



C O N T E N T S

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Chairman: Mr. Luciano JOUBLANC RIVAS
(Mexico).

AGENDA ITEMS 31 AND 33

Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter: reports of the Secretary-General and of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/2892 to 2894, A/2895 and Add.1 and 2, A/2896, A/2898, A/2908 and Add.1) (*continued*):

- (a) Information on social conditions;
- (b) Information on other conditions;
- (c) General questions relating to the transmission and examination of information;
- (d) Offers of study and training facilities under General Assembly resolution 845 (IX) of 22 November 1954 (A/2937 and Add.1, 2 and 3/Rev.1)

Question of the renewal of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories: report of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/2908 and Add.1) (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. WAHLUND (Sweden) said that the report of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/2908 and Add.1) was a valuable document and that he would vote in favour of approving it.
2. The Committee's task had been extremely difficult, the more so as the necessary data had often

been inadequate. The Committee had stated in paragraph 80 of part two of the report that the first priority task was to provide adequate basic statistics, especially agricultural and vital statistics, and that family living studies and community studies would also be valuable. The Committee had added that "these highly desirable studies might suitably be undertaken by research institutions and by departments of the local universities and institutions of higher education". Such social studies, he thought, should be made under the control of the administrations concerned. They should also be carried out in a uniform way, in order to make it possible to have an unbiased view when comparing the different Territories. They could be made quite easily by the use of sampling techniques. The living conditions of the inhabitants could be gauged by studying their standards of consumption. In the Non-Self-Governing Territories, where the living conditions of the inhabitants were generally meagre, the quality and quantity of food consumed were very important data. In that connexion, he noted that the administering Powers were paying increasing attention to the problems of malnutrition, and he hoped that some of the results of research on the subject would be communicated to the Fourth Committee in 1956.

3. With regard to the question of the renewal of the Committee on Information, his delegation was in favour of renewal for three years. The results achieved by the Committee justified its continuation. But it would lose its usefulness if there was not close co-operation between the members which were administering Powers and those which were not. That was why it would not be reasonable to continue it on a permanent basis.

4. In connexion with community development, he had himself been able to deduce the value of such activities from his visit to India, Thailand and Ceylon, and they should be more widely developed. They were of special interest to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as they would be of great help in educating their inhabitants for self-government.

5. Miss AMMUNDSEN (Denmark) noted that the services of experts on public health had been available to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories when it had dealt with the subject. Although the Fourth Committee was concerned rather with the general principles which were brought out in the report than with technical questions, she wanted, in her capacity as a public health physician, to point out that it was difficult to evaluate public health conditions in countries where the relevant vital statistics were not reliable. The influence of certain diseases on health conditions and the mortality rate was in such cases likely to be merely estimated. Nevertheless document A/AC.35/L.190 and Corr.1 showed beyond doubt that health conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories were improving and that the mortality rate was

going down. That was due to the efforts of the administering Powers and the specialized agencies, especially the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Moreover, the indigenous inhabitants themselves had a growing understanding of the value of hygiene. In that connexion, the training of indigenous health-workers was essential, and should be developed with due regard to conditions in the Territories.

6. Her delegation highly appreciated the collaboration of the specialized agencies, particularly WHO, with the Committee on Information. If that co-operation was to yield the best possible results, it should be as precisely defined as possible. She hoped that it would continue, and her delegation would support any draft resolutions along those lines.

7. She noted with satisfaction that at the last session of the Committee on Information, the delegations of France, the United Kingdom and the United States had been assisted by experts, who had participated in the discussion of all questions on which they had special knowledge. That practice raised the standard of the debates and also enabled the Committee to assist Administering Members in the formulation of their policies, while giving the non-administering Powers a more accurate insight into the problems of the Territories.

8. Her delegation hoped that increased use might be made of the great advances in knowledge of public health and treatment of diseases, and that the infant mortality rate in particular might be brought down to a minimum.

9. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) recalled the circumstances in which the Chapter of the Charter relating to Non-Self-Governing Territories had been drafted at the close of the Second World War. Article 73 laid upon the Administering Members the sacred trust of preparing the Territories to exercise the privileges of self-government, and paragraph e called upon them to transmit statistical and other information of a technical nature. In his view, the importance of the statistics for all Member States and for world public opinion could not be over-emphasized. That was why he thought that the States concerned could not cease to transmit information until the day when the populations under their administration had achieved full self-government, and in any case that the decision should never be made unilaterally. If the United Nations ceased to receive information, its work would be seriously endangered and the peoples which could not yet secure representation for themselves would lose all contact with the outside world. His delegation thought that the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories and its report played a role of primary importance and would accordingly support draft resolution B in annex II of part one of the report.

10. He noted that previous speakers had approached the problem from different angles. The Danish representative's statement on infant mortality had seemed to him particularly instructive. He stressed the importance of the infant mortality rate. The fact that little more than 100 years previously, infant mortality there had been some 250 per 1,000 and that it was at present 43 per 1,000 showed the progress that had been made, but it was apparent that much remained to be done to reduce those figures still further. The rate of infant mortality was a reflection not only of

social conditions, but also of racial discrimination when there were several different indices corresponding to the various strata of the population.

11. Other representatives had asked what part the inhabitants of the Territories played in their communities: Did they vote? Were they eligible for communal or territorial office? Were they active citizens who took part in the life of the community? The Committee had taken a keen interest in the progress of education and in community development and had congratulated the United Kingdom and the United States on the results they had obtained in those spheres in the Territories under their administration. He pointed out, in connexion with other areas, that learning to read was of little value if that ability was not used. Unless measures were taken to ensure the social and economic well-being of the populations and their participation in civic activities, unless labour conventions were applied and friendly relations established between the different races, the Fourth Committee's efforts would be in vain and the administration of the Territories might remain what it had been in the past.

12. He paid a tribute to the Ecuadorian representative, who, at the 477th meeting, had aptly referred to documents in which the American Republics had reaffirmed their position on the colonial problem; and to the Guatemalan representative, who at the same meeting had pointed out that knowledge must be complemented by a sense of responsibility. The purpose was not to launch a campaign against the administering Powers, some of which had a long tradition of liberty and rendered valuable service as members of the Fourth Committee; what was needed was merely to enlist their co-operation in order to enable dependent countries to obtain self-government.

13. As a citizen of a country where the principle of the equality of all before the law was proclaimed in the Constitution and served as a guiding principle for the entire people, he was convinced that the transmission of information was essential to help non-self-governing peoples to become masters of their destiny and to assure the well-being of future generations.

14. Mr. GIDDEN (United Kingdom) wished to make a few observations regarding statements made by various representatives at previous meetings.

15. At the 476th meeting the Chilean representative had spoken of the rights of his country to what he had called Chile's Antarctic territories. If he had meant to refer to the Falkland Islands Dependencies administered by the United Kingdom, the statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the 472nd meeting regarding those Territories should be regarded as applicable to the Chilean representative's observation as well.

16. At the 474th meeting the Thai representative had referred to certain Territories administered by the United Kingdom in connexion with racial discrimination and labour questions. With regard to the first point, the Thai representative had apparently understood that the United Kingdom Government and the established authorities of the Territories under its administration did nothing to eliminate racial discrimination, but left that problem to be dealt with by public opinion. He pointed out that he had not mentioned public opinion in that connexion in his statement at the 473rd meeting. He had said that Governments might well act to improve race relations by fostering in various groups a willingness to collaborate

in the defence of common interests and for the achievement of common goals. He had then given examples of steps taken by the authorities to improve relations between the various races. The United Kingdom Government was convinced that the Administration's programme should be a broad one and not restricted to the narrow field of social questions.

17. With regard to the question of labour, concerning which the Indonesian and Indian representatives had echoed at the 477th meeting the observations made by the Thai representative he feared that as a result of inadequate information the Thai representative had misunderstood the situation of Africans in Northern Rhodesia. In fact, thousands of Africans were working in the mining industry in that Territory and they were among the most highly paid African workers in the African Territories administered by the United Kingdom. While the number of jobs open to Africans in the mining industry was limited, the reason was that, when the industry had been established less than twenty-five years previously, the Africans had been living under a very primitive tribal régime. Consequently they had not had time to acquire the necessary skills for the more senior positions and would not be prepared for them for some time more. However, as the Indian representative had pointed out, the United Kingdom Government and the local governments were endeavouring to accelerate the employment of Africans in the industry. Under recently concluded agreements 11 categories of jobs had been opened to Africans. As a result of a study carried out by the management of the industry in collaboration with the European trade union, it had been decided that 13 other categories of jobs would be simplified, so that they could be held by Africans. Industrial consultants of an independent firm were going to study the possibility of making still other jobs accessible to them. The situation was therefore much more encouraging than it had been a year earlier.

18. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand) thanked the United Kingdom representative for the information and the clarification that he had provided, which happily complemented the Secretariat documents he had consulted.

19. With regard to race relations, he had never believed that the United Kingdom Government and the established authorities of the Territories under its administration wished to do nothing or had done nothing to eliminate the various forms of racial discrimination. He had simply wished to point out that various statements and observations made by the United King-

dom representative seemed to lay too much stress on the role of public opinion and of the members of the communities, and that he did not approve of that tendency.

20. Mr. CORTINA (Argentina) felt it necessary to give an explanation with reference to the statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the 472nd meeting to the effect that his Government was ready to accept the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice on the question of what the United Kingdom described as the "Falkland Islands Dependencies" (*dependencias de las Islas Malvinas*).

21. His delegation maintained that no relationship of dependency existed and that, even if it did, it could not be invoked by the United Kingdom, as the Islas Malvinas were Argentine.

22. The Argentine Government had already informed the United Kingdom Government that there was no legal or moral requirement that States should have recourse to foreign Powers or institutions for decisions regarding their legitimate sovereign territorial rights. Almost all the countries that had accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice had made reservations stipulating that the Court was not competent to bind them by any decision concerning the legitimacy of their territorial rights. The United Kingdom was one of those countries.

23. Moreover, the problem of the Islas Malvinas was primarily a concern of Argentina, and therefore an American problem. The attitude of the United Kingdom Government was thus incompatible with the desire of the peoples and Government of America for the complete elimination of colonialism, a desire that had been given formal expression at the Tenth Inter-American Conference at Caracas.

Requests for hearings (continued)

24. The CHAIRMAN announced that telegrams had been received from the Union des populations du Cameroun, the Jeunesse démocratique du Cameroun and the Union démocratique des femmes camerounaises, to which the Fourth Committee had decided to grant hearings. If there were no objections, the texts of the telegrams would be communicated to the members of the Committee.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.5 p.m.