

have seemed to be impatient with the progress of the Commission; have seemed at times to lack understanding of the genuine difficulties faced by the Commission in resolving some of its most perplexing dilemmas; and have consequently yielded altogether too often to the temptation to tug at the coat-tails of the Commission, to offer it advice on this or that particular aspect of its problem, to distract its attention from its main task by offering resolutions and directives urging this or that particular course of action. These initiatives have no doubt been taken with the best of intentions: but the net result, in view of the Canadian Delegation, has been to overload and distract the Human Rights Commission, and to prevent it from effectively keeping control over its own work programme and agenda, in a manner comparable to that made possible for other commissions. In consequence of this, the Canadian Delegation considers it preferable to avoid sending further directives at this time to the Human Rights Commission with respect to those sections or clauses of the covenants which have not yet been formulated by the Commission in final form. The main task of the Commission remains that of completing the drafting of the covenants in a form which will make it possible for them to be passed on for the consideration of ECOSOC and the Assembly.

Regarding the three United States proposals suggesting an action programme for promoting human rights, we are grateful to the representative of the United States for the explanation given a few days ago as to the spirit in which these proposals were put forward, and as to their scope. As you are aware the United States proposals were submitted to Member States and to the United Nations specialized agencies with the request that comments be forwarded by October 1, if possible. We understand that comments from four or five governments and one Specialized Agency have now been received by the Secretariat. Together with several other governments, the Canadian Government has not found it possible, in view of the short period of time allowed to study them with full attention. We are of the opinion that these proposals deserve serious consideration and, in order to be able to be in a position to formulate our views on their implications, the Canadian Delegation would suggest that a further period of time be given to governments for commenting. These comments, together with the views expressed by delegates in the Third Committee, should then be transmitted to the Commission on Human Rights for careful study, and for the preparation of recommendation on the three United States proposals for the later consideration of the General Assembly. Such a course of action would seem to us to be wise, and will offer full opportunity to Member States to judge the merits and the practicability of the United States proposals.

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to say a few words about the problem of Freedom of Information. This question is also one which deserves serious and careful consideration, because of its implications in the private and governmental fields. The Report prepared by Dr. Lopez, who was appointed last year by ECOSOC, is a document of too great import to be acted upon without thoughtful and complete examination. Dealing generally with the position of information media in different parts of the world and, more particularly, with the censorship of news; the status and movements of foreign correspondents; laws affecting the Press; monopolies; professional standards; production and distribution of newsprint;