing intermediaries able to adapt the material to their audience. That concept had been accepted in the basic principles and the Committee had merely re-emphasized its importance. The United Nations, for budgetary reasons alone, could not publicize its work directly among the peoples of the world, and it must necessarily work through the services, organizations and private persons mentioned in paragraph 214 of the Committee's report. There was no "new or newly interpreted set of principles". On the contrary, the Committee did not say that the Office of Public Information should not undertake on its own initiative positive action to supplement the information provided by existing agencies. It merely emphasized, and rightly, that the production of information material was not an end in itself and that the dissemination of information, so as to reach all peoples, was the most vital aspect of the Office's activities.

5. The Secretary-General was afraid (A/3945) that the new system recommended by the Committee might lead national Governments and organizations to act as "filters and transformers" between the Office of Public Information and the peoples of the world, and that thereby the objective and international approach would be lost. But none of the Committee's comments on the need for presenting United Nations information in the languages and according to the cultural background of different areas, in accordance with paragraph 4 of the basic principles, ran counter to the principles already adopted.

^{1/} Approved by the General Assembly in resolution 595 (VI); for text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 41, document A/C.5/L.172, annex.

6. The Committee had not proposed the elimination of any of the information media enumerated in the basic principles, but the observations which it had made with a view to rationalizing and improving that work had given rise to a misunderstanding. He quoted paragraph 212 of the report in that connexion and recalled that in view of its interpretation of the basic principles, the Office of Public Information had been forced, every time the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had asked it to determine an order of priority or to list its various activities according to their importance, to state that according to the basic principles all its activities were of equal importance. Because of that situation, the suggestion had been made on several occasions that a ceiling should be imposed on the expenditure of the Office of Public Information—which was arbitrary—or that a specific percentage of the budget should be voted for that purpose—which was irrational, as there was no logical relation between information needs and overall expenditure. The Committee of Experts felt that the Office of Public Information should not feel itself obliged to utilize all the information media enumerated in the basic principles at all times. He could not understand how, by asking the Office of Public Information to choose between them, the Committee could be said to have violated the basic principles.

7. It had also been alleged that the Committee had gone beyond its terms of reference. As the representative of the United Arab Republic had already pointed out, it was only necessary to refer to resolution 1177 (XII) and the suggestions in the Secretary-General's memorandum (A/3928, annex I) to see how false that allegation was.

8. Another point on which the report had been criticized was that the Committee was alleged to have recommended that the role of the accredited United Nations correspondents should be reduced and that the facilities they enjoyed should be cut down. Not only had the Committee made no recommendation to that effect, but it actually proposed expanding the facilities provided for correspondents; in that connexion, the comments in paragraphs 43, 56, 59 and 227 (c) of the report should be looked into carefully. With regard to press releases, the Committee merely recommended that their number and frequency should be reduced; that was an administrative question which the Secretary-General could deal with satisfactorily, taking into account the actual needs of correspondents. With regard to press liaison services, the Committee did not recommend that they should be reduced; on the contrary, it recommended that they should be expanded by recruiting more personnel at higher levels of responsibility. Thus, the fears of the United Nations Correspondents Association (A/C.5/757) concerning a reduction in the services provided to journalists working at Headquarters were groundless. The Association's comment that there was some notion of down-grading the importance of mass media of communication was still less justified, judging by paragraphs 214, 222 and 227 of the report.

9. Regarding the so-called "thematic approach", he pointed out that in view of the growing variety and complexity of United Nations activities, it was becoming increasingly important for newspaper readers, students and experts, and government officials, to have access to reviews or analyses of the work and the dis-

cussions of the United Nations. Such material, which must be adapted to reader-interest in the various areas without detracting in any way from its objectivity, accuracy and international balance, was essential for creating an informed understanding of the United Nations. By emphasizing the importance of that approach, the Committee had shown that it was aware of long-term needs in public information.

10. The Secretary-General accepted, on the whole, the Committee's recommendations on publications, Information Centres, the External Relations and Public Liaison Divisions, and the development of co-ordination with the specialized agencies; he had no comment on the recommendations regarding the Radio and Films Services, although he had serious reservations on the suspension of unrelayed broadcasts. In addition, he (the Secretary-General) defended the proposal for the construction of a new television studio.

11. The quality and usefulness of the monthly reviews did not justify their being kept at the present level, and they should be cut to the minimum. On the other hand, in order to encourage the publication of articles, pamphlets and books by others, the Indian delegation supported the recommendation for a quarterly reference journal.

12. With respect to information centres, the system could and did work effectively, provided that the greatest care was shown in the selection of officers and provided they were given the necessary facilities and guidance from Headquarters to carry out their task. The present distribution of the centres should be studied to ensure that the Office of Public Information was paying particular attention to the special problems and needs of those areas where information media were less fully developed. He was sorry to note that there had been little progress in that direction and that an excessive share of the expenditure continued to be devoted to the more advanced areas of the world where the existing channels of information, and especially mass media, were already very well developed. The Indian delegation would like to see information centres in Burma and Ceylon and also in or near Trust Territories.

13. He supported the Committee's recommendation concerning the establishment of a Bureau of Planning and Co-ordination, since he was convinced that systematic planning of the work was indispensable and could be ensured only to the extent that some service was specifically responsible for such planning.

14. With respect to radio broadcasts, the Committee had sought to make a realistic appraisal of the situation. It was regrettable that the reception of broadcasts from the United Nations was poor in nearly all the countries of the world and that certain Governments refused to co-operate. Efforts could no doubt be made to use persuasion with such Governments, but in the present state of affairs, it was obviously preferable to eliminate the broadcasts which were not relayed and therefore did not reach those at whom they were aimed. The largest portion of the budget of the Office of Public Information was devoted to the radio services and, since there was general agreement on the need for economies, it was reasonable that the reduction in funds should first affect the sectors in which the results were the least effective, if not altogether non-existent.

15. The Indian delegation endorsed without reservation the three principles set forth by the Secretary-General, i.e., that United Nations information should be objective and impartial, that it should be adapted to the linguistic and cultural requirements of various areas, and that it should be universal. There was no reason to feel that the Committee of Experts believed otherwise; in its study, it had been guided by the rule of "maximum effectiveness at minimum cost" and the conclusions it had reached could hardly be considered as surprising by the members of the Fifth Committee.

16. There seemed to be many points in common in the three draft resolutions before the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/L.527, A/C.5/L.529, A/C.5/L.530), and it should be possible to eliminate the differences so that the decision would be unanimous. The Indian delegation would be prepared to support any draft resolution approving the recommendations made by the Committee of Experts in paragraph 227 of its report, requesting the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of those recommendations in 1959, as far as practicable, providing for an examination of the administrative and financial aspects of the recommendations by the Advisory Committee and for review at the fourteenth session of a report by the Secretary-General on the progress of implementation in 1959, and endorsing the suggestion for the formation of an advisory group to assist the Secretary-General in matters of public information.

17. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WLJCK (Netherlands) said he was surprised at the artificially created agitation in connexion with the report of the Committee of Experts. Even before the report was issued there had been a rumour that the Committee would propose amendment of the basic principles governing the work of the United Nations in the field of public information in a way which might actually jeopardize freedom of information itself. If such had been the case, the attitude of his delegation would have been clear, since it had always felt that freedom of information was essential in the society of nations and that objective information about the United Nations should be made available to the peoples of the world, particularly those of Member States, without hindrance. The Committee of Experts had made a thorough study and had tried to find ways and means of improving the effectiveness of the information activities of the United Nations within the budgetary limitations imposed by the General Assembly; and it had prepared a useful report. It could not be denied that some of the considerations and recommendations advanced by the Committee might give rise to misgivings. Perhaps effectiveness had been sought at the expense of that other aim—"to promote to the greatest possible extent... an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the Organization among the peoples of the world". The Committee had been accused of having gone beyond its terms of reference, but he was not sure whether that was the case; it was very often difficult to draw a sharp dividing line between problems of policy and problems of method.

18. His delegation wished to approach the report from a practical point of view. The question whether to use institutions, governmental or private, as media to disseminate information, was one of efficiency rather than of principle; the use of other media when and where necessary was not thereby excluded. It was

perhaps useful to recall in that connexion that according to the revised principles of 1952, the Office of Public Information was not only intended to "assist and rely upon the services of existing official and private agencies", but also to "undertake, on its own initiative, positive informational activities that will supplement the services of existing agencies". The Committee's recommendation that radio broadcasts which were not relayed or re-broadcast should be suspended seemed too drastic. His delegation was not impervious to the arguments adduced in paragraphs 79, 83, 84 and 85 of its report, but it thought that the problem should be thoroughly investigated again in order to weigh the pros and cons.

19. The Committee's observations with regard to facilities for the correspondents accredited to the United Nations had given rise to some concern. They had not been followed by a recommendation, however, and actually, the importance of the services was stressed in paragraph 227 (c), (d), and (f). His delegation would be opposed to any measure which might hamper the important work of the correspondents.

20. With regard to the United Nations reviews, his delegation thought that publication on a monthly basis should continue, since a quarterly edition would not suffice. It agreed with the Committee of Experts however, that the English version, and perhaps also the Spanish version, were not satisfactory; they should not be discontinued, but should be brought into line with the French edition. It seemed essential that a review should give a complete picture of all the activities of the United Nations without going into all the details, which would be impossible.

21. With reference to the Information Centres, the Committee of Experts had rightly stressed the fact that they should not be overwhelmed by the task of distribution. Headquarters should supply the basic material, but its presentation should be adjusted to the national idioms of the various parts of the world, as the Secretary-General himself had said.

22. In general, as far as the draft resolutions before the Fifth Committee were concerned, his delegation was in favour of the United States draft (A/C.5/527), the preambular paragraphs of which set forth very clearly the principles underlying the information programme. It would be very difficult for his delegation to endorse without reservations all the general recommendations of the Committee of Experts, and it hardly seemed realistic to mention a ceiling of \$4.5 million at the present time. Nevertheless, if the sponsors of the various draft resolutions could see their way to proposing a joint text, his delegation would naturally reconsider its position.

23. Mr. LEVYCHKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the report of the Committee of Experts was an excellent one for two reasons. First, the Committee was composed of individuals representing all the geographic regions and was therefore in a position to appreciate the particular needs of the various countries. The fact that its conclusions and recommendations had been adopted unanimously was sufficient indication of the impartiality and objectivity of its members. Second, it had done an enormous amount of work: its members had visited sixteen capitals in a great variety of regions and had consulted 308 truly representative and responsible persons, as was indicated in annex II of the report.

24. There were four obvious conclusions. The Committee should be most grateful to the Committee of Experts and should mention the fact in its report to the General Assembly. The objectivity, and particularly the scope of the findings of the Committee of Experts were undeniable and, in that connexion, his delegation fully approved the comments of the Indian representative. In order to be able to organize information services in conformity with United Nations principles, great care had to be exercised in recruiting information personnel to ensure equitable geographical representation. Finally, the interference of correspondents accredited to the United Nations and of certain United States newspapers in the work of the Committee of Experts was altogether out of place.

25. The Committee's report constituted a sound basis for improvement of United Nations public information activities in accordance with the Principles and Purposes of the United Nations; and he did not understand why the Secretary-General, in his comments and recommendations, should have voiced scepticism concerning the Committee's recommendations and even have criticized them strongly.

26. If United Nations public information activities were to be organized more satisfactorily, care must be taken that certain important principles were applied and the Soviet delegation approved in particular those stated by the Committee of Experts in paragraph 227 (a) and (b) of its report and by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 2 and 3 of his statement (682nd meeting). Unfortunately, however, those principles had not always been respected in practice. The Secretariat attached too much importance to controversial matters and not enough to United Nations activities in favour of international co-operation and the peaceful settlement of international disputes. In its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946 the General Assembly had given the Secretary-General very clear instructions: the United Nations should not engage in propaganda but should encourage the dissemination of information concerning its activities by all existing media of information, acting in close co-operation with Governments and with the competent agencies of the Member States. The General Assembly had confirmed those instructions on many occasions in subsequent resolutions, but the Secretariat had set about establishing its own public information service which functioned parallel to the agencies and even in competition with them, instead of supplementing their services. It had thus lost contact with the situation in the various countries and tended to address itself direct to the peoples of the world, ignoring the Governments. The Secretary-General was elected by the Member States and had to carry out their decisions without giving his own interpretation of them. Furthermore, he was required to provide objective information concerning United Nations activities and to avoid anything in the nature of propaganda or publicity.

27. For information purposes, the Office of Public Information had at its disposal the existing media in the Member States, which represented vast facilities; yet it appeared to fear that Governments would distort information concerning United Nations activities, although experience had clearly shown that there was nothing to be feared in that direction. It had lacked objectiveness in placing too much emphasis on those problems on which the major Powers were opposed

(for instance, it had if anything helped to intensify the propaganda concerning the Korean war), and in neglecting activities which served the cause of peace—it had said practically nothing, for example, concerning the General Assembly's resolutions on uniting for peace, on the condemnation of propaganda against peace, on the right of peoples to exploit their natural resources, and on peaceful coexistence.

28. He realized that public information raised difficult problems, since it meant taking into account the interests of all the Member States, without ever opposing them; but the content of the information was not the only factor, there was also the question of the media used to disseminate it. The Office of Public Information had no radio broadcasting station of its own and its programmes were mainly broadcast by the transmitters of the Voice of America. That station was known to be an information agency of the United States of America and its hostility to the USSR and the peoples' democracies was common knowledge. It had participated in the organization of the counter-revolutionary movement in Hungary and met with strong hostility in all the peoples' democracies, with the result that its broadcasts were listened to with distrust. For its broadcasts to the People's Republic of China, the Office of Public Information used the transmitters of the United States Armed Forces, which naturally gave rise to the most vehement protests. There were many facilities besides the Voice of America for addressing the peoples of the world. A mere glance at the report of the Committee of Experts showed that.

29. The choice of countries to which special broadcasts were directed appeared to be dictated by political considerations. That was the only explanation to be found for the fact that, for example, Hungary was the only country in Europe which throughout the year received unrelayed broadcasts, transmitted by the Voice of America. He drew the Fifth Committee's attention to the comments made by the Committee of Experts in paragraph 85 of its report. Political considerations also played a part in other connexions. The United Nations programmes were based on the American pattern and reflected United States foreign policy issues. It must be made quite clear to everyone that the policy of the United Nations was not the policy of the United States. To mention only one example, the Office of Public Information had arranged a broadcast, in the Hollywood manner, with the assistance of American artists, in order to prove that the world needed armaments. A broadcast so unworthy of the United Nations could only be detrimental to its prestige. In addition, the Office engaged in propaganda directed against certain Member States. In 1956 there had been two emergency special sessions to deal with the question of Hungary and the armed aggression against Egypt. The Paris Information Centre had devoted six special broadcasts to the former and none to the latter, though it was of vital importance to world peace.

30. The Office's lack of objectiveness was not restricted to broadcasting. With regard to Press and Publications, he noted from paragraph 133 of the Committee's report that out of twenty-four pamphlets published in 1957, fourteen were reprints of articles published in the *United Nations Review* and ten were new texts. From annex V it appeared that many were only very remotely connected with United Nations

activities. Those most widely circulated were brochures of a propaganda nature, dealing with problems which aroused the greatest differences of opinion between Member States, and having attractive titles to appeal to the reader. The Office of Public Information was paying undue attention to everything connected with the emergency forces, which were the "brain-child" of one or two Member States only and not of the United Nations. The exhibition of photographs organized at the Ghana Information Centre to publicize the work of the United Nations was another example of the way in which the truth was being camouflaged.

31. How had the Office of Public Information come to be an instrument of propaganda in favour of the policy of certain Member States? The Secretary-General was overburdened with political responsibilities and had entrusted public information matters to Mr. Bokhari, Under-Secretary for Public Information, who had fallen back on his assistants and his assistants were Americans. They were highly competent but, quite naturally, being impregnated with American culture, they knew of no truths other than those of United States policy. However, if the information provided was not objective, it was not their fault but the fault of those who had organized the Office of Public Information. The Press and Publications Division had thirty-eight specialists, including thirteen Americans who, incidentally, occupied most of the higher posts—its Director, for example, was American. The chiefs of the Press Services and of the Central Editorial Service were Americans. Clearly it was difficult, in such circumstances, to ensure objectivity in the provision of information.

32. Mr. BENDER (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, said that the Soviet representative's remarks were uncalled for, and he protested against the attacks made on officers of the Secretariat whose high integrity was unquestioned.

33. The CHAIRMAN asked the Soviet representative, if he wished to make criticisms, to criticize only the departments concerned or the Secretary-General, and not subordinate officers.

34. Mr. LEVYCHKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had not criticized individual officers, but had simply pointed out the difficulties involved in ensuring objectivity of information when the principle of equitable geographical representation was not observed. He trusted that the Secretary-General and the Office of Public Information would bear in mind his criticisms, which had been made in all sincerity to assist them in improving the information services in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. He had mentioned facts and was prepared to mention others if necessary to support his argument. He would speak again at a later stage to indicate his position on the draft resolutions.

35. Mr. LONGDEN (United Kingdom) recalled the terms of General Assembly resolution 13 (I) to the effect that "the United Nations cannot achieve the purposes for which it has been created unless the peoples of the world are fully informed of its aims and activities".

36. While there was agreement upon the end to be achieved, there were different views as to the means of attaining it, particularly because of the limitations imposed by the United Nations budget. The General Assembly had been concerned with the problem of in-

formation since 1946 as was indicated by the numerous documents which, from General Assembly resolution 595 (VI) adopted in 1952 to resolution 1177 (XII) of 1957, had led to the establishment of the Committee of Experts with instructions, *inter alia*, to undertake an appraisal of the methods used and the effectiveness of the results achieved by the public information services and to recommend possible modifications to ensure a maximum of effectiveness at the lowest possible cost.

37. The Committee's report had been assailed on many sides and in the opinion of the United Kingdom delegation very unfairly assailed. The competence of the members of the Committee had been questioned. For its part, the United Kingdom Government had nominated Mr. R. A. Bevan, an expert whose qualifications were beyond all question. The other members of the Committee were well known to the Fifth Committee. Moreover, their competence could not be questioned without, at the same time, questioning the decisions of the Governments which had nominated them. It had also been stated that the experts had exceeded their terms of reference by dealing with questions of principle. However, in paragraph 6 of the Secretary-General's memorandum of 14 May 1958, (reproduced in annex I to the Committee's report) it had been suggested that, after consideration of principles, the Committee might consider what should, in prevailing conditions, be the extent of the information services acceptable to Member Nations. He thought it unfortunate that the Press and radio, basing themselves on mere rumours, should have made criticisms as violent as they were unjustified, and he hoped that members of the Fifth Committee, who had had time to read the report of the Committee of Experts thoroughly, would be able to assess its value dispassionately.

38. The essence of the Committee's recommendations was that the United Nations had in effect been using a shot-gun and that most of the pellets had failed to hit the target. A more effective and less wasteful procedure would be to use a weapon of greater precision and to get nearer the target by entrusting much more of the work to the Information Centres, which constituted the most important means of disseminating information about the United Nations among the peoples of the world (A/3928, para. 227 (e)).

39. Throughout its report, the Committee of Experts recognized the importance of the Press and of radio and television and the need to provide press correspondents with the facilities they required in their work. When the Committee doubted the need for automatically producing "takes" and felt that the system could be rationalized, it assumed that correspondents would prefer to cover the more important meetings themselves. There was no suggestion made in the Committee's report which would do anything but improve the current arrangements and facilitate the work of accredited correspondents.

40. The problem with regard to radio and television broadcasting arose from the General Assembly's endorsement of the proposal that the total cost of the information services should be gradually reduced to \$4.5 million. The estimates for 1959 amounted to over \$5 million. The cost of the radio services represented nearly 20 per cent of the whole budget for the Office of Public Information. The question was whether that sum was proportionately too large and whether it could be more effectively spent, for instance, by trans-

ferring more of it to the production of local programmes currently costing only \$70,000. The Committee of Experts, while appreciating that authentic news about the activities of the United Nations could best originate through its own broadcasts (para. 84), doubted whether in view of the present level of intensity of broadcasts and their reception qualities—there being whole regions where reception of unrelayed broadcasts was extremely poor because of technical difficulties—the results produced were commensurate with the financial outlay and effort made (para. 85).

41. The matter took on quite a different aspect where the Office of Public Information was using existing channels. Co-operation between Member States and the Office in the dissemination of information through national networks would allow the work of the Office in that field to be much cheaper and more effective. As television broadcasts could at present only reach the American continent, the Committee of Experts rightly felt that, for the time being, the provision of a new studio would not be justified (para. 274).

42. In paragraph 190 of its report, the Committee of Experts expressed the conviction that the Information Centres occupied a position of no less importance than the provision of basic facilities and services at Headquarters to news agencies, press, radio and television correspondents. He agreed with that view and supported the recommendations set out in paragraph 227 (e) to (1), which he regarded as among the most important recommendations made by the Committee of Experts and to which the United Kingdom draft resolution (A/C.5/L.529) referred. He noted with satisfaction that the Secretary-General appreciated the need for "decentralizing" to the regions as much of the production work now carried out at Headquarters as was possible (A/3945, para. 14). He attached particular significance to the parts of paragraph 227 which dealt with the Directors of Information Centres; those Directors should be allowed to use their own initiative as far as possible and, provided they possessed a basic understanding of the region and a knowledge of the language, should not be citizens of the country in which they served.

43. It was a misinterpretation of the recommendations in paragraph 227 (b), (d) and (j) to see in them a danger of propaganda. Such fears were not justified, and a careful reading of the report showed that it had not been the Committee's intention to make any such recommendations. Paragraph 227 (a), and various other paragraphs of the report clearly indicated the importance which the Committee of Experts attached to the observance of objectivity, impartiality and accuracy by the United Nations in presenting information. The Secretary-General had described Governments and national organizations as "filters and transformers", but the United Kingdom delegation failed to see how within its budgetary limitations the United Nations could inform the peoples of the world without the aid of some intermediaries.

44. Paragraph 227 (b), (d) and (j) likewise dealt with the presentation of material and, in that connexion, strong criticisms had been expressed. The word "thematic" had aroused alarm. It had been mistakenly feared that the word implied information with a slant whereas it merely referred to subjects of information. Moreover, the term had been used in 1954 by the Survey Group appointed by the Secretary-General. The Committee of Experts had advocated (paragraph 227 (b)) that information should not be presented in a way likely to estrange people from the whole concept of the United Nations. That was an elementary desideratum. At the present time it was unrealistic to equate all the peoples of the world; many were today still illiterate and comparatively few could be reached by radio or television. In the meantime, therefore, the best thing to do was to try to keep them informed (*inter alia*) by the means suggested by the Committee of Experts.

45. Those were the reasons why the United Kingdom delegation invited the Fifth Committee to endorse the recommendations in paragraph 227 of the report of the Committee of Experts and to adopt the draft resolution which the United Kingdom delegation had submitted.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.