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Chairman: Mr. Jiří NOSEK (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 28

Freedom of information: report of the Economic and Social Council (A/2705, A/2686, chapter V, section VI, A/C.3/L.447) (*continued*)

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CONCERNING THE USE OF BROADCASTING IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE (GENEVA, 1936) (A/C.3/L.447) (*continued*)

1. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the amendments submitted by the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Turkey (A/C.3/L.453) to the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.3/L.447) affected the substance of the question. He had therefore been obliged to ask his Government for instructions, and he requested the Committee to postpone the consideration of the draft resolution until later, and to take up the next item on the agenda.
2. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should comply with the Soviet delegation's request.
It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 29

Question of organizing an international professional conference to prepare the final text of an international code of ethics for the use of information personnel: report of the Secretary-General (A/2691 and Add.1 and 2, A/C.3/L.455) (*concluded*)

3. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) said that it could hardly be denied that the national and international information enterprises and associations which were in favour of organizing the proposed conference did not constitute a sufficiently representative group to justify the calling of a conference. Nevertheless, the General Assembly should reaffirm its interest in the adoption of such a code. Accordingly, under subparagraph (a) of the operative part of the draft reso-

lution he had submitted (A/C.3/L.455), the General Assembly would decide to take no further action "at the present time", thus reserving its future attitude, while under subparagraph (b) the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to transmit the text of the draft code, together with his report (A/2691 and Add.1 and 2) to the enterprises and associations with which he had been in communication regarding the matter, for such action as they might deem proper.

4. Mr. KUEHN (France) said that his country felt that it was most important that a code should be adopted; for the reasons the Philippine representative had stated, however, he thought that the General Assembly should wait a while before calling the conference.

5. He would therefore vote in favour of the Philippine draft resolution.

6. Mrs. TSALDARIS (Greece), too, shared the Philippine representative's view. She noted that there were two large Greek enterprises among the information enterprises that had already replied to the Secretary-General; that showed the interest the question aroused in her country. Nevertheless, her delegation believed that on the whole the group was not yet representative enough to warrant the calling of a conference.

7. She would vote in favour of the Philippine draft resolution.

8. Mr. LAURSEN (Denmark) thought that the main effort with a view to the adoption of a code of ethics should come from the profession concerned. Nevertheless, it was desirable for the General Assembly to reaffirm its interest in the question.

9. His delegation would vote for the Philippine draft resolution.

10. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by the Philippines (A/C.3/L.455).

The draft resolution was adopted by 40 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 30

Forced labour: report of the Economic and Social Council (A/2662, A/2686, chapter V, section VIII)

11. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that at the eighth session of the General Assembly the Third Committee had carefully studied the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Forced Labour (E/2431)¹ and that, on the initiative of some

¹ Joint United Nations and International Labour Organisation document. *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixteenth Session, Supplement No. 13*, and No. 36 in the *Studies and Reports (New Series) of the International Labour Office*.

delegations which had shown a special interest in the question, the Economic and Social Council had likewise studied the report at its seventeenth session. His delegation had opposed the consideration of the report which, in its opinion, far from promoting higher standards of living for the workers, was against their interest since it was based on inaccurate and tendentious information. The Soviet delegation had already expressed disapproval of the *Ad Hoc* Committee's activities and its report. In order to avoid futile polemics it would not revert to the question. It would merely say that a new discussion of the question would serve no useful purpose and could only harm the prestige of the United Nations. It was not the only delegation to take that view; the Committee would recall that at the sixteenth session of the Economic and Social Council, consideration of the question had been postponed on the initiative of France. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that some delegations had stated that they were most anxious to receive information on the position of workers in some countries, in particular the USSR, and that the Secretary-General, in compliance with the delegation's wishes, had asked the USSR Government for information on the subject, he wished to present some data.

12. The basic provisions concerning labour were contained in chapters I, X and XI of the USSR Constitution, article 118 of which recognized the right of every individual to work, and to wages corresponding to the quality and quantity of the work produced. Exercise of the right was safeguarded by the socialist organization of the economy, which had succeeded in ensuring the continuous expansion of production while eliminating crises and unemployment. In addition to the right to work, the Constitution recognized the right to leisure, to social security (including old age pensions and sick benefits) and to education. Those rights were granted to all citizens without distinction. The Soviet Constitution was entirely democratic and all the peoples of the Union enjoyed equal rights.

13. Under the social structure of the USSR there could be no exploitation of man by man so that, as Lenin had said, for the first time after centuries of toiling for others, the working masses could work for themselves and make use of all the facilities that technique and science made available to them.

14. Soviet society was divided into two friendly classes: the workers and the peasants and the intellectuals came from both classes.

15. The victory of socialism had greatly improved the moral and material well-being of the workers; today, in the Soviet Union, manpower was no longer a commodity since the working class itself possessed all the means of production. The system of collective enterprise was one of the best safeguards of the peaceful coexistence of peoples. Collective ownership of the means of production gave everybody an equal chance because labour was the sole source of livelihood, and exploitation of the labour of others had disappeared. As a result, work had become a duty and an honour for all able-bodied citizens in the Soviet Union.

16. Along with the increase in production there was a constant increase in the number of wage-earning manual and clerical workers, from 10.8 million in 1928 to 47 million in 1954. All the branches of the economy were developed according to a plan drawn up in the interests of the society as a whole. Produc-

tion did not encounter the obstacles created by private ownership. The means of production belonged to all. The workers, like the peasants, enthusiastically welcomed all technical developments and mechanization, for in a country where there was no unemployment, the machine was not a competitor with man, but made his work easier. Between 1951 and 1953, some 1,800 new types of machinery had been developed by Soviet engineers. To take the example Mr. Malenkov, the head of the Government of the USSR, had given on 26 April 1954 at the first session of the Supreme Soviet, industry had acquired over 150,000 million roubles worth of equipment; transportation, 50,000 million roubles worth; and agriculture 60,000 million roubles worth. Financing of industrial plant had more than doubled since 1940, and was twenty-two times what it had been in 1913. In 1953, the production of heavy industry had been thirty times greater than in 1913. Between 1913 and 1953, the output of coal had gone up from 29 to 320 million tons, of oil from 9 to 52 million tons, of steel from 4 to 38 million tons and of electric power from 1.9 to 133,000 million kilowatt hours. The Soviet Government allocated enormous sums—over 9,000 million roubles since the Second World War—to ensure the safety of workers and improve their working conditions (installation of, for example, ventilation equipment, showers and dressing-rooms at undertakings and in mines). It had spent over 3,000 million roubles on safety devices alone. During the five years since the war, industrial accidents had dropped by 24 per cent in the industry as a whole, and by 30 per cent in the machine and oil industry and on the railways. A trade-union delegation, from the United States of America, after a three weeks' journey (in July 1951) in the course of which it had covered approximately 8,000 kilometres and had seen thousands of workers, had noted in its report that the Soviet worker lived well, had modern equipment and worked under healthy conditions. He stressed that the Soviet worker had an enormous advantage over the workers of capitalist countries in that he was not afraid of losing his livelihood since all chances of an economic crisis, of urban unemployment and of rural over-population had been eliminated forever.

17. In the capitalist countries, labour was a commodity whose value depended on the market and on the economic situation; in the Soviet Union, labour was employed under a plan which provided for systematic recruiting and vocational training. Thanks to its planned economy, the USSR had no difficulty in finding markets for its goods; the steady increase in the people's purchasing power created an ever-growing demand. The simultaneous play of those factors made for a very rapid rate of economic development in the USSR.

18. Inflation, economic crises and unemployment were unknown in the Soviet Union. The financial system was based on the ever-growing strength of the economy and was further improved as a result of the peaceful policy of the Government, which was constantly reducing its defence budget. The proportion of the budget devoted to national defence had been declining from year to year: 23.6 per cent in 1952; 20.8 per cent in 1953; 17.8 per cent in 1954. The 1947 monetary reform, the increase in production and seven reductions in prices had raised the exchange rate of the rouble and increased its purchasing power.

19. The right to leisure and rest was guaranteed under the Soviet Constitution. The working day was a maximum of 8 hours and might be 7 hours or 6 hours in the case of heavy work and even 4 hours in the case of particularly heavy work. All workers had the right to holidays with pay. There was a whole network of nursing and rest homes, homes for children, day-nurseries and sanatoria, and the funds devoted to that purpose were increasing from year to year.

20. The Constitution guaranteed the right of all to education. At the current time education was free and compulsory for seven years; when the post-war Five Year Plan was put into operation in 1955 the period of free and compulsory education would rise to ten years in the capitals of the sixteen federated republics and it was hoped that the system would be applied throughout the country within five years. There was a system of scholarships for higher education. Pupils were taught in their mother tongue. Vocational training courses were organized in factories and collective farms. Illiteracy, one of the distinctive features of Tsarist Russia, had completely disappeared. In a pamphlet published in London in November 1954, Christopher Whyte, who did not agree with Soviet ideology, had noted that the Russian people were very keen to acquire knowledge—a desire which was encouraged by the Government and the trade unions—that women played a very important role in the life of the country, that in many respects the education of children was superior to that of English children and that he would not be surprised if the cultural standards in the Soviet Union were higher than in the United Kingdom.

21. The Soviet Union offered unlimited possibilities for the full development of abilities and talents. As Lenin had stated in 1918, the conquests of science and culture were from then on the property of all and no one could use them as a means of repression or exploitation. The number of pupils and students, which had been 8 million in 1914, had risen to 49 million in 1940 and 57 million in 1953. The number of pupils in secondary and technical schools, which had been 700,000 in 1914, had risen to 14,800,000 in 1940 and to 21,400,000 in 1953. The increase in the number of students in higher educational establishments was also significant: 117,000 in 1914, 812,000 in 1940 and 1,562,000 in 1953. The number of pupils graduating from secondary schools had doubled during the past year. In 1954, the funds allocated to social services and education had amounted to 141,000 million roubles (an increase of 9.8 per cent as compared with 1953), or 41,000 million roubles more than the funds devoted to defence. That was a striking example of the peaceful policy of the Soviet Government, which bent all its energies to the task of improving the material and cultural conditions of the people.

22. The USSR Constitution guaranteed all citizens the right to social security, and a remarkable organization ensured its effectiveness. The people enjoyed absolutely free medical attention and a considerable number of nursing homes of all kinds were open to it. Soviet medicine was making steady progress; the medical staff was anxious to study living conditions in order to take appropriate preventive measures. Every year greater funds were devoted to public health; special attention was given to maternal and child welfare. Thanks to that policy, the mortality rate

in 1953 had been 51 per cent lower than in 1940 and a third of that in 1913. The population was steadily increasing; the current rate of increase was about 3 million persons per annum. The trade unions took an active part in the administration of social security, which was thus under the workers' direct control. The credits allocated to health and pension funds in the 1954 budget had amounted to 45,000 million roubles. Wage-earners did not have to contribute, which gave them a definite advantage over the workers of capitalist countries; under the law every undertaking was obliged to register within ten days as its employees' insurer. The allowances paid in the case of temporary disability ranged up to 80 per cent of the normal wage and up to 100 per cent for some workers such as miners and metallurgical workers who had been employed for at least one year. Provided that they had worked twenty-five years, all men aged sixty and women aged fifty-five were entitled to an old-age pension amounting to from 50 to 60 per cent of their normal wages; they were still free to go on working if they so desired without thereby losing their pension. All those who were totally or partially disabled received a disability pension which ranged up to 100 per cent of the normal wage. In addition, teachers received seniority bonuses, amounting to as much as 40 per cent of their salary. No distinction of any kind was made between citizens, all of whom had an equal right to social security. Those few particulars were sufficient to give an idea of the living conditions of Soviet wage-earners. A delegation of the United States Congress of Industrial Organizations which visited the USSR after the Second World War had, incidentally, noted in its report that Soviet trade unions were taking an active interest in the worker's living conditions and were constantly endeavouring to improve them; it had also emphasized the scope of the security system in the country.

23. Under the socialist property system, rents accounted for only a very modest proportion of workers' budgets; they averaged 4 per cent of wages. In view of the further fact that education and medical services were free, it could be seen that Soviet citizens enjoyed very high real wages. Furthermore, large appropriations were made for physical training and sports in order to promote public health; in 1954, thousands of millions of roubles had been spent for that purpose. The trade unions promoted such activities in which 40 million members of workers' trade-union organizations took part. In the USSR, there were over a million qualified athletes, of whom over 2,000 were among the best in the world. During the last three years, Soviet citizens had set eighteen world records and won thirty championship titles in various sports. An effort was also being made to develop tourism. All those factors helped to improve public health and raise the standard of living, thanks to the possibilities offered by the economic system. Since 1940 real wages had risen by 74 per cent; it could be said that they had doubled if account was taken of the sums devoted by the State to the improvement of the workers' living conditions. Moreover, the Soviet Government has seven times reduced retail prices, which now were on an average two or three times lower than in 1947 and four times lower on the collective farm market. As a result, the workers' purchasing power was steadily increasing. As, in addition, the law guaranteed the right to individual property and the inheritance of

savings, personal belongings and other privately used articles, the volume of savings was rising from year to year; in 1953, it had amounted to 36,600 million roubles, or five times the figure for 1940. Deposits in savings banks had increased by 9,500 million roubles during 1954 and amounted to over 48,000 million roubles.

24. Lenin had said that electrification should be one of the bases of the Soviet economy. In accordance with that principle, the USSR had built the most powerful electrical power-stations in the world; the planned economy had made it possible to establish a unique and tremendously powerful electrical network. In order to meet the requirements of industry, a vast programme was currently under way. It provided, in particular, for the construction or extension of 711 large power-stations, which, when completed, would increase by 75 per cent the nation's electrical energy resources, which had already been tripled since 1940. During the first four years of the Five Year Plan seven large hydroelectric power-stations had been built. Furthermore, thanks to the Soviet scientists and engineers who had perfected the technique for the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, the first electric station using atomic energy for industrial purposes, with a capacity of 5,000 kilowatts had come into operation during the summer of 1954; others with a capacity of 50,000 to 100,000 kilowatts were planned. The USSR had taken the lead in a field which opened up magnificent prospects for the future.

25. The Soviet delegation to the United Nations had always taken an active part in the work designed to

improve the living conditions of the peoples of the world. The USSR Government was pursuing a policy designed to promote peace and develop friendly relations among nations, in accordance with Article 1 of the United Nations Charter. To that end, it promoted trade and travel; between 1949 and 1953, 463 groups of visitors and delegations, belonging to sixty-two different countries, had been received in the Soviet Union, while 269 Soviet groups had gone abroad. The visitors had been able to see for themselves that the USSR was effectively applying the principles of the United Nations and in particular the provisions of Article 55 of the Charter. The peaceful and creative work of the Soviet people had won the sympathy and admiration of all honest and peace-loving people throughout the world. In a few years of history, the Soviet people had shown that it threatened no one; far from desiring war, it was bending all its energies to the development of its industry (which was already thirty times greater than before the October Revolution), the modernization of its agriculture, the reconstruction of its towns and the building of new ones, and the achievement of further progress in the scientific and all other fields. The Soviet system enabled all to work for the common good in conditions permitting the fullest development of the creative abilities of the individual. The people of the USSR looked to the future with confidence; lies and slander such as those contained in the libellous report in document E/2431 could not prevent it from continuing its march forward and from serving the cause of peace and friendly relations among nations.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.