

The issues raised by our Egyptian colleagues' resolution concerning the federal state clause are not new; they have been considered on a number of occasions in this Assembly, in the Economic and Social Council and in many of the subordinate organs of the United Nations. In fact the General Assembly expressed its opinion very clearly on the federal-state clause in relation to the covenant on human rights when it approved resolution 421(V) on December 4th, 1950.

Section C of that resolution requests the Human Rights Commission

"to study a federal State article and to prepare, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its sixth session, recommendations which will have as their purpose the securing of the maximum extension of the covenant to the constituent units of federal States, and the meeting of the constitutional problems of federal States."

The paragraph which I have quoted constitutes the clearest possible direction and authority to the Human Rights Commission to work on the preparation of a federal state clause. Three years ago the General Assembly pronounced itself in favour of this in no uncertain manner. In this third Committee for example, only 3 votes were cast in opposition to the paragraph relating to the federal state clause, out of a total of 48 members present and voting. 31 votes were cast in Committee in favour of the inclusion of a federal state clause: only 3 were opposed: and there were 14 abstentions.

When the paragraph on the federal state clause was voted on in plenary, the result was equally decisive: 37 votes in favour: 7 opposed and only three abstentions.

The official records of the debates in 1950 do not show the names of the 37 delegations who voted in plenary for the federal state clause. The records of the Third Committee do show, however, the names of the 31 delegations who in plenary voted for it. Here they are:-

"In favour: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela."

These 31 delegations, as well as the additional delegations who voted in favour of the federal state clause in plenary in 1950 must ask themselves the question as they look at the Egyptian proposal now before us: - "What has happened since the debates of 1950, what new factors or arguments have emerged, what changes have taken place which would justify us now in reversing the position we took in 1950, together with the overwhelming majority of members, and in supporting now the Egyptian proposal."

The answer to this question is very simple. The answer is "None". Nothing has happened since 1950 which could possibly justify a change in the position which the majority of this