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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Fourteenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 23 April 1963, at 11 a.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairmen:</u>	Mr. de PINIES	(Spain)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. NORRISH	New Zealand
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. WHITE	Australia
	Mr. VALENCIA RODRIGUEZ	Ecuador
	Mr. de CAMARET )	
	Mr. DOISE )	France
	Miss SUNSERI	Honduras
	Mr. EASTMAN	Liberia
	Mr. CARRANCO AVILA	Mexico
	Mr. HAMDANI	Pakistan
	Mr. CALINGASAN	Philippines
	Mr. PEREZ RUIZ )	
	Mr. GOMEZ DURAN )	Spain
	Mr. SANKEY )	
	Mr. SELWYN )	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. WHITE	United States of America
	Mr. KABORE	Upper Volta
<u>Representatives of specialized agencies:</u>		
	Mr. LLOYD	International Labour Organisation
	Mr. SALSAMENDI	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES  
(A/AC.35/L.371; A/5401/Add.1-12, A/5402/Add.1-5, A/5403/Add.1-11 and  
A/5404/Add.1-4; ST/TRI/B.1962/1-4 and addenda)

ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (A/AC.35/L.368, L.369,  
L.370, L.375, L.376; ST/TRI/B.1962/1-4 and addenda) (continued)

- (a) POLICIES AND TRENDS
- (b) DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
- (c) AGRICULTURE
- (d) INDUSTRY
- (e) EXTERNAL TRADE

Miss SUNSERI (Honduras) said that Honduras was a freedom-loving country, as was evidenced by its anti-colonialist history, and had assisted former colonies in attaining independence whenever it had been in a position to do so. She was happy to note that the majority of the Administering Powers had supplied useful information on the development of the Territories they administered, a matter with which it was well that all should be acquainted. She consequently concurred in the Mexican representative's hope that the Government of Portugal would shortly provide information on the Territories under its administration and would co-operate with the Committee in its work.

Some representatives might perhaps feel that the information supplied was not sufficiently detailed. Her delegation considered, however, that the Non-Self-Governing Territories had made substantial progress since the establishment of the Committee and it would welcome any practical measures the Administering Powers might take in the interest of those Territories.

Honduras was paying particularly close attention to developments in the Territory of Belize. The Committee was not the place in which her delegation should make political declarations on the subject of that Territory, with regard to which it had a special position. Her delegation regretted that no reference had been made in the Committee to the Swan Islands, a small territory over which Honduras claimed to have sovereign rights for historical and juridical reasons.

Her delegation had followed the debate on the economic advancement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories very closely and hoped that by applying suitable policies all the Administering Powers would make it possible for the inhabitants of those Territories to live in peace and prosperity.

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Mr. de CAMARET (France), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, recalled that the Territories described by the Liberian representative at the previous meeting as Non-Self-Governing Territories, and as such subject to the transmission of information, were self-governing and had proclaimed their right of self-determination in a referendum based on universal secret suffrage held in October 1958. The only Non-Self-Governing Territory still under French administration was the New Hebrides, which was a Franco-British condominium with respect to which the French Government continued to transmit information.

Mr. EASTMAN (Liberia) said that he found the reply of the French representative disappointing. In the light of the principles enunciated in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) which should guide Member States in determining whether or not the obligation to transmit the information called for under Article 73 e of the Charter applied to them, Liberia still considered that the territories concerned were Non-Self-Governing Territories within the meaning of Chapter XI of the Charter.

Mr. SELWYN (United Kingdom) said that he wished to comment on certain points which had been raised by the representative of Liberia at the previous meeting.

He himself had pointed out in an earlier statement that the period of transition over the next few years might be a difficult one for Kenya. He could not, however, accept the Liberian representative's conclusion that those difficulties, which were connected with the changeover to an African Government, demonstrated that no genuine progress had in fact been achieved in the Territory. He had already mentioned the substantial progress made in agriculture, in terms both of the reform of the traditional land-tenure system and of the expansion of cash crop production. Moreover, manufacturing industry had been developed on a solid basis, thanks to substantial European investment. The country had a long-standing tradition of good government; a substantial infrastructure had already been built up and the rate of progress, which was recognized by the

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representatives of the African parties themselves, would seem to ensure lasting improvement. Although the political changes that were occurring in the Territory might cause certain economic difficulties, those difficulties were, he was sure, only temporary and Kenya should be able to resume its rate of economic advance in the not too distant future.

The representative of Liberia had also criticized the situation in certain Territories which were heavily dependent on one or two export products and were therefore liable to sudden changes in their general economic situation as a result of natural disasters or variations in weather conditions. Such a situation, which, as he had already said, was to be found in several United Kingdom Territories, was common to many Latin American countries and apparently applied to Liberia also. The Governments of those countries were aware of the dangers inherent in the situation and were doing their utmost to diversify their economies. The United Kingdom Government was also taking steps in that direction by means of development programmes, on which he had already given some information, in the Territories it administered. Although the problem was not always susceptible of an easy solution, it seemed that much could be done to reduce that potential source of economic instability.

Both the Liberian representative and the representative of the Philippines had suggested that external enterprise often had little effect in improving the conditions of the indigenous inhabitants of the Territories. It was true that in many developing countries there was a fairly wide gap between the advanced sectors of the economy and the traditional sectors, the chief reason for which was the lack of flexibility in the traditional economy, which was often based on traditional practices and a social framework which were difficult to change rapidly. A Dutch economist had coined the phrase "the dual economy" to describe that state of affairs and had suggested that it was an inevitable part of the process of economic development. Without entirely sharing that view, he recognized that the traditional sectors tended not to develop at the same rate as the advanced sectors. One of the difficulties was that the more

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capable people tended to be attracted away from the traditional sectors to the advanced sectors, which offered them better prospects. To try to prevent that from happening would be tantamount to preventing the indigenous inhabitants from improving their position. Nevertheless, as a result of the efforts of the Governments concerned, the traditional economy was gradually changing over a wide area. African agricultural production had developed considerably, particularly in Kenya, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and external enterprise was indirectly of assistance in the process of change in the traditional sectors. The creation of large industrial centres increased the demand for agricultural products and thus provided an encouragement for the commercialization of agriculture. In certain circumstances it was of advantage to traditional agriculture that people should be attracted away from the land, since that might have the effect of reducing the surplus population on the land and making agricultural investment more profitable. Obviously the presence of large-scale external enterprise would help in the long run in the development of the indigenous agricultural economy, but that would come about only if the Governments concerned paid special attention to providing technical expertise and capital required for that process. The Northern Rhodesian plan in particular, to which there was a reference in the document on development planning (A/AC.35/L.369), was an excellent example of what could be done in that field.

The representative of Liberia had referred to the possibility that the results of development plans might not always be in conformity with the purposes of the plans. That, of course, was a general problem in development planning and had been one of the topics considered at the first session of the Conference of Asian Economic Planners held in New Delhi in 1961 under the auspices of ECAFE. The ECAFE secretariat had prepared for that Conference a document entitled "A Decade of Development Planning and Implementation in the ECAFE region" (E/CN.11/CAEP.1/L.2), which pointed out the wide disparity between the purposes laid down in development plans and the achievements, and gave various reasons for it: bad weather, adverse terms of trade and, possibly more fundamental, the difficulty in absorbing effectively and efficiently a high rate of investment into the economy. That absorptive capacity - or the ability to invest

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efficiently - was conditioned by the traditional society, although, as the report rightly pointed out, it could also be changed by development efforts themselves. The Governments of the United Kingdom Territories were well aware of those problems, especially since most of them had been involved in development planning of one kind or another since the end of the Second World War.

Finally, the representative of the Philippines had referred to the aims of the United Nations Development Decade, aims which the United Kingdom dependent Territories fully shared. Unfortunately, the mere statement of targets was not in itself sufficient to achieve a higher rate of growth. A combined effort of some magnitude in the social and economic fields was required. That was particularly difficult in countries where agriculture was a major element in the economy and it was partly at least for that reason that several of the Territories were concerned to develop their industries. He shared the views of the representative of the Philippines about the importance of those aims and hoped that the work of the Committee and any proposals it made could be of value to the Territories in achieving those aims.

Mr. SANKEY (United Kingdom) recalled that this was the second year in which the Committee was examining political and constitutional developments in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. There had been many important and striking advances in the Territories for which the British Government was responsible since the last session of the Committee, including the attainment of independence by Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda in the course of 1962. Those Territories had been admitted to membership of the United Nations during the last session of the General Assembly, a convincing demonstration of the successful policies which the British Government was pursuing.

He noted that, for the second year in succession, the British Government had made available to the United Nations full information on political and constitutional developments in the United Kingdom dependent Territories in accordance with the undertaking given by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on 27 September 1961. The objective had been to present the situation in each of the Territories as at 31 December 1962, although in certain cases, references to later developments had been included. He expressed his delegation's appreciation of the prompt and efficient way in which the Secretariat had processed and published the information.

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His Government followed four main principles in promoting independence in its different Territories. The first was that each Territory was considered on its own merits, and not forced to conform with any over-all theory or plan; the main Territories from the beginning were treated as embryonic nations, which would, as they developed, inevitably assume increased responsibility for their own affairs. The second principle was that as much responsibility as possible was devolved upon the authorities in each Territory; from the earliest times, each Territorial legislature was empowered to make laws for all aspects of the Territory's internal affairs, and the executive in the Territory was given a wide measure of autonomy. The third principle was that the process of advance towards self-government consisted of the steady increase in participation of local people in the legislature and the executive, coupled with the extension of the franchise towards the goal of universal adult suffrage. The fourth principle was that at each stage of the advance towards self-government and independence, the measures taken were the result of a dialogue between the British Government and the peoples of the Territory concerned; and the contribution made by the representatives of the people grew naturally from the early stages in which the guiding hand of the British Government played an important part, until the final stage, when the establishment of the constitution was almost exclusively a matter for the representatives of the Territory to decide. Thus, the change-over to independence came not as a sudden removal of an existing authority, but as the final fading away of an authority which had for some time been moving more and more into the background.

Last year, his delegation had suggested that the Committee might well take the opportunity of devoting some general reflections to the practical problems which faced Administering Members in preparing Territories for self-government and independence, and the Committee had agreed that the Secretariat should prepare studies on the establishment and growth of central legislative and executive institutions and on the progressive introduction of democratic elections.

His delegation was therefore disappointed with the report prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.35/L.371), as it did not contain a general survey of developments on a basis of the topics suggested by the Committee last year, but merely reproduced the material submitted by the British Government, with additions from other official sources, in respect of some seventeen of the



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forty Territories under United Kingdom administration. While it was useful to have the material collected in that form, his delegation did not believe that it would be of material assistance to the Committee in its endeavour to formulate general principles.

Accordingly, his delegation did not propose to attempt a close analysis of the Secretariat paper; particularly as there had not been time to obtain detailed comments on it from his Government. He proposed instead to discuss certain main topics, broadly on the lines suggested last year, and to give some practical illustrations.

The first topic was the increase of indigenous representation in the executive. In Nyasaland, as a result of an agreement reached at the Constitutional Conference held in November 1962 there was a self-governing Constitution, with a Prime Minister and a Cabinet of eight elected ministers and one ex officio minister (the Minister of Finance). Secondly, as a result of an agreement reached between representatives of Aden and the British Government in August 1962, Aden now had a Chief Minister and a Council of Ministers, of whom seven were elected and one was ex officio (the Attorney General). Aden now enjoyed a considerable measure of self-government within the Federation of South Arabia. Thirdly, as a result of a decision taken at the Kenya Constitutional Conference held just over a year ago, a coalition Government held office in Kenya; the Council of Ministers had sixteen ministers under the Chairmanship of the Governor, with Mr. Kenyatta (Kenya, African National Union) and Mr. Ngala (Kenya African Democratic Union) each holding office as Minister of State and heading a team of twelve ministers, six from each party, with the addition of two ex officio ministers (Minister for Defence and Attorney General). After the elections due next month, Kenya would have a Prime Minister and a Cabinet. Finally, as a result of elections held in October and December 1962, a coalition Government now held office in Northern Rhodesia, consisting of three representatives of the United National Independence Party, three members of the African National Congress and four ex officio ministers. Thus in four important Territories, elected members were now holding office and playing a major role in the formation and execution of government policy.

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The second topic was the holding of elections on the basis of a wider franchise, often coupled with the enlargement of the Legislative Council. For example, in May 1962 a general election had been held for the House of Representatives in the Gambia, in which thirty-two members had been elected on a basis of universal adult suffrage, and four by the Chiefs in Assembly. The result of this election had been that the People's Progressive Party had won eighteen seats, the United Party and its allies thirteen seats and the Democratic Congress Alliance one seat. The leader of the People's Progressive Party had thus become Premier and headed an Executive Council of eight elected ministers. In September 1962 general elections on a basis of universal adult suffrage had been held in Grenada which had resulted in the Grenada National Party winning six seats, while the Grenada United Labour Party had won the remaining four seats. The leader of the Grenada National Party had taken office as Chief Minister and Minister of Finance. Thirdly, in November 1962 a general election had been held in the Bahamas on a basis of universal adult suffrage with a limited plural vote on a property basis, and as a result of the election the United Bahamian Party now had nine seats in the House of Assembly, the Progressive Liberal Party eight seats, the Labour Party one seat and Independents five. In the general elections in Northern Rhodesia in October and December 1962, the United Federal Party had won sixteen seats, the United National Independence Party thirteen seats and the African National Congress seven seats; and the two latter parties had united to form a coalition Government.

The third topic related to the Territories where the franchise had been widened, in some cases on the basis of a fresh delimitation on constituencies, in preparation for general elections in the near future. In Zanzibar, all parties had accepted the recommendations of the delimitation Commissioner (Sir Robert Arundel) which had increased to thirty-one the number of elected members in the Legislative Council. Literacy and property restrictions on voters had also been removed, and the next elections would therefore be held on the basis of universal adult suffrage. Provided the new electoral registers could be completed in time, it was hoped that fresh elections would take place early in July 1963. In Kenya a constituency delimitation commission had divided

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the country into 117 constituencies, and election to the House of Representatives, as well as to the Senate and the seven regional assemblies, would be held between 18 and 26 May 1963. Elections were being held in April in Fiji under an enlarged franchise. Hitherto, women had not had the vote and there had been property or income and literacy qualifications; furthermore, of the three main groups represented in the Council only the Europeans and the Indians had been directly elected, while the Fijian representatives had been elected by the Council of Chiefs. Now women could vote, the income and property qualifications had been done away with, and the Fijians were to have directly elected representatives. The literacy qualification remained at the unanimous wish of the representative members of the Legislative Council. That was not a stringent requirement and with the high literacy rate in Fiji very few voters would be disallowed, as it was only necessary to read and write a single sentence in English, Fijian or one of seven Indian languages. Elections were also due to be held in April in Bermuda, where the Constitution provided for universal suffrage for persons aged twenty-five or over, and a limited second vote for landowners.

The last topic related to the dialogue between the British Government and the representatives of the Territories, which normally took the form of a constitutional conference and was the accepted method by which the next step forward for the Territories was determined. The Swaziland Conference which had opened in London in January 1963, had been adjourned to allow representatives to return to the Territory for further discussions and would be resumed in due course. A conference would take place in May 1963 in London between the British Government and leaders of the political parties in the Bahamas to recast the Constitution of the Bahamas on lines more in accordance with those normally followed by a Territory enjoying internal self-government. A conference would be held in London in June to reach final decisions about the formation of a new West Indies Federation comprising Barbados, Antigua, Dominica, Monserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. A conference would be held in London later in 1963 to consider the next step forward in British Honduras; and a conference would be held within the next few months to discuss the request of the Prime Minister of Malta for independence.

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His delegation had attempted to give a brief indication of some particular advances in the British dependent Territories; the statement did not claim to be a comprehensive account of developments in all Territories, but merely some of the more significant ones. He hoped that the Committee might find itself in a position to reach certain general conclusions in the way indicated in his statement. He referred to the respected and valued tradition in the Committee whereby the representatives of the non-administering Members shared the fruits of their own experiences in their own countries in discussing the problems, and thus made the Committee a true forum for a full exchange of views and a pooling of knowledge.

In reply to a question by Mr. EASTMAN (Liberia), the CHAIRMAN said that the Committee was quite free to consider all the information submitted to it and that it would consider the report of its Sub-Committee on Economic Advancement at a plenary meeting.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.