

entitled "Development of the work of the United Nations for wider observance of, and respect for, human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world". The first question was concerned with the possibility of establishing a system of periodic reporting on human rights. The Commission recommended to the Council the adoption of a resolution by which member states of the United Nations and of the Specialized Agencies would be requested to transmit annually to the Secretary-General a report describing developments and progress achieved in the field of human rights, including the rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and including the right of peoples to self-determination. The second question was concerned with a programme of studies of specific rights or groups of rights, and the material for these studies was to be drawn from the following sources: governments, the Secretary-General, Specialized Agencies, non-governmental organizations in consultative relationship with ECOSOC, and from writings of recognized scholars and scientists. States were to be asked, in transmitting their annual reports to deal in particular with the specific right or group of rights currently selected for special study.

When these two resolutions by the Human Rights Commission were considered at the twenty-second session of ECOSOC, many delegations expressed the view that to institute a programme of annual reporting would impose too great a burden on the governments supplying the information, on the United Nations Secretariat, and on the Human Rights Commission which would have to process and study them. On the initiative of the Canadian Delegation, the resolution was amended to provide for the submission of reports every three years, instead of annually. It was understood that the first report would cover the years 1954, 1955 and 1956. The resolution invited states to include in their reports a separate section dealing with the right or group of rights chosen for special study. A second resolution approved, as the first subject for special study, the right of everyone to be free from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile.

Another resolution adopted by the Human Rights Commission, and unanimously endorsed by ECOSOC, dealt with plans for the 1958 celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Commission had decided to appoint a committee to prepare, in consultation with the Secretary-General, the Specialized Agencies, and non-governmental organizations, plans for the widest possible celebration of the anniversary. The Committee's recommendations are to be considered by the Human Rights Commission at its thirteenth session in 1957.

Another matter discussed at some length by the Commission was the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights<sup>1</sup> which had been authorized by a resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth session.

During its twelfth session in March 1956, the Commission held a closed meeting to receive a confidential list of communications as well as observations from governments containing summaries of over 3,000 communications received during the year. About two-thirds of these communications were about political persecution; the remainder were concerned with discrimination and minorities, self-determination, cruel and unusual punishment, fair

<sup>1</sup>See below pp. 70-71.