

SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

Note by the Executive Secretary

VERBATIM RECORDS

My attention has been drawn to inaccuracies of the interpretations of speeches included in the verbatim records. These inaccuracies arise from the fact that the non original texts consist of a verbatim report of the interpretations at the committee sessions and it is therefore hardly to be expected that these should be an exact translation of the original. If the interpretations were to be corrected so as to be an exact translation, the appearance of the verbatim records would be considerably delayed to the detriment of their utility. Moreover, the additional expense and staff required would be considerable.

In these circumstances, the following alternatives present themselves:-

- (a) to continue the present system with the understanding that the records of interpretations are not to be relied upon as the exact equivalents of the original statements, or
- (b) to confine the verbatim records to texts of statements in the original language.

There appears to be much to recommend the second alternative. In the first place, the records of interpretations are of little value as part of the record of discussions and on the other hand they may give rise to subsequent misunderstandings. Secondly, the suppression of records of interpretation would result in desirable economies of paper and manpower.

If on the other hand, it is proposed to adhere to alternative (a), it must be recognized that it is impracticable to issue corrigenda of the interpreted text and that the only authoritative record is the original text.

The Secretariat will seek the instructions of the Preparatory Committee on this matter at the next meeting in executive session.