

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

29 WEST 57th STREET
New York 19, New York
PLaza 1-3850

Press Release # 424
December 11, 1961
For immediate release



ACEN'S TWO-DAY PLENARY MEETINGS OPEN IN NEW YORK

The Assembly of Captive European Nations met in plenary assembly this morning at Carnegie Endowment International Center. Mr. Aleksander Kutt, Estonia, was the presiding officer and Monsignor John Balkunas delivered the invocation.

Guest Speakers

The first guest speaker, the Honorable Seymour Halpern, U.S. Representative from the State of New York, praised the significance of Human Rights Day, emphasizing that "freedom, like anything else worth cherishing, must be shared to be valid. Our freedom will last only as long as we pay careful, diligent attention to the problem of those who are denied freedom." As long as America is not deaf and blind to the problems besetting the captive peoples, the cause of freedom is not dead, he said.

He continued "...The Communists have forgotten the thing that I pray will be the saving grace of mankind. They have forgotten that man is man; that he prides his individuality; that his whole reason for being is himself, his family, his dignity, his freedom; that when these things are taken away from him even the most docile among us rebels. It is this facet of human nature that will eventually defeat Communism...we must ourselves be resolute in our purpose. We must remember that in aiding the people of the Captive Nations we are aiding ourselves and all others like us who disdain and detest those forces which would take away our freedom."

The guest speaker said he hoped that the resolution he co-sponsored in Congress to establish a Captive Nations Committee in the House of Representatives would be approved by the House Rules Committee. In conclusion, he pledged his unceasing efforts in the cause of the Captive Nations.

The Honorable Steven B. Derounian, U.S. Representative from the State of New York, was critical of the present U.S. Foreign Policy. He emphasized the need for firmness in order not only to stop the Soviet nibbling process, but also to go over to the offensive. He decried the fact that the knowledge of communism was so inadequate in the United States. In his opinion, he said, a bold attitude towards the Soviet Union is called for because nobody should forget that the United States is powerful.

Albania

Bulgaria

Czechoslovakia

Estonia

Hungary

Latvia

Lithuania

Poland

Romania

In conclusion, the Congressman congratulated the Assembly "for your admirable work in our common interest."

Mr. Roger Baldwin, Chairman of the International League for the Rights of Man, said that he came to speak not as an American, but as an internationalist. He emphasized that "what ACEN represents is one of the major aspects of human rights in the world. The UN is in a state of crisis, and this explains its continued inability to enforce its Resolutions on Human Rights."

Mr. Baldwin was very emphatic about not being a defeatist, a cynic or pessimist. On the contrary, he said, he was optimistic regarding the future. The Assembly's spokesmen would not be here, he said, year after year, if they did not have faith. It is not enough to keep on protesting like others do, but the main thing is to retain faith in the "success of your cause."

While, he said, nobody knows how to solve the present world crisis, one thing is certain, "human justice comes only by resisting evil."

Messages Received

The Hon. Edna F. Kelly, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Europe, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, said "I hope you will inform all of those present that, as Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Europe of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, I have appointed a Special Sub-Committee on the Captive Nations. This Sub-Committee will hold hearings in Washington shortly after Congress reconvenes. I would appreciate your furnishing me with the name of one person from each of the captive nations who can speak with authority for his native country, as it is my intention to request these individuals to give testimony at the hearings."

U.S. Senator Jacob K. Javits said "The Assembly is to be highly commended for its outstanding efforts on behalf of those nations held captive by Communist imperialism...The principle of self-determination is liberty's answer to oppression and we must fight for it until the Human Rights of all men are established."

The Hon. Victor L. Anfuso, Member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs said "In the light of the current international situation, it is imperative that the peoples of the captive European nations be given every encouragement in order to survive their ordeal."

ACEN's Human Rights Day Messages

To U.N. Secretary General U. Thant: "...We congratulate the UN for the help it has rendered to many people in large areas of the world in their quest for self-rule. We deplore the fact that the efforts of the World Organization have not yet been extended to the captive peoples of East-Central Europe. Denial of basic human rights to Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania endangers the foundations of the World Organization and peace itself. The human rights of the one hundred

million people in East-Central Europe can only be secured through restoration of their inalienable right to self-determination. We trust that Your Excellency will devote increasing attention to ways and means to extend the scope of the United Nations efforts in the field of human rights so as to embrace the subjugated peoples of East-Central Europe."

To H.E. Mongi Slim, President of the 16th General Assembly of the UN: "...While expressing our satisfaction with the success of the United Nations in promoting self-determination in certain parts of the world, we must express our deep concern with the failure of the World Organization to occupy itself with the Soviet denial of self-determination to captive peoples of East-Central Europe. The peoples of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania look back to centuries of independence. They therefore feel entitled to the same concern for their plight which the UN has shown to the legitimate aspirations of people in other parts of the world. They believe, as we do, that universal application of human rights is a cardinal problem facing the World Organization and that every effort must be made to achieve that universality.

Denial of Human Rights in East Central Europe

The Rapporteur, Mr. Boleslaw Biega, Poland, described at length the violations by the Soviet Union and its puppet regimes of all basic human rights to the peoples of East-Central Europe "especially at a time when the right of self-determination is accorded universally to all other peoples of the world."

Resolutions

The "Resolution on the Denial of Human Rights in East-Central Europe" appealed to the Members of the UN to set up an ad hoc Committee of their General Assembly to investigate the non-observance and constant violations of human rights by the Communist regimes in the captive European area, to be followed by appropriate measures.

The Resolution urged the free nations in the UN "a) to insist that consideration of the Covenants on Human Rights be given the highest priority; b) to thwart any attempt to dilute and thus render meaningless the principles clearly set forth in the Universal Declaration by hedging them with reservations or provisions subordinating their application to domestic legislation.

The Resolution on Denial of Self-Determination to the Peoples of East-Central Europe, after listing the stipulations in the UN Declaration of Human Rights and their violation by the Soviets and their puppets, ended with an appeal to the governments of the free nations in the UN to undertake a concerted action designed to restore the right to self-determination in East-Central Europe, an essential prerequisite to the full observance of human rights, and to this end,

- (a) place the question of the denial of the right to self-determination to the captive peoples of East-Central Europe on the agenda of the UN General Assembly

- (b) call on every occasion for the application, to the benefit of the captive European peoples, of the procedure proposed recently in the UN by the Soviet Union in favor of the remaining colonial lands, namely, the withdrawal of foreign troops and agents, as well as holding of free elections under international supervision

Situation of Churches in the Captive European Countries

The Rapporteur, Mr. Adolfs Blodnieks, Latvia, submitted a long report describing in great detail the persecution of the churches in each of the nine captive countries.

Mr. Blodnieks, in his address, said that the Soviet Union's hypocrisy "has no limits", the proof of which is Khrushchev's recent "hearty" congratulations on the Pope's birthday. Referring to his Report, the Rapporteur said that the facts contained therein are convincing evidence of the real situation pertaining to the churches.

Freedom of Information in the Captive European Countries

The Rapporteur, Mr. Sabin Manuila, replacing the absent Mr. Iancu Zissu, introduced the Report emphasizing that the only hope to change the attitude of Moscow and its puppets in the information field was to thoroughly publicize throughout the free world the Communist violations, thus arousing world public opinion against it which Communism could not afford to disregard.

The Report, in its conclusions, quoted the UN Rapporteur on Freedom of Information in these words: "In a large part of the world (the USSR, the mainland of China, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania) there is...control in the interests of well-defined ideological ends." Yet "control," the ACEN Report said, is too mild a qualification. For what the situation actually amounts to in the captive countries is a water-tight system of both internal and external censorship, which not only stifles freedom of information, but in the long run, as in the case of the Soviet Union, leads to an internal distortion of the true picture of the world and the real intentions of other nations, promoting international hatred, increasing world tension and endangering world peace.

Afternoon Meeting

Monsignor Bela Varga of Hungary was the presiding officer. Monsignor introduced Mr. John Richardson, President of Free Europe Committee, as an old friend and supporter of the cause of the captive nations. He called Mr. Richardson a courageous man who was one of the first to fly to Hungary during the Revolution, where he was able to witness the undaunted spirit of the people and their deep attachment to freedom and democracy.

Mr. Richardson said that ACEN's commemoration of Human Rights Day was important because Human Rights are at the bottom of the struggle being waged in the world today. "God did not mean to let people live as the Communist rulers are asking them to live" and he said it was his deep conviction that the cause of the captive peoples pursued by the legitimate spokesmen in the free world will succeed.

ACEN Chairman Ferenc Nagy submitted a report on ACEN's Special Session in Paris last October.

The International Situation and the Captive Nations

The Report was submitted by Mr. Vaclovas Sidzikauskas, Lithuania, the Rapporteur, after an introductory Report by Mr. Antanas Trimakas, Chairman of the Political Committee.

A general debate followed in which the following speakers delivered their addresses: Mr. Aleksander Kutt, Estonia; Mr. Martynas Brakas, Lithuania; Mr. Dimitar Petkoff, Bulgaria.

ACEN Against Admission of Peking Regime to U.N.

ACEN Chairman Ferenc Nagy, upon the proposal of the Bulgarian National Delegation to ACEN sent the following telegram to Mr. Mongi Slim, Chairman of the U.N. General Assembly, and to the Representatives of the free member nations of the UN:

The Assembly of Captive European Nations convening in its 93rd meeting respectfully appeals to the UN delegations having at heart purposes and principles of the Charter, to reject the attempt to unseat the Republic of China and to admit in any way whatsoever the Peking regime. The Soviet Union and Soviet-imposed regimes in East Central Europe never possessed qualifications for membership, since they were and are not only unwilling but organically unable to comply with the principles of the Charter, and particularly with the obligation to respect human rights. Their presence on the roster of the UN membership is no justification for the admission of Communist China. Injustice and error call for correction, not for repetition when, as in the case for Communist China, the candidate to admission is still at war with the UN, whose decisions it has been flouting for more than ten years.

.....

Representatives of American Ethnic Groups attended the meeting as visitors and were greeted by the Chairman.