

From the Canadian point of view some difficulties have arisen in connection with Articles 4 and 9 of the Draft Convention on the Gathering and International Transmission of News.

Article 4. This article established the principle of free egress of news without censorship, except in the interests of “national military security”. Our objection in principle was undermined by the discovery that we had admitted the principle of prior censorship in peacetime in the International Telecommunications Convention of 1947. In the end Article 4 was amended to provide that censorship might be exercised only in the interests of “national defence”.

Article 9. This article, as adopted, contained a paragraph stating that “It is the duty of information agencies and foreign correspondents to report the facts without discrimination...”, etc. Our delegate objected to this paragraph on the grounds that enforcement of duties on correspondents would lead to the totalitarian practice of instructing correspondents as to what they might write.

The Mexican delegation which had sponsored the offending paragraph has, under pressure from the United States delegation, agreed to amendments which, if adopted, will meet our objections. Our delegate has been instructed to vote in favour of the whole Convention if these amendments are, in fact, adopted.

Since April 29 the Committee has been debating the Third of the Geneva Draft Conventions which proposed to establish certain basic freedoms of nationals and non-nationals alike to impart and receive information and opinions. The Committee has adopted a thoroughly unsatisfactory Article 2 which waters down the undertaking to guarantee the freedoms listed in Article 1. Prolonged discussion has led to a stalemate, and it is probable that further consideration will be postponed until the next General Assembly.⁷⁸

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⁷⁸ On peut lire le compte rendu de la discussion à l'Assemblée générale dans *Le Canada et les Nations Unies 1949*, pp. 105–109.

For an account of the discussion in the General Assembly, see *Canada and the United Nations 1949*, pp. 101–105.