

since in their view what was needed was not mere technical knowledge but a willingness on the part of governments to take action to promote and safeguard human rights. It was moreover the Canadian view that the adoption of the resolution might lead to duplication of effort in the field of technical assistance at a time when consideration was already being given to the amalgamation of the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration activities for economic development, social welfare and public administration. However, on hearing the more detailed exposition of the purposes of the programme by the United States Delegate and having obtained the acceptance of a Canadian amendment, the Canadian Delegation voted for the resolution. The amendment, which was approved by a vote of 50 in favour, 0 against, with 3 abstentions, ensures a review of the usefulness of the programme after a three-year trial period through the submission by ECOSOC to the 1958 General Assembly of a report containing an evaluation of the projects carried out and recommendations concerning the future of the programme. In the meantime, at its twenty-first session, ECOSOC will consider the detailed proposals of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the programme. The Committee adopted the resolution, as amended, by a vote of 50 in favour, 0 against, with 4 abstentions; and the General Assembly in plenary approved it by 51 in favour, 0 against, with 5 abstentions (Australia, France, New Zealand, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

Freedom of Information

The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly continued in 1955 the examination of this question which has been discussed by various organs of the United Nations almost continuously since 1946¹.

At its session in April 1955, ECOSOC had before it a number of freedom of information reports and studies prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with some of the Specialized Agencies, professional associations and information enterprises, and with the assistance of governments of member states. The most important of these reports and studies dealt with the promotion among news personnel of a wider knowledge of the United Nations and of international affairs; the principles and practices involving censorship of news despatches; the legal aspects of the rights and responsibilities of information media; the problem of protecting sources of information of news personnel; and the public and private information monopolies.

A resolution² adopted by ECOSOC at its nineteenth session in 1955, requested the Secretary-General to prepare the way for a programme to promote freedom of information by providing services such as experts, fellowships and seminars, and to include in his budget estimates for 1956 an analysis of the estimated costs of such a programme; the Council urged the General Assembly to include in its regular 1956 budget sufficient money to provide for the implementation of the programme, and invited the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its twenty-first session in April 1956.

In another resolution adopted during its nineteenth session, ECOSOC urged all states to cease the practice of censoring outgoing news despatches during peacetime, and to assist the unrestricted transmission of news by telecommunication services, as requested at the Buenos Aires Plenipotentiary Telecommunication Conference; ECOSOC also requested the Secretary-General to transmit the study on the legal aspects of the rights and responsibilities of information media to appropriate information enterprises and

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1953-54*, pp. 45-46.

²ECOSOC resolution 574 A (XIX).