

No. 54/41/UN 9/18

SELF-DETERMINATION

Text of a statement on November 26, 1954, by Mr. Roger Chaput, Canadian representative in the Third Committee at the ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, on agenda item 58 - Human Rights: Recommendations concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination.

NOTE: The text of the resolution adopted by the Committee and the results of the voting are included at the end of the statement.

The Canadian Delegation has felt compelled to abstain on the draft resolution on the question of self-determination. I need not recall here, Mr. Chairman, the position taken by Canada on this question during the debate on the International Covenants on Human Rights. The Canadian Government whole-heartedly supports the principle of self-determination. Were it not so, Canada would be repudiating its own history. However, we have strong doubts as to the propriety of the General Assembly addressing itself directly to a Commission which reports to the Economic and Social Council and the fact that this was done in the past does not remove our doubts on this score. In any event we doubt the need for the Assembly to give the Commission on Human Rights further directives in this matter since the Economic and Social Council has already returned to the Commission the two draft resolutions adopted at its 10th Session. Moreover, one might well argue that the adoption of the draft resolution in its final wording by the General Assembly would deprive the Economic and Social Council of its legitimate rights.

Voting Results

Following is the text of the resolution (U.N. Doc. A/C.3/L.435/Rev.3) which was approved in Committee on November 26 by a vote of 37 in favour to 14 against with 1 abstention (Canada), and, after amendment, was adopted in plenary session on December 14 by a vote of 41 in favour to 11 against with 3 abstentions (Canada, Chile and Mexico):

Text of Resolution

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 637 (VII), 648 (VII) and 738 (VIII),

Noting the recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights to the Economic and Social Council, (E/2573 - E/CN.4/705, annex IV, draft resolution F),



Noting further, resolution 545 G (XVIII) adopted by the Economic and Social Council,

Considering that the preparation of recommendations on measures for promoting the right of self-determination is a matter of immediate concern,

1. Requests the Commission on Human Rights to complete its recommendations concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, including recommendations concerning their permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources, having due regard to (the rights and duties of States under international law and) to the importance of encouraging international co-operation in the economic development of under-developed countries, in order that the General Assembly may give those recommendations full and due consideration at its next session;

2. Requests the Economic and Social Council to transmit these recommendations to the General Assembly for consideration at its next regular session.

NOTE: The words in brackets in the first operative paragraph of the resolution were not included when the vote was taken in Committee, but were added before the vote was taken in plenary session.



Following is the text of the resolution (U.N. Doc. A/C.3/L.435/Rev.3) which was approved in Committee on November 25 by a vote of 37 in favour to 14 against with 1 abstention (Canada), and, after amendment, was adopted in plenary session on December 14 by a vote of 41 in favour to 11 against with 3 abstentions (Canada, Chile and Mexico):

Text of Resolution

The General Assembly

Recalling its resolutions 637 (VII), 648 (VII) and 738 (VIII),

Noting the recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights to the Economic and Social Council (E/2573 - E/CN.4/705, annex IV, draft resolution F),