

**ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL****CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL**E/HR/16
10 MAY 1946

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

SUMMARY RECORD OF MEETINGS

Eighth Meeting Held on Wednesday, 8 May 1946, at 3:00 P.M.

Chairman: Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt

The Commission continued the discussion of the points on the Agenda prepared by the Secretariat.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

The question next raised was whether the nuclear Commission should recommend to the Council the acceptance of the general principle that basic human rights should be included in international treaties and should be accepted by all states who are members or who want to become members of the United Nations. Such a step might be advisable as the nuclear Commission would not be able to draft, in the very near future, an International Bill of Rights.

M. Cassin strongly supported these recommendations.

Mr. Neogi asked whether the nuclear Commission might not be able to draw up a tentative International Bill of Rights, but the Chairman suggested that it might be more important to prepare the groundwork for the full Commission as a great deal of preliminary work needed to be done before the drafting of a Bill of Rights could begin. It was important however, that the nuclear Commission should not feel limited in its work and should carry on until the full Commission was constituted and could meet.

The Commission agreed to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that:

General provisions for basic human rights be included in international treaties and that similar provisions be accepted by

by all States, Members of the United Nations.

ORGAN OF INQUIRY

The Commission then discussed the desirability of setting up an Agency for inquiring into the observance and violation of basic human rights in countries all over the world.

While all members agreed that some provisions for supervision would be necessary Mr. Neogi suggested that the first task of the Commission was to formulate basic human rights and that it might best be left to the full Commission to decide on ways of supervision.

M. Cassin pointed out that a great many experts felt that it was more important to assure the observance of existing Bills of Rights than to draft immediately a world Bill of Rights. He pointed out that the Charter of the United Nations provided for control and supervision and that Mr. Stettinius in commenting on the Commission on Human Rights had stated, "Through the work of this Commission the Human Rights provisions of the Charter can be implemented." As to questions of national or international concern Chapter 7 of the Charter clearly indicates which problems are to be left to the individual nations and which should be taken up by the United Nations.

In order to accomplish its task properly the Commission should therefore ask the Economic and Social Council to provide the necessary means for supervision and control. Mr. Brkish and Mr. Kriukov agreed that the Commission should make such a recommendation to the Council.

Mr. Hsia who also stated his agreement, further pointed out that all authorities who had discussed the work of the Commission on Human Rights had expressed themselves strongly in favour of some kind of enforcement agency, that one group of experts had suggested that the Commission should have the right to: "Inquiry, investigation and advice".

The Chairman suggested that this question was closely connected with problems which the Commission would have to take up later on. If, for instance a sub-commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press were

established and the Commission succeeded in securing the adherence of all the United Nations to the principles of freedom of information and the press, freedom of inquiry and investigation would be assured.

M. Cassin pointed out that it would not be possible to give an exact blueprint of the kind of agency that should be set up, but suggested that the Commission might recommend to the Economic and Social Council that - pending the establishment of such an agency the mission of the Commission on Human Rights should be: to aid qualified organs of the United Nations in the task defined for the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in Articles 13 and 62 of the Charter concerning the promotion and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all; and to aid the Security Council in the task entrusted to it by Article 39 of the Charter by pointing to cases where violations of human rights, committed, in one country may, by their gravity, their frequency and their systematic nature constitute a threat to the peace.

The Chairman agreed that the Commission should recommend to the Economic and Social Council that:

The purposes of the United Nations with regard to the promotion and observance of human rights as defined in the Charter of the United Nations would only be fulfilled if provisions were made for the implementation of an International Bill of Rights.

SUB-COMMISSIONS

The Commission then discussed whether it should recommend to the full Commission the setting up of sub-commissions dealing with questions such as: freedom of information and freedom of the press, protection of minorities, prevention of discrimination, Social Security.

The Members of the Commission agreed that it would be unwise to suggest too many commissions and that only such sub-commissions should be recommended as would be needed immediately. The full Commission itself should decide what additional sub-commissions or committees of experts should be appointed. Mr. Kriukov suggested that a sub-commission on an International Bill of Rights and a sub-commission on Freedom of

Information and Freedom of the Press should be recommended.

The Chairman suggested that it might be advisable not to set up a sub-commission on the International Bill of Rights immediately but to wait until it had become clear whether a sub-commission should be recommended or groups of experts would be more useful.

It was hereupon decided that:

The nuclear Commission on Human Rights should recommend to the full Commission that in addition to the already existing sub-commission on the Status of Women a sub-commission on the Freedom of Information and the Press should be appointed.

Members of the Commission finally agreed to express the view:

That the Commission realizes the importance of public opinion in the field of human rights as transmitted to it by experts and non-governmental organizations and wishes to stimulate and encourage public discussion of human rights throughout the world.

The Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M.
