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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Tenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD MEETING (CLOSED)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 30 March 1954, at 3 p.m.

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list of communications relating to human rights

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. INGLES	(Philippines)
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. WHITLAM	Australia
	Mr. NISOT	Belgium
	Mr. LABARCA)	Chile
	Mr. ORTEGA)	
	Mr. CHENG PACNAN	China
	Mr. GHORBAL	Egypt
	Mr. JUVIGNY	France
	Mr. ROUSSOS	Greece
	Mr. DAYAL	India
	Mr. TYABJI	Pakistan
	Mr. BIRECKI	Poland
	Mr. ASIROGLU	Turkey
	Mr. SAPOZHNIKOV	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
	Mr. MOROZOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. HOARE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. GREEN	United States of America
	Mr. MONTERO BUSTAMANTE)	Uruguay
	Mr. BRACCO)	
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. HUMPHREY	Director of the Division of Human Rights
	Mr. SCHWELB	Deputy Director of the Division of Human Rights
	Mrs. BRUCE)	Secretaries of the Human Rights Commission
	Mr. DAS)	

LISTS OF COMMUNICATIONS AND REPLIES FROM STATES: CONFIDENTIAL LIST OF
COMMUNICATIONS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS

The CHAIRMAN announced that the Commission was meeting in closed session to receive the confidential list of communications submitted in a restricted document (HR Communications List No. 4) by the Secretary-General.

Mr. HUMPHREY (Secretariat) said that the confidential list of communications had been prepared in accordance with Council resolution 75(V), paragraph (b), as amended by resolution 275 B(X). In accordance with Council resolution 454 (XIV) the list also included eight communications from non-governmental organizations in category A consultative status, six of which had been received from the World Federation of Trade Unions and two from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and four from category B organizations, namely the International Federation for the Rights of Man, the International League for the Rights of Man, the Women's International Democratic Federation and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The list as a whole contained summaries of, or references to, 9,524 communications received during the nine-months period of 13 March 1953 to 31 December 1953.

Of that total the great majority (7,850) alleged violations of freedom of religion, and (1,343) violations of human rights on political grounds.

The list also contained summaries of communications alleging discrimination and violations of the rights of minorities (25), violations of trade union rights (30), denial of the right to a fair trial (45), cruel and inhuman treatment and punishment of persons accused of crimes (12), violations of property rights (10), violation of the right of self-determination (44) and the practice of forced labour (27). The remaining communications related either to two or more of those subjects or to a variety of subjects, such as the right of asylum, family rights, right to a nationality, genocide, prisoners of war, refugees, slavery, freedom of movement, just and favourable conditions of work, freedom of information and of the Press, the right to marry, the right to work,

arbitrary detention, privacy of correspondence, old-age rights, the status of women, freedom of assembly, just and favourable remuneration and retroactive application of the law.

In accordance with Council resolution 75 (V), paragraph (e), as amended by resolution 275 B (X), the Secretary-General had furnished copies of communications summarized in the list to the governments of the Member States to which such communications explicitly referred, without divulging the identity of the authors, except as provided for in paragraph (b). As a result of that action, the Secretary-General had received thirteen replies from the following governments: one each from Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Chile, Denmark, Ecuador, two each from Egypt and Iraq, and one each from Liberia and the United Kingdom. They were being circulated together with the confidential list in documents Human Rights Communications Nos. 40 to 52. A reference to them appeared in annex A of the list, indicating the communications to which the replies had been made and the Member States from which they had been received.

Annex B contained an index showing the countries in which or against which violations of human rights were alleged. Annex C contained an index arranged according to the type of right which was alleged to have been violated. Annex D contained a list of petitions relating to human rights which had been issued as Trusteeship Council documents and, in accordance with the arrangements for co-operation between the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council in matters of common concern (E and T/C.1/2/Rev.1, paragraph 11 (e) i), were dealt with by the Trusteeship Council. In accordance with a previous decision of the Commission, only one copy of the documents had been circulated to each member of the Commission.

Mr. MOROZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that a vote should be taken on the question whether the Commission would take note of the distribution of the list.

The Commission decided, by 10 votes to none, with 7 abstentions, to take note of the distribution of the list.

Mr. GHORBAL (Egypt) explained that he had abstained in the vote, not because he failed to recognize the distribution of the list but rather as a means of protesting against the fact that the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council rendered the Commission powerless to deal with communications properly. The prestige and authority of the Commission on Human Rights required that it should be given greater power than that of merely taking note of the list.

Mr. MONTERO BUSTAMANTE (Uruguay) explained that he had abstained for the same reasons as those given by the Egyptian representative. The Commission should be entitled to deal with a matter of great importance in a more satisfactory and decisive way.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of the Philippines, said that he was dissatisfied with the existing practice by which the Commission had been unable to act on the communications received by it. A reply by a Member State which might indicate remedies to the sender of a communication was not even sent to him for his own information. That was to push to an extreme the rule under which the Commission was disqualified from taking action on violations of human rights.

Mr. MONTERO BUSTAMANTE (Uruguay) proposed that in accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, the Commission should make public the summary records of the closed meeting.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.