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President: Sir Douglas COPLAND (Australia).

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, China, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, India, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Mexico, Philippines, Uruguay.

The representative of the following specialized agency: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 15

Freedom of information (E/2681, E/2683 and Add.1 to 3, E/2686 and Corr.1 and 2, E/2687 and Add.1 to 3, E/2693 and Add.1 to 3, E/2698 and Add.1, E/2702, E/2705 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2, E/2750, E/2759)

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE (E/2759)

1. Mr. SOBOLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) could not support the proposal in draft resolution C in the report of the Social Committee (E/2759) that consideration of the draft convention on freedom of information should be deferred for two years. His delegation had participated in every stage of the discussion of the draft convention in the Social Committee, as well as at previous General Assembly and Council sessions, and had made many concrete proposals designed to ensure that the draft convention would be an effective instrument for guaranteeing freedom of information. Its proposals had been rejected, with the result that the draft convention as it stood had in its provisions contrary to the United Nations Charter and to the letter and spirit of General Assembly resolution 110 (II). But the imperfections of the draft convention must not dissuade the Council from attempting to draft an instrument which would really serve the purposes of freedom of information. He would therefore abstain on draft resolution C.

2. He agreed with operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution B; his own Government had taken measures to ensure facilities for the distribution of information provided that it did not serve the ends of war propaganda or provoke hatred among peoples or racial hatred and discrimination. The Ministry of Communications of the Soviet Union had made agreements with the appropriate authorities in other countries in order to provide lower rates and better facilities for information media. His delegation also accepted operative paragraph 3, but it had strong objections to operative paragraph 1. It had stated at the Council's previous session that any attempt to raise in the United Nations the question of censoring outgoing news dispatches would be contrary to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter and an infringement of a State's right to suppress libellous information sent out with the object of misleading public opinion and endangering international peace and security.

3. His delegation accepted the basic principle of draft resolution D and agreed that further study of the question might well lead to the preparation of effective measures to develop information enterprises in underdeveloped countries. He could not, however, agree with the discriminatory provision of operative paragraph 1 that only those non-member States which were members of a specialized agency should be invited to transmit information. The USSR delegation reserved the right to introduce at the appropriate time a proposal designed to correct the unjust provision of paragraph 1 to which he had just referred.

4. His delegation would support draft resolution A.

5. He regretted that the Council had had no opportunity to discuss the draft convention on freedom of information, since such an exchange of views would have clearly shown what were the problems of freedom of information and the possible solutions.

6. Any discussion of freedom of information must take due account of the United Nations Charter and in particular of Article 1, and of General Assembly resolution 110 (II) on measures to be taken against the inciters of a new war. In the light of those considerations, it was clear that the Organization's main tasks in connexion with freedom of information were: first, to develop friendly relations among nations by promoting the dissemination of accurate information free from pressure by or dictation from private publishing monopolies, trusts and syndicates; secondly, to promote the solution of economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and to strengthen the development of economic links between nations on a basis of equality and mutual respect for the independence and sovereignty of States; and thirdly, to counteract the use of information media for incitement to war, nazi or fascist propaganda, racial or national discrimination, hatred or enmity or international hatred.

7. If all information media were guided by those principles, the Organization's task would be much

simpler, but unfortunately, information media in some countries served merely as weapons in the "cold war". The Press and radio in the hands of private monopolies, acting on the orders of aggressive elements in certain countries, were used to spread insecurity and fear of a new war and to fabricate lies directed against the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies.

8. His delegation had always realized the importance of the proper use of information media in furthering the purposes and principles of the United Nations and it had been on his delegation's initiative that the General Assembly had adopted resolution 110 (II). In the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission in London in 1955 his Government had submitted on 10 May a draft declaration on the limitation of armaments, the prohibition of atomic weapons and the removal of the threat of a new war, which contained certain proposals directly connected with the role of information media in strengthening international peace and security. The declaration of the Government of the USSR drew attention to the dangers of propaganda in favour of a new war, and growing incitement in a number of countries in recent times to an atomic war, in violation of General Assembly resolution 110 (II). The declaration noted that the situation that had arisen required that immediate and effective action should be taken to ease international tension and to strengthen mutual confidence in relations between States. That could only be achieved if an end were put to the "cold war" and if the propaganda for a new war which was being carried on in certain States, with its accompanying incitement to enmity and hatred between peoples and its inflaming of certain peoples against others, were brought to a stop. The USSR Government proposed in that declaration that the General Assembly should recommend all States to take the necessary measures to ensure scrupulous compliance with the General Assembly resolution condemning all forms of propaganda for a new war, to put an end to all calls for war and for the kindling of hostility between peoples in the Press, on the radio, in the cinema and in public statements. Non-compliance with that recommendation would be regarded as a violation by a State of its international duty and of its obligations to the United Nations, namely, to abstain in its international relations from the threat or use of force and not to permit violations of the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

9. The adoption of those proposals by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and its scrupulous implementation by Governments would greatly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

10. The Soviet Union itself, and the peoples' democracies, had taken all practicable steps, in particular legislative measures, to ensure that information media served the cause of peace. War propaganda in the Soviet Union was considered to be a crime against humanity, and the use of information media to propagate hatred was severely punished. The Press belonged to the people and therefore did not have to serve the interests of private monopolists; it could remain objectively devoted to the promotion of friendly relations among nations and peaceful co-operation and serve the interests of the entire Soviet people. If information media in other States served the cause of peace as well as they did in the peoples' democracies, the "cold

war" would soon be a thing of the past, and the task of maintaining international peace and security would be considerably facilitated.

11. Mr. ULLRICH (Czechoslovakia) considered unsatisfactory the results achieved at the current session on the question of freedom of information, which were summarized in the Social Committee's report (E/2759), particularly the negative decision with respect to the draft convention on freedom of information. The Council had thereby evaded consideration of the substance of one of the most important items on the agenda of its current session. That fact was not counterbalanced by the positive results achieved through the unanimous adoption of the resolutions concerning technical assistance for the promotion of freedom of information and information media in under-developed countries.

12. The Czechoslovak delegation considered that neither the past resolutions nor the draft convention drawn up a few years earlier offered a guarantee that a solution could be found. It had stressed in the Social Committee that much still remained to be done and that no final solution could be reached without considerable effort. In particular, measures should be adopted to carry out the guiding principles laid down in the Charter and in General Assembly resolutions 110 (II) concerning measures to be taken against propaganda and the inciters of a new war, and 127 (II) on false or distorted reports.

13. The continuing propaganda carried on in certain countries in favour of a new war and of enmity between nations represented one of the most serious obstacles to the development of useful activities in the field of information. A Czechoslovak draft resolution in favour of measures to put an end to war propaganda had been submitted to the General Assembly at its ninth session but had unfortunately not been adopted.

14. Both Member and non-member States, and the United Nations itself, were faced with the task of adopting such recommendations and measures concerning dissemination of information as would be conducive to a lessening of international tensions and would serve to increase confidence in international relations. Governments which desired peace could neither advocate nor tolerate war propaganda, a type of propaganda which was not an expression of freedom of information but, on the contrary, an abuse of that freedom for ends hostile to the cause of peace and peaceful co-existence among nations. For that reason the Czechoslovak delegation could not vote in favour of operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution B, which allowed misuse of information media, for it felt that a State had the right to exercise control over the dissemination of news which advocated hostility between nations. Legislation had been adopted in Czechoslovakia and a number of other countries which made the fomenting of hatred between nations and the spreading of war propaganda and fascist ideology a penal offence.

15. The Czechoslovak people had welcomed the proposals which the Government of the Soviet Union had submitted on 10 May 1955 to the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, for those proposals offered new possibilities for a lessening of international tension and the creation of the necessary atmosphere of confidence and mutual understanding among nations.

16. In that connexion, the United Nations could do much to bring about the elimination of war propaganda by including in the draft convention on freedom of information provisions condemning the spreading of such propaganda and of hatred between nations. The desired objective should be the use of information media exclusively for the promotion of peace.

17. The PRESIDENT asked the Council to vote on the four draft resolutions submitted by the Social Committee (E/2759).

Draft resolution A was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

18. Mr. SOBOLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested a separate vote on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution B.

Operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution B was adopted by 14 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution B as a whole was adopted by 14 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution C was adopted by 11 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

19. Mr. SOBOLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed the deletion of the words "those" and "which are members of a specialized agency" in operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution D.

The proposal was rejected by 13 votes to 4, with 1 abstention.

20. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) proposed the deletion of the words "if any" and the insertion of the words "any based on" between the words "including" and "the recommendations" in operative paragraph 1 (b).

The proposal was adopted.

Draft resolution D, as amended, was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

21. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation had voted against draft resolution C because the Social Committee had taken a negative attitude not in keeping with the current international situation and had failed to carry out the General Assembly's instructions in the matter.

22. Mr. LOOMES (Australia) explained that he had abstained on draft resolution A because, although it was somewhat less vague than the draft submitted at the seventeenth session, the financial implications were still impossible to foresee and there was still uncertainty as to how the programme would be put into operation. Moreover, no request for such technical assistance had been received. It would have been better to refer the matter to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in order to prevent the risk of duplication.

23. He had also abstained on draft resolution D because he doubted whether making further studies when much of the ground had already been covered would be desirable or useful. The objective of the draft resolution was similar to, if not identical with, that of resolution A and open to similar objections.

24. Mr. EPINAT (France) said that his delegation had abstained on draft resolution C for the reasons given in the Social Committee.

25. It had also abstained on draft resolution A because it felt that technical assistance to under-developed countries should be limited to the fields already defined. He interpreted resolution A to mean that technical aid in respect of freedom of information would not in any case come under the technical assistance programmes, but would be parallel to them. He must stress his view that any efforts in connexion with freedom of information should be broadly international, and should have as their aim to organize exchanges and meetings going beyond the limits of regional action.

26. Mr. MIR KHAN (Pakistan) said that he had supported operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution B on the assumption that it reserved to Governments the right to regulate the transmission of information material in national emergencies in the interests of national security.

27. Mr. RAJAN (India) explained that he had voted against draft resolution C because the General Assembly had clearly stated its intention of discussing freedom of information at its eleventh session. The proper course for the Council to take would have been to give the Assembly constructive guidance. It should have suggested the principles to be taken into account, even if it could not actually draft the convention, or ways of carrying the work forward, such as the making of recommendations to the Commission on Human Rights or the convening of a conference of plenipotentiaries. Instead it had merely recommended postponement until the Assembly's twelfth session. One reason given in the resolution was the absence of a wide measure of agreement. If that was true, it would surely have been more logical to apply procedures that might obtain wider agreement.

28. He had voted for operative paragraph 1 in draft resolution B, but regarded it as relating essentially to the practice of censorship, and as not prejudicing a State's right to resort to it in exceptional circumstances for the sake of national defence.

29. Mr. RIVAS (Venezuela) said that he had voted against draft resolution C because in it the Council had totally disregarded General Assembly resolution 840 (IX).

30. He had also had doubts about operative paragraph 1 of resolution B, as it was virtually impossible to draw a distinction between the practice of censoring outgoing news from practices adopted in defence of national security. In that paragraph States were requested to refrain from using powers recognized in multilateral instruments.

31. Mr. HOTCHKIS (United States of America) said that he had voted for draft resolution A because he construed it to mean that a new programme would be set up parallel to, but separate from, the existing technical assistance programmes. He was confident that, with the co-operation of the Governments, the specialized agencies and the Secretary-General, the programme would prove successful.

AGENDA ITEM 24

Elections (E/2743 and Add.1 to 3, E/L.671)

32. The PRESIDENT called attention to the note by the Secretary-General (E/2743 and Add.1 to 3) concerning the renewal of one-third of the membership

of the functional commissions of the Council. He asked the Council to vote to fill the vacancies in the commissions.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dipp Gómez (Dominican Republic) and Mr. Akant (Turkey) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

France	18
Norway	16
China	14
Burma	9
Ecuador	6
Pakistan	6
Panama	6
Colombia	5
Brazil	1
Sweden	1
Indonesia	1
Haiti	1
Belgium	1

Having obtained the required majority, China, France and Norway were elected members of the Commission.

33. The PRESIDENT observed that the representative of Pakistan and the observers from Belgium, Brazil, Colombia and Haiti had indicated that they were not seeking election to the Commission. Under rule 69 of the rules of procedure, a special ballot would be held to determine whether Sweden or Indonesia should be included with Burma, Ecuador and Panama in the second ballot to fill the remaining two vacancies in the Commission.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dipp Gómez (Dominican Republic) and Mr. Akant (Turkey) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	17
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	17
Required majority:	9

Number of votes obtained:

Indonesia	9
Sweden	8

Having obtained the required majority, Indonesia was included in the second ballot.

Mr. Brilej (Yugoslavia) took the Chair.

34. The PRESIDENT called for the second ballot.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dipp Gómez (Dominican Republic) and Mr. Akant (Turkey) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

Burma	15
Ecuador	10
Panama	6
Indonesia	5

Having obtained the required majority, Burma and Ecuador were elected members of the Commission.

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

At the invitation of the President, Mr. van Braam Houckgeest (Netherlands) and Mr. Butt (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

Canada	17
India	16
New Zealand	15
Dominican Republic	14
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	12
Cuba	9
Iran	2
Iraq	1
Turkey	1

Having obtained the required majority, Canada, India, New Zealand, the Dominican Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were elected members of the Commission.

POPULATION COMMISSION

At the invitation of the President, Mr. van Braam Houckgeest (Netherlands) and Mr. Butt (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

France	18
Norway	15
China	14
Israel	14
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	12
Guatemala	7
Iran	3
Sweden	2
Haiti	1
Venezuela	1

Egypt	1
Honduras	1

Having obtained the required majority, France, Norway, China, Israel and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were elected members of the Commission.

SOCIAL COMMISSION

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dipp Gómez (Dominican Republic) and Mr. Akant (Turkey) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

Egypt	18
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15
Czechoslovakia	14
Sweden	12
Colombia	11
Dominican Republic	11
Argentina	10
Haiti	8
Mexico	5
Chile	1
Iraq	1

Having obtained the required majority, Egypt, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Colombia and the Dominican Republic were elected members of the Commission.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

At the invitation of the President, Mr. van Braam Houckgeest (Netherlands) and Mr. Butt (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

India	16
France	15
Iraq	15
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	14
Philippines	13
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	12
Guatemala	9
Uruguay	7
Egypt	2
Haiti	1
Indonesia	1
Poland	1

Having obtained the required majority, India, France, Iraq, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Philippines and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were elected members of the Commission.

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dipp Gómez (Dominican Republic) and Mr. Akant (Turkey) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	17
United States of America	16
Belgium	13
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	13
Venezuela	11
Israel	10
Lebanon	9
Mexico	9
Colombia	6
Philippines	2
Haiti	1

Having obtained the required majority, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Belgium, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Venezuela and Israel were elected members of the Commission.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

35. The PRESIDENT observed that Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Sweden and the United Kingdom had become members of the Board by virtue of their election to the Social Commission. The Council would hold a secret ballot to elect three members directly to the Board.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. van Braam Houckgeest (Netherlands) and Mr. Butt (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

Canada	15
Pakistan	14
Brazil	11
Yugoslavia	11
Iran	1
Greece	1

Having obtained the required majority, Canada and Pakistan were elected members of the Board.

36. The PRESIDENT called for a second ballot between Brazil and Yugoslavia to fill the third vacancy.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. van Braam Houckgeest (Netherlands) and Mr. Butt (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	18
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	18
Required majority:	10

Number of votes obtained:

Yugoslavia	11
Brazil	7

Having obtained the required majority, Yugoslavia was elected a member of the Board.

37. The PRESIDENT asked the Council to vote by secret ballot to elect one further member of the Board for a two-year term to fill the vacancy created by the election of the Dominican Republic to the Social Commission.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. van Braam Houckgeest (Netherlands) and Mr. Butt (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	18
Invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	17
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	17
Required majority:	9

Number of votes obtained:

Brazil	17
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Having obtained the required majority, Brazil was elected a member of the Board.

AGENDA ITEM 25

Confirmation of members of functional commissions of the Council (E/2742 and Add.1 and 2)

38. The PRESIDENT proposed that the list of representatives nominated by their Governments as representatives on the functional commissions (E/2742 and Add.1 and 2) should be approved.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.