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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The attached letter from the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights to the President of the Economic and Social Council is circulated for the information of the Council.

/My dear

March 24, 1947

My dear Mr. President:

Prior commitments made before my election as chairman of the Commission on Human Rights forced me to tell the Commission I could not appear before the Economic and Social Council to submit the Commission's report, and the Commission voted to have the Rapporteur, Dr. Malik, present its report. While I regretted not being present, I have been gratified by the great interest shown by the Council in the work and the report of the Commission.

According to information which I have just received, a majority of the members of the Council have indicated a desire for the appointment of a special body within the framework of the Commission on Human Rights which would undertake to prepare a preliminary draft of the proposed International Bill of Human Rights and would assist the Commission in carrying out its responsibilities in this field.

As you know, the Commission on Human Rights itself voted that all members of the Commission should be consulted in the preparation of the draft declaration of Human Rights. It had of course, always been my intention to take advantage of the advice of other members of the Commission at all stages of the work and I can see no important inconsistency between the suggestion of the Social Committee and the procedure that we intended to follow. I shall, of course, be assisted by the suggestions of this Committee as to the members of the Commission who should be consulted, and in the light of the discussions which have taken place, I shall be pleased, acting as Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, to appoint immediately a Drafting Committee composed of the members of the Commission on Human Rights for Australia, China, Chile, France, Lebanon, United States, United Kingdom, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It is my understanding that this Drafting Committee would meet prior to the next session of the Commission and prepare, on the basis of documentation supplied by the Secretariat, a preliminary draft of an International Bill of Human Rights. I furthermore concur in the recommendation of the Social Committee of the Whole that the following procedure be adopted in preparing the International Bill of Human Rights.

- (a) that the draft prepared by the Drafting Committee be submitted to the second session of the Commission on Human Rights; and
- (b) that the draft as developed by the Commission on Human Rights be submitted to all States, Members of the United Nations, for their observations, suggestions and proposals; and
- (c) that these observations, suggestions and proposals then be considered as a basis of a redraft, if necessary, by the Drafting Committee; and
- (d) that the resulting draft then be submitted to the Commission on Human Rights for final consideration; and
- (e) that the Council consider the proposed International Bill of Human Rights as submitted by the Commission on Human Rights with a view to recommending an International Bill of Human Rights to the General Assembly in 1948.

In accordance with the directions given us by the Commission on Human Rights, the group working on a preliminary Draft Bill was requested to send reports on progress by the first of every month beginning with April first, and I presume that we are following that procedure.

Very sincerely yours,

(sgd.) Eleanor Roosevelt

(Chairman, Commission on Human Rights)
