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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73(e) OF THE CHARTER

First Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York,
on Thursday, 31 August 1950, at 11 a.m.

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<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. Shiva RAO	India
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. SPITS	Netherlands

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Members present:

Mr. HAY	Australia
Mr. STEYAERT)	Belgium
Mr. WENDELEN)	
Mr. JOBIM	Brazil
Mr. SVEISTRUP	Denmark
Mr. FARRAG	Egypt
Mr. LAURENTIE	France
Mr. de ARAOZ	Mexico
Mr. LAKING	New Zealand
Mr. LOPEZ	Philippines
Mr. WOLLIN	Sweden
Mr. FLETCHER-COOKE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Mr. GERIG	United States of America
Mr. ALAMO BLANCO	Venezuela

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. EVANS	International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Mr. PAWLEY	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Mr. DESTOMBES	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Mr. KAUL	World Health Organization (WHO)

Secretariat:

Mr. HOO	Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories
Mr. BENSON	Secretary of the Committee

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ANALYSES OF INFORMATION RELATING TO OTHER FUNCTIONAL
FIELDS: (a) AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS (A/1297)

1. Mr. PAWLEY (Food and Agriculture Organization) wished, first of all, to convey his organization's gratitude to the Administering Powers for the full and valuable information furnished by them under Article 73 (e) of the Charter, as well as to the Secretariat for its summary and analysis of that information, as set forth in documents A/1276 to A/1283 and A/1297.
2. In its study of the agricultural and economic situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the FAO treated that question not as a separate matter, but as part of the general problem of agricultural development throughout the world. It had always held the view that the preparation and implementation of agricultural programmes would contribute in large measure to the increase of production and the improvement of living conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as the discussions which had taken place during the 1948 and 1949 sessions of the FAO Conference served to indicate.
3. In 1949, in order to assist and encourage Governments in planning and carrying out agricultural development programmes, the FAO had organized a series of regional conferences to study the question, which representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories had occasionally attended. Three such conferences had been held, at Quito for Latin America, at Beirut for the Middle East, and at Singapore for Asia. Mr. Pawley pointed out that no regional conference had been held for the African territories, but he assured the members of the Committee that FAO assistance was being extended to all Non-Self-Governing Territories, subject, of course, to such special requests as the Administering Powers might address to the organization with respect to particular Territories. Moreover, it should be noted that the annual report on the FAO's programme of work contained information on the implementation of programmes in African territories as well as in other territories.
4. He had noted with satisfaction that document A/1297 raised the question of prices of agricultural products in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. That question was of primary importance for the agricultural production and economic position of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in

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relation to the world. The FAO Conference had looked into the question of agricultural prices and ^{he} wondered whether the Administering Powers could supply such information regarding prices, their gradations and their relation to the cost of the means of production as might enable the FAO Secretariat to prepare a special study on the subject.

5. In reply to a question asked the previous Tuesday by the United States representative, he said that the FAO was not making a special study of the problem of the flow of rural populations to the cities. It would seem, however, that by endeavouring to raise the standard of living of rural populations, which would then no longer be forced to leave the countryside for economic reasons, the FAO was helping to solve that problem. He further recalled that at its last session the Economic and Social Council had requested the FAO to undertake, in collaboration with the United Nations, a study on unemployment and under-employment in the under-developed countries; that study was at least indirectly related to the subject mentioned by the United States representative.

6. The CHAIRMAN wished to make a few remarks on behalf of his delegation. In a recent speech, the Philippine representative had referred to land tenure, which was dealt with in paragraphs 10 (a), (b) and (c) of section IV B of the Standard Form. The question of land tenure was in fact closely linked with the of raising the standard of living of rural populations to which the FAO representative had referred. In India, as in many other countries, peasants were inclined to be highly mistrustful, conservative and wily. The peasant farmers seldom took the initiative in improving agricultural techniques, especially if their links with their land were weak and they were not protected against possible expulsion. The questions of land tenure, of legislation regarding land tenure and of the division of income between owners and working farmers were therefore of particular importance.

7. India, when it became independent, had no uniform system of land tenure since the British administration had retained the system of tenure it had found in each region. However, the system of absentee ownership, which reserved all the rights to the owner, was the most common. India had realized

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that no improvement of peasant living conditions was possible without a reform of the system of land tenure and the Governments of certain States had already taken drastic steps in that field. Generally speaking, those measures involved the complete abolition of absentee ownership, with fair compensation. He wondered whether the Secretariat could not prepare a study on that subject, especially as the Committee might decide to give particular attention to economic problems the following year.

8. The question of the allocation of crops was also of capital importance. He wondered by whom and how the decision was made in the Non-Self-Governing Territories to put any given piece of land under such cash crops as jute or cotton or under food crops. That decision was of great interest to the landowner since prices varied for each crop and the grower's profit depended on the choice. In that connexion, he would like to know whether there were price-fixing committees and whether the indigenous farmers were represented on them. Using India as an example, he noted that farmers who grew sugar cane -- a product which spoiled easily once it was cut -- were, if they were not properly organized, frequently forced to accept the conditions set by the sugar mill owners or take the risk of losing their crops. It was therefore important that the crop processing stations, the chambers of commerce and the committees on prices should have indigenous representatives in sufficient numbers and well enough organized to see that their rights and interests were speedily respected.

9. With respect to agricultural debt, he observed that in India it had been reduced by the rise in prices of agricultural products. He wondered whether the Non-Self-Governing Territories were in a similar position. He also wished to know what rate of interest the peasants paid, whether there were credit facilities like those referred to in section IV G, of the Standard Form and whether there were indigenous credit associations. Those too were questions with respect to which the Administering Powers should furnish more detailed information and on which the Secretariat might well prepare a paper.

10. The United Kingdom representative had raised a general problem when he had mentioned the appropriation for education in the Gold Coast; he had asked how it would be possible, in a territory the budgetary resources of which amounted to only 12 million pounds, to make any higher appropriation for education than the actual amount of a little over one million pounds. In the Chairman's view, that was not a problem which the Special Committee could or should resolve. However, it might have shed some light on the problem or on similar problems, if it had received fuller information under section IV F of the Standard Form. The report of the United Kingdom Government on colonial territories for 1949-1950 was hardly more explicit. Unless the Committee was supplied with detailed information on the subject, it could not possibly reply to the question of the United Kingdom representative.

11. Another question which had arisen was that of the participation of colonial territories in the European Reconstruction Plan; all the colonies of the United Kingdom, with the exception of Bermuda, had adhered to the Anglo-American agreement and had thus received three-fold assistance: technical, material and financial. It would be of interest to know precisely what had been the direct or indirect effects of that arrangement and what benefits the populations of the Non-Self-Governing Territories had derived from participation in the European Reconstruction Plan.

12. In conclusion, he said that he had been glad to find in the Secretariat report (A/1297) proof of the Administering Power's growing interest in the production of food crops, and rice in particular, in the Non-Self-Governing Territories for which they were responsible, in order to avoid those territories having to import food. India had suffered a great deal and was still suffering from being forced to import rice, since the demand for rice on the world market was always very strong; it had not always been possible to obtain delivery at the proper time and the prices had been very high.

13. Mr. FLETCHER-COCKE (United Kingdom) thought that the Chairman had ~~not~~ been altogether impartial towards the Administering Powers and in particular towards the United Kingdom, which transmitted a considerable amount of information under Article 73 (e) of the Charter. He himself had not been in a position to read all

the documents sent by his Government in connexion with the Non-Self-Governing Territories under United Kingdom administration, but he would be very surprised if the details for which the Chairman had asked were not to be found in those documents.

14. It was obvious that the summaries prepared by the Secretariat could not by definition, contain all the information transmitted by the various Governments. It rested with the General Assembly to give instructions to the Secretariat to the effect that the summaries should contain the data which the Committee desired to study in detail. Document A/1297, for example, was excellent in itself, but did not contain all the information supplied by the Administering Powers.

14a. He quoted several passages from the 1950 report on the colonial territories of the United Kingdom which answered some of the questions raised by the Indian representative. A more detailed study of the information transmitted by the United Kingdom would show that the implication that whole sections of the Standard Form had been ignored was inaccurate. Before asking the Administering Powers to supply information on some specific point, it would be advisable to make sure that they had not already done so.

15. Mr. BENSON (Secretary of the Committee) agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom that the summaries and analyses prepared by the Secretariat could not contain all the information supplied by all the Administering Powers on any particular subject. In 1950, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 218 (III), the Secretariat had prepared statistical supplements to round out the summaries drafted in the previous year. These supplements should therefore be studied at the same time as the green book published in 1950.

16. The fact that certain information did not appear in the documents put out by the Secretariat did not mean that it had not been transmitted. On the contrary, generally it had been transmitted in one form or another; he quoted a specific example.

17. It was the Committee's prerogative to give the Secretariat whatever instructions it chose. However, the Secretariat should have an opportunity of putting forward its views on the practical aspects of carrying out such instructions. The Department of Economic Affairs, the Department of Social Affairs and the appropriate specialized agencies all took part in preparing the reports which the Special Committee asked the Secretariat to supply. However, unless the Committee limited the subjects, often very wide, on which it wanted special reports, the Secretariat would be obliged to ask for extra staff.

/18. Mr. LAURENTIE

18. Mr. LAURENTIE (France) said that the representative of the FAO had been right to recall that his organization made no distinction between the agricultural problems facing the Non-Self-Governing Territories and those encountered by other territories. He thought that the Chairman's remarks left no room for doubt in that respect. The Chairman had laid particular stress on agricultural problems in India.

19. As far as the Non-Self-Governing Territories under French administration were concerned, particularly Africa and Madagascar, the problems of land tenure to which the Chairman had made particular reference did not exist.

20. Actually, large areas were available for agriculture and in addition the system of collective ownership was practically the only system in use. The problem which must be overcome in those territories was not that of the ownership of land but rather the organization of agriculture in such a way as to achieve the best possible results.

21. He cited as an example the system applied at Lake Chad and in the Ubangi-Shari, particularly in the cultivation of cotton. That system had been in effect since 1950. Its aim was to organize the cultivation and export of industrial crops without reducing the food crops. To that end, some associations had concluded agreements with the Government under the terms of which they undertook to furnish to a specific region all the facilities necessary for the cultivation of specific crops. In return, the growers were committed to sell their products to the associations in question at prices determined in advance for each season, after discussion between the Government and the associations. Those associations were also responsible for transporting, treating and exporting the crops. That system made it possible for the farmer to remain at home and to receive guaranteed compensation according to an established scale. The system had operated extremely well and had brought prosperity to entire regions.

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22. Such an experiment could be tried elsewhere for the cultivation of other crops, particularly oil grains and rice. Production of food crops, and of industrial crops could be alternated in order to obtain a better yield from the available land.

23. It would be advantageous to extend that system to all of Africa: its application would not involve agricultural reform; on the contrary, it would make it possible to safeguard the methods of collective cultivation in use. Moreover, the system involved no division of the products or the land between the grower on the one hand and the landowner and creditors or even usurers on the other hand.

23 a. In the matter of agricultural credit, the territories had commercial associations, State associations or co-operative banks.

24. Replying to an observation made by the Chairman, Mr. Laurentie emphasized the fact that in French West Africa the construction of the Niger Dam and the development of the mouth of the Senegal River had brought about a great increase in rice cultivation, involving an area of several thousand hectares of hitherto fallow land.

25. Turning to the question of the revenue of the territories, he recalled that there had as yet been little discussion of the development programmes which were the subject of item 6 of the agenda.

26. He wished, in that connexion, to refer to the French programme, which was an ambitious one. The greater part still remained to be done. Replying to some of the Chairman's remarks with respect to financial problems, he said that any programme was in the long run, doomed to failure unless it resulted in a sizable increase in a territory's revenue. Indeed, to build schools and hospitals and to undertake various types of social work without, at the same time, increasing the revenue of the territory would merely add to the latter's financial commitments. In other words, the situation would worsen instead of improving.

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27. It was worth devoting some attention to the problem of increasing the resources of the territories and the income of their inhabitants so that the projected programmes might be carried out successfully. Unless the need to maintain that balance was recognized, the result might be a bankruptcy for which all the colonial countries would be jointly responsible. In that respect, he shared the Chairman's views.

28. He noted that the need to increase the income of the territories and of their inhabitants was generally recognized, but deplored the growing tendency to engage in wholesale development at all speed. That haste, of course, reflected a universal trend. Everyone wished to see the gap which still existed between the countries representing ancient civilizations and economic systems and those representing more recent ones bridged as early as possible. France would endeavour to take those tendencies into account and to do its utmost while giving priority to those programmes which would cause an increase in the revenue and means of production of the territories concerned.

29. It was necessary to emphasize a factor of a different nature, which might also delay the carrying out of the development programmes; namely, the sense of insecurity which had spread throughout the world. It was obvious that the greater the military expenditures, the smaller the amounts available for programmes in the public interest. That was ^{an} unfortunate fact which should nevertheless be taken into account.

30. In conclusion, he was pleased to note the undeniable international solidarity which existed with respect to the development programmes, particularly the programmes of economic development. Although it was true that some countries had achieved extremely rapid and sensational progress, they had often done so by setting a very cheap price on human life, and, in some cases, by resorting to outright slavery. The French delegation felt that while that course might bring speedier results, there were other means of achieving real progress and France would confine itself to them.

/31. The CHAIRMAN

31. The CHAIRMAN wished to clarify his previous statement. It had in no way been intended to imply a criticism either of the work of the Secretariat or of the attitude of the Administering Powers, particularly the United Kingdom.

32. He had merely desired to point out what his delegation felt to be the principles which should guide the Committee's work. In that connexion, he recalled that Article 73 of the Charter stated that the Members of the United Nations "recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of those territories are paramount".

33. He recognized that dominant economic groups/^{existed} in every country, and not only in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. India did not escape that general rule. That was why the peoples concerned should be protected from abuse of power, in accordance with the principle set forth in Article 73.

34. The information transmitted by the Administering Powers should be selected and examined with those guiding principles in mind.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

35. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) proposed that in view of the difficulties arising for the small delegations from simultaneous meetings of the Sub-Committee and of the Committee, the latter should not meet that afternoon; the Sub-Committee could thus complete its report and submit it to the Committee the following morning.

36. Mr. BENSON (Secretary of the Committee) stated that the Secretariat was in a position to submit a first draft of the report to the Sub-Committee that very afternoon. He wondered, however, whether the delegations might not require a little more time to study the report before discussing it, the more so since the French and Spanish translations of so important/^a report called for particular attention on the part of the Secretariat services.

37. Mr. GERIG (United States of America) proposed that, in the circumstances, the Committee should consider the Sub-Committee's report at the morning meeting on the following Tuesday.

38. After an exchange of views in which Mr. LAKING (New Zealand), Mr. FLETCHER-COOKE (United Kingdom), the CHAIRMAN, Mr. JOBIM (Brazil), Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) and Mr. HAY (Australia) participated, Mr. GERIG (United States of America) proposed that the Chairman should present at the next meeting of the Committee a programme of work which would take into account both the limited time left at the Committee's disposal and the relative importance of the items remaining on the agenda.

There being no objection, it was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.