

Q. What is meant by, "to collaborate with them?" Is it to collaborate with the members of the United Nations? I wonder to what the pronoun is referring?—A. I think it refers to the United Nations, to collaborate with the Commission on Human Rights.

Mr. STEWART: Mr. Chairman, could Mr. Riddell tell us if any country has yet established local groups for the study of human rights?

Some Hon MEMBERS: Canada.

The WITNESS: I do not know of any development which has taken place in the direction. The Secretary General has been investigating the possibility of having groups of this nature established. It is not quite clear yet as to what character the groups should have, that is whether they should be in any sense official groups or whether they should be purely voluntary groups. This would depend to a certain extent on the nature of the government of the country in which they existed. Again, this is a subject upon which Mr. Humphrey can give you more recent information.

*By Mr. Stewart:*

Q. Do you think these groups are meant to be started at the instigation of such a group as a government or is it a group such as the United Nations Society?—A. I am not clear on that, Mr. Chairman. The wording says, "Members of the United Nations".

*By Hon. Mr. Turgeon:*

Q. Is not this body which is now sitting in this room one of the groups such as is contemplated in this particular item? It says,

"Members of the United Nations—Canada is a member of the United Nations—Members of the United Nations are invited to consider the desirability of establishing information groups or local human rights committees within their respective countries to collaborate with them in furthering the work of the Commission on Human Rights."

Is not this parliamentary committee just such a group as is suggested in this clause?

Mr. LESAGE: According to our terms of reference, yes.

The WITNESS: I think, Mr. Chairman, it is necessary for each member country of the United Nations to decide in what manner it will meet this provision of the resolution of the Economic and Social Council. I should think it would be for the member government to decide whether any particular body constituted, for it, the group which it shall have to represent in this capacity.

*By Hon. Mr. Gowin:*

Q. If we refer to the wording of that section 5, it seems to contemplate only the setting up of official committees. It does not seem to refer in any way to voluntary committees, though they may be highly desirable. The clause speaks of a member nation which could establish one of these committees?—A. I think, Mr. Chairman, it would be within the rights of a member of the United Nations to designate within its own country some voluntary group and say that, for the purpose of its association with this particular work it would regard this voluntary group as representing it. In this respect, I think the intention is that those voluntary groups should consider the state of human rights within their own country and be a channel for the communication of information to the Commission on Human Rights. I think the various countries would have different ideas about the way in which such a group might be set up. There was no effort to define precisely the way in which such a group might be established in any country.