

The General Assembly

No. 53/77 U.S. Proposals on Human Rights

Text of a statement made on November 19, 1953 by Mrs. A.L. Caldwell, Canadian representative, in the Third Committee of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, on agenda item 12 - Report of the Economic and Social Council, with reference to the United States proposals on Human Rights.

Note - The text of the resolution adopted by the Assembly and the results of the voting are included at the end of the statement.

The Canadian Delegation will be glad to support the Egyptian proposal now before us. It will abstain on the Syrian amendments, if they are put to the vote, since it does not consider it advisable, or necessary, to give such precise directives as to priority to the Human Rights Commission. This is particularly so in view of the priorities already established by the Economic and Social Council, and by this Committee, in earlier resolutions relating to the draft covenants and to self-determination.

As I said in the statement which I gave in the general debate the Government of Canada has not yet had sufficient time to give these three resolutions, which were presented to the Human Rights Commission in May of this year by Mrs. Lord, the U.S. representative, the detailed study and consideration which they undoubtedly deserve. Consequently, like most other governments, the Canadian Government was unable to send to the Secretary-General its comments on these proposals by October 1, the date requested. We agree that further time is required to enable those governments which are desirous of expressing their views, to do so. We agree also that these replies, when received, should be given consideration in the first instance by the Human Rights Commission, in order to enable that Commission to come to a decision with reference to the three proposals themselves. It is in that spirit that we shall vote for the Egyptian proposals.

Following is the text of the resolution adopted by the Assembly on November 28, 1953 by a vote of 47 in favour (including Canada), 5 against, with 6 abstentions:

Document A/C.3/L.367

Text Begins:

The General Assembly,

Considering that under Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter the members of the United Nations have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion;

Desiring to advance as rapidly as possible respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms and to stimulate member states to press forward toward attaining the goals set forth in the universal declaration of human rights;

Noting that the Commission on Human Rights, at its ninth session, considered three draft resolutions (E/CN.4/L.266/Rev.2, E/CN.4/L.267/Rev.1 and E/CN.4/L.268) concerning development of the work of the United Nations for wider observance of, and respect for, human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world;

Noting that the Economic and Social Council, in resolution 501 C (XVI) of 3 August 1953 requested member states and specialized agencies to submit their comments on the draft resolutions and the amendments thereto to the Secretary-General in so far as possible by 1 October 1953;

Requests the Economic and Social Council to ask the Commission on Human Rights;

(a) To consider at its tenth session the three draft resolutions concerning the development of the work of the United Nations for wider observance of, and respect for, human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world, and to prepare if possible to supplement the provisions of the covenants on Human Rights, recommendations thereon, in order that these recommendations may be considered by the Economic and Social Council at its eighteenth session;

(b) To take account at its tenth session of the comments made by member states and specialized agencies and of the views expressed on this subject at the eighth session of the General Assembly.

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