

UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

SUB COMMITTEE OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION

Summary Record of 11th Meeting held on Monday, 21 January 1946,
at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Francis Williams

The Sub-Committee considered various aspects of the establishment and work of Branch Offices.

1. Urgency of Establishing Branch Offices:- It was suggested that the Sub-Committee should recommend that no action be taken in the immediate future regarding the setting up of Branch Offices. The general view of the Sub-Committee was, however, that it should endorse paragraph 6 of the Technical Advisory Committee's recommendations, which urges that the Department of Public Information should consider the establishment of Branch Offices at the earliest practicable date.
2. Staff of Branch Offices:- The view was put forward that Branch Offices should be staffed by local officials only. After some discussion, the Sub-Committee decided that Branch Offices should be staffed by international officials, some of whom should be nationals of the country in which the office was situated and others nationals of other countries. The lowest grades of employees, however, should be appointed locally. Officials of all grades should owe allegiance to the United Nations.
3. Co-operation with existing agencies:- The Sub-Committee decided to recommend that in examining the establishment of Branch Offices full consideration should be given to the part existing appropriate organization might play in disseminating the Department's material; and that where regional and national Branch Offices are set up they should co-operate with such organizations.

4. Regional Branch Offices:- Recommendations were put forward urging that comprehensive regional offices should be established to meet the special needs of Europe, Asia, and other Continents.

It was emphasized that the indifference of public opinion in Europe to the United Nations must be overcome and that this could only be achieved by means of a vigorous campaign planned and carried out in closest contact with the European atmosphere. In addition, most European countries would not be able to afford to maintain teams of newspaper correspondents at Headquarters. Further, thirteen European countries (not counting Germany), representing one hundred and fifty million inhabitants, were not members of the United Nations. A campaign to encourage these countries to join the organization could not be left to local Branch Offices; it could only be carried out on a continental scale by an international service working in close touch with that Continent.

It was further pointed out that the special needs of Asia made the establishment of a similar regional office imperative for that Continent also. Asia had large illiterate populations and an undeveloped press, and it was closely affected by the activities of the United Nations, particularly as regards economic, social and trusteeship matters.

In view of these considerations, the Sub-Committee decided to recommend that continental regional offices should be set up wherever the Secretary General deemed necessary, and that eventually they should be supplemented by national Branch Offices.

Mr. Shishnin stated that he wished to reserve his position as regards this point.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.
