

No. 53/51 SELF DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES
(Report of the Economic and Social Council)

Text of a statement made on November 18, 1953, by the Canadian Representative on the Third Committee of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mrs. A.L. Caldwell, on the question of self-determination of peoples, Agenda Item 12.

NOTE: The text of the resolution adopted on November 18, 1953, and the results of the voting are given at the end of the Canadian statement.

The Canadian Delegation has listened with great attention to the statements made by the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.371/Rev. 1, and to other delegations. We could have supported most of the parts of the resolution, but we could not support the operative paragraph one which contains a directive to the Commission on Human Rights, and that has made it necessary for us to abstain on the resolution as a whole.

You will recall, Mr. Chairman, that in our opening statement in the general debate on Chapters IV and V of the report of the Economic and Social Council, we emphasized our opinion that the Human Rights Commission should be encouraged to concentrate its efforts on completing the draft covenants, which have been before the Commission for a number of years. We think it is anything but clear, what is meant by 'due priority' at the tenth session. There is lack of precision, and even some confusion, we feel, as to what is really meant. It may be that due priority at the tenth session may have little meaning if the covenants are to be dealt with first at that session, because it would be optimistic indeed to think that the Commission at its tenth session will have time to complete the covenants, and then deal with this question of recommendations relating to self-determination.

On that account we sincerely doubt the wisdom of a directive to the Human Rights Commission which requests it "to give due priority at its tenth session to the preparation of these recommendations".

VOTING
RESULTS

The following is the text of the resolution (U.N. Press Release GA/SHC/372) adopted by the Third Committee on November 18, 1953. It was sponsored by the following twenty nations: Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Uruguay and Yemen.

The resolution as a whole was adopted by a vote of 39 in favour (including the United States), 8 against (including France, United Kingdom, Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia and Belgium), and 6 abstentions (including Canada).

RESOLUTION
ADOPTED

"The General Assembly,

Recalling resolution 637C (VII) of the General Assembly, and resolution 472 (XV) of the Economic and Social Council inviting the Commission on Human Rights to make recommendations concerning the international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 648 (VII),

Considering that the Commission on Human Rights had been unable due to lack of time to prepare such recommendations at its ninth session,

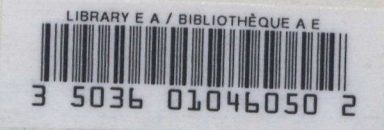
Considering the importance of the observance and respect for the right of self-determination in the promotion of world peace and of friendly relations between peoples and nations,

1. Requests the Commission on Human Rights to give due priority to the preparation of such recommendations at its tenth session,

2. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the Commission on Human Rights the summary records of the debate on the matter."

NOTE - The original proposal appeared in Doc. A/C.3/L.371/Rev.1. The second paragraph, recalling General Assembly resolution 648 (VII), is an Argentine amendment, approved by a separate vote of 33 in favour, 12 against, with 6 abstentions (including Canada).

Background information on this subject is to be found in "Canada and the United Nations 1952-53", page 43.



VOTING
RESULTS

The resolution as a whole was adopted by a vote of 39 in favour (including the United States), 8 against (including France, United Kingdom, Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia and Belgium), and 6 abstentions (including Canada).