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Chairman: Mr. Víctor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

AGENDA ITEM 63

**Question of West Irian (West New Guinea)
(A/3200 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.173) (*continued*)**

1. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand) said that the question of West Irian was another case of a dispute between two Member States which tended to divide the Committee into two camps. As in the case of the disputes considered in the past few months, the question forced members to take sides and thus to transform the Organization into a divided house. The delegation of Thailand did not relish the role of a partisan which had to demolish the arguments of the opponent. His delegation did not lack the courage to choose between right and wrong; it did not relish such a role because it was harmful to the interests of the Organization and ran counter to the long-range interests of the parties.

2. In the opinion of his delegation, the constructive role of the United Nations was to harmonize the actions of its Members. Its task was still to build a better world, in furthering social and economic progress. He regretted that that task had been neglected during the past few months in the face of the pressing task of solving disputes and conflicts. Recalling the harmonious atmosphere that prevailed at the International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, he asked the Committee to dedicate itself to the recreation of that atmosphere at the twelfth session of the General Assembly.

3. Thailand was deeply concerned about the dispute over West Irian mainly because it existed in its part of the world and placed a sister Asian nation in opposition to another nation, with both of which Thailand maintained cordial relations. There were, however, two encouraging aspects. First, the voice of moderation, and even of friendliness, had not been muffled by acrimonious words. The statements made at the 857th meeting by the representatives of Indonesia and the Netherlands had not increased existing tensions, but contained affirmations by the two sides that they would adhere to amicable methods of settlement. The second encouraging aspect was that the dispute had not been aggravated, up to now, by the violence or fighting which had marked other questions considered by the Committee. That aspect, however, should not be taken for granted, but should rather spur the United Nations to new efforts to settle the question.

4. The abundance of cogent legal argumentation did not make the task of the Committee easier. The two positions were diametrically opposed and appeared to

have hardened. Therein lay the danger. The United Nations must seek to prevent the situation from deteriorating and the dispute from taking a dangerous turn.

5. It seemed inconceivable that the United Nations should pass judgement on the case, and still less that it should compel one party or the other to abide by any formula designed to settle the problem, because the General Assembly could neither act in a judicial capacity nor impose a solution. It should, therefore, urge the parties to settle their differences, and it must stand ready to offer them all facilities which might contribute to a solution. The delegation of Thailand would welcome the resumption of negotiations between the parties, without which a settlement was not possible.

6. The fact that a wide gap existed between the parties could not serve as a reason for not negotiating. It was conceivable that, because of the wide gap, a bridge might be necessary to bring the parties closer to each other. He was glad to see that the report of the Committee of Rapporteurs of the First Chamber of the Netherlands Parliament indicated that certain parliamentarians had raised the possibility of using a "go-between" to bring the Governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands together.

7. Observing that Article 33 of the Charter listed several methods which might be used to close the gap between the parties, he stated that his delegation had no objection in principle to the particular means chosen by the sponsors of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.173). However, the Government of Thailand had an open mind and was willing to recognize that the preference for one means or another could be justified only by the superiority of its chance of success.

8. Warning against complacency in the absence of violence, he declared that the existence of the dispute was in itself disturbing. Though differences of opinion might exist among delegations as to the most suitable method of settling the question, the important thing was that there should exist among the parties a willingness to negotiate and to face the problem in a spirit of compromise. His delegation would like to see that atmosphere, rather than a victory of one side over the other, for the true victories of the United Nations could be achieved only when there was harmony among all the Members of the Organization.

9. Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands) recalled that, during his previous intervention (857th meeting), he had already stated the legal position of his Government. Observing that the Committee was not a court of law, he said that perhaps too much stress had been placed on the legal aspects of the question. Legal arguments could only throw light on whether or not Indonesia had a claim to Netherlands New Guinea. That question, however, was not within the competence of the General Assembly to decide. The question before the Committee was whether it should adopt the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.173) which provided for the establishment of a good offices commission.

10. He suggested that that draft resolution should be tested by two criteria: first, what such a resolution would achieve; and secondly, what the true interests of the inhabitants of Netherlands New Guinea were.

11. As to the first criterion, he quoted a statement by the representative of Liberia at the 844th meeting regarding the practice of adopting resolutions which could not be implemented, and a statement by the representative of Mexico at the 845th meeting concerning the necessity that a resolution should be acceptable to the interested parties. In the present case, the subject of negotiations appeared to be the sovereignty over Netherlands New Guinea, a subject on which the Netherlands Government would not be prepared to negotiate. There were two reasons for that attitude: first, such negotiations would constitute an infringement of the guarantee of the territorial integrity of the Netherlands, as embodied in Article 2 of the United Nations Charter; and secondly, to negotiate with Indonesia concerning a Non-Self-Governing Territory under Netherlands administration would be contrary to his Government's obligations under Article 73 of the Charter.

12. If the object of negotiations was to find some other solution, neither negotiations nor good offices were acceptable to Indonesia, which took the stand that West Irian was part of Indonesia. He recalled that the Committee had been told time and time again that, unless the Netherlands stated in advance that it was prepared to transfer sovereignty over Netherlands New Guinea to Indonesia, the negotiations would remain fruitless. In that connexion, he cited the statement by Mr. Mohammed Natsir, the Prime Minister of Indonesia, on 9 January 1951 and that by an official spokesman for the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 26 January 1957.

13. He asked whether, in the light of the positions of the Governments involved, it would be sound common sense for the General Assembly to adopt a draft resolution similar to the thirteen-Power draft, since it knew in advance that it could not achieve any result.

14. He then turned to the second criterion by which he thought that the draft resolution should be tested, namely the true interests of the inhabitants of Netherlands New Guinea. Whereas a court of law might construe the status of Netherlands New Guinea as the subject of a dispute between the Netherlands and Indonesia, the task of the General Assembly was entirely different. The Assembly had to maintain the principles of the Charter with respect to "territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government" (Article 73). Those principles were that the interests of the inhabitants of those territories were paramount, that due account should be taken of their political aspirations and that the principle of self-determination of peoples should be respected. He therefore suggested that it was the duty of the General Assembly to measure its actions against the standard of the interests and the wishes of the inhabitants of Netherlands New Guinea themselves.

15. Expressing surprise that some speakers in the debate had seemed to pay scant attention to that aspect of the matter, he quoted passages from speeches made in connexion with the questions of Algeria and Cyprus concerning the question of self-determination. He pointed out, however, that he was not suggesting that the cases were alike, since there was one important difference. In the cases of Algeria and Cyprus, there was a primary conflict between the Government and the

governed, whereas in Netherlands New Guinea, there was no such conflict, but only an effort at interference by a third party, Indonesia.

16. He observed that the statements quoted indicated the existence of a considerable body of opinion which held that the right of a people to decide its own future was an important principle and that the inhabitants of a Non-Self-Governing Territory should be given the opportunity to decide for themselves, as soon as they were able to do so, what their political future would be. Whereas the Netherlands Government had promised to grant that opportunity to the inhabitants of Netherlands New Guinea, Indonesia, and those who had supported its case, would deny it to them.

17. One basis for that denial was that there had been some dim connexion in the historical past between Indonesia and West New Guinea. Another was that Netherlands New Guinea had been part of the Netherlands East Indies under Dutch rule. He doubted, however, whether that constituted a valid reason to deprive the inhabitants of Netherlands New Guinea to decide for themselves whether they wished to form part of Indonesia. In that connexion, he cited the statement of the representative of Ceylon at the 849th meeting to the effect that his country would not countenance India's taking over Ceylon because the people of Ceylon had come from India 2,500 years ago or because India was just thirty miles away from Ceylon.

18. Mr. Schurmann recalled that at the 859th meeting, the representative of Burma had argued that, in the case of under-developed people, it was not necessary to hold a plebiscite; it was enough to ask the opinion of some of their leaders, as had been done in Burma. The representative of the Netherlands did not agree with that statement, and he did not think that to ask the opinion of a few leaders could properly be called self-determination in accordance with the principles of the Charter. But in view of the argument advanced by the representative of Burma, Mr. Schurmann read a telegram sent to the Secretary-General by nine chiefs of various tribes in different parts of Netherlands New Guinea. The chiefs, having met in Hollandia on 11 February 1957, had adopted a resolution requesting the General Assembly to dismiss the claims of the Indonesian Government because, *inter alia*, the Papuan people were not Indonesians and had fundamental differences of principle with them. Furthermore, the chiefs had stated that in 1949 the Papuan people had rejected the transfer of sovereignty over Netherlands New Guinea to Indonesia and that the presence of the Netherlands Government in New Guinea was in accordance with the wish of 98 per cent of the Papuan people. The telegram was signed by Julius Mahuse, representative of the tribes from South New Guinea, Marauke; Zeth Aidora, representative of the tribes of the Fakfak-Enawatan area; Johann Wanma, representative of the tribes of the Soroong-Radja Ampat area; Lodewijk Mandatjan, representative of the tribes of the Wandamen-Manokwari area; Jacob Erns Kafiar, representative of the tribes of the Biak Numfoor area; Frans Waromy, representative of the tribes of the Japen-Waropen area; Zeth Dofun, representative of the tribes of the Sarmi-Bonggo area; John Hembring, representative of the tribes of the Gresi-Nimboran area; and Leonard Siby, representative of the tribes of the Hollandia area.

19. In conclusion, Mr. Schurmann reiterated the view that the opinion of the nine chiefs could not be accepted in lieu of a plebiscite by the whole population

of Netherlands New Guinea. The telegram rather proved that such a plebiscite was necessary and that it should be held as soon as the population was able to express its will. Any support for a transfer of sovereignty over the territory and its population without such a plebiscite would be contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter. It was for that reason, above all others, that negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia on the sovereignty over Netherlands New Guinea could not be countenanced.

20. Mr. GABRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) was certain that the moderate and considered views of the Indonesian delegation, supported by the opinion of leading and learned men in the Netherlands itself, had inspired respect for the view of that delegation and its cause. The Ethiopian delegation believed that the representative of the Netherlands had given ample indication of the sincere desire of his Government to settle the problem in a way conducive to good relations between the two Governments. Indeed, both Governments had indicated a desire to settle the question and thus remove permanently a source of irritation in their relations.

21. He cited the view expressed by members of the Netherlands Parliament that perhaps use should be made of an intermediary in order to revive negotiations with Indonesia. No one would deny that such a settlement would be beneficial to the two countries.

22. There could be no doubt that a dispute existed over West Irian and that it had remained unsolved despite the efforts of the Indonesian Government. Yet a willingness to negotiate existed. That being the case, the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.173), co-sponsored by the Ethiopian delegation, merely proposed a procedure by which the two parties could be brought together at the negotiating table. Consequently, his delegation urged every member to support that draft resolution and thus encourage the two Governments to begin discussion of the problem.

23. Mr. BLANCO (Cuba) recalled his delegation's expression of satisfaction in the Security Council at the conclusion of the Round Table Conference agreements¹ in 1949 and its contribution as a member of the Council at that time to Indonesia's achieving independence. That position did not, however, disturb the traditionally friendly relations between the Netherlands and Cuba.

24. The Cuban delegation wished to express its opinion on the question of West New Guinea with the same frankness, objectivity and honesty as had been demonstrated in the Security Council several years ago. Cuba's position was based on what it regarded as the primary duty of the United Nations and the interests of the people of West New Guinea.

25. The Cuban delegation believed that article 2 of the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty (S/1417/Add.1, appendix VII) to Indonesia expressly excluded West New Guinea. The members must ask themselves why it had not been included in the transfer of sovereignty as a result of the Round Table Conference agreements. The reply to that question given by the representative of the Netherlands in his opening statement to the Committee (857th meeting) also represented the opinion of the Cuban delegation. Mr. Blanco quoted that statement to the effect that the Indonesian view had been that the transfer of sovereignty should include all territories which had formed part of the Netherlands

East Indies. The Netherlands Government, on the other hand, had felt that such an action would have been unjustifiable, because West New Guinea was inhabited by Papuans, a people entirely different from Indonesians and having no racial, no cultural, no religious, and especially no national, affinity with them. That was the aspect of the question that the United Nations must concern itself with above all.

26. He maintained that the negotiations had failed because the Indonesian Government had insisted that sovereignty over West New Guinea should be transferred to it; that Government had regarded West New Guinea as an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia. It was obvious that the most logical and conciliatory procedure for settling such a dispute would have been to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice for an opinion on the interpretation and scope of the Round Table Conference agreements and other juridical aspects of the problem. Nevertheless, the Indonesian Government had not accepted that procedure, which had been proposed by the Netherlands Government. To an impartial observer, the refusal by Indonesia had weakened that nation's alleged right to West New Guinea. He agreed with the representative of the Netherlands that the illogical shifts in the Indonesian position with regard to the juridical basis of Indonesia's right to West New Guinea revealed a certain lack of firmness in the Indonesian Government's position.

27. Moreover, the fact that Indonesia had recently unilaterally abrogated all the Round Table Conference agreements, including the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty, from which it derived the right to negotiate the political status of West New Guinea, had destroyed the very basis of the Indonesian claim. Since Indonesia had unilaterally abrogated those agreements, it was obvious that it could not invoke them to justify its right to West New Guinea.

28. Many questions arose in connexion with the problem of West New Guinea: for example, whether the United Nations could encourage or accept the transfer of sovereignty by one Member State to another Member State when the Organization had the duty to respect the territorial integrity of each of its Members; furthermore, whether the United Nations could contribute to such a transfer of sovereignty without even concerning itself with the will of the inhabitants of the territory which was the subject of the dispute; and whether such actions would not completely nullify the relevant provisions of Article 73 of the Charter.

29. In that connexion, he asserted that, if the claims put forward by the representative of Indonesia were accepted, that would, in the opinion of the Cuban delegation, amount to a substitution of one type of colonialism with guarantees for the Papuan people by another type of colonialism without guarantees. The territory would be annexed to Indonesia forever, and its inhabitants would never have an opportunity to express freely their own will and decide their own destiny. It was a duty incumbent upon the United Nations to prepare that island for self-government in accordance with Chapter XI of the Charter.

30. For those reasons, the Cuban delegation regretted that it could not associate itself with those advocating the creation of a good offices commission which would have the sole purpose of facilitating negotiations regarding the transfer of the sovereignty over West New Guinea. He wondered whether there were not also other matters which would be interesting to consider, such as,

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Fourth Year, Special Supplement No. 6, document S/1417/Add.1.*

for example, the unilateral abrogation by Indonesia of the agreements arrived at during the Round Table Conference.

31. In conclusion, he stated that his delegation hoped that the difficulties existing between Indonesia and the Netherlands could be solved by legal and peaceful means to the benefit of the parties and the United Nations itself. Therefore, Cuba was prepared to support any draft resolution submitted which would be acceptable to the parties concerned.

32. Mr. NOBLE (United Kingdom) believed that United Nations debate on the question of West New Guinea would not be expedient since it would not foster friendly relations between the parties, would not promote the interests of the people of West New Guinea and would rather tend to create unrest in a territory whose people lived in peace and tranquillity. He expressed concern lest discussion of the matter might affect the friendly relations of Indonesia, not only with the Netherlands, but also with Australia, which had a direct interest in the question. It was therefore a matter of regret to his delegation that the item had been included in the agenda, especially since the problem had been created by the determination of certain delegations to discuss the matter.

33. The Committee was discussing the future of a territory which was part of a large island the people of which were geographically, linguistically and ethnologically part of the whole population. It was generally admitted by Indonesians no less than others that the people of West New Guinea were at present lacking in the means to decide fairly on their own future, though in due course the time would come when they would achieve that political level. There was nothing prejudicial to their development in that respect under Netherlands sovereignty and tutelage. Moreover, the Netherlands Government was making steady progress in preparing the people for self-government and any change at the present point would be detrimental. The Netherlands Government had made an irrevocable promise to grant the people of West New Guinea an opportunity to decide on their future, whereas no such promise had been made by the Indonesian Government. At present, in spite of the arguments of the Indonesian and other delegations, West New Guinea was clearly under the sovereignty of the Netherlands. Furthermore, in 1956, the Government of Indonesia had unilaterally abrogated the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty and had repudiated thereby the only document on which any claim on its part to West New Guinea could be erected. The sole argument left to it was that West New Guinea had formed a part of the Netherlands East Indies. That was an untenable position, since the General Assembly had no authority to recommend to one Member State that it should transfer part of its territory to another State. Indeed, the United Nations was based on the principle that all Members must respect the territorial integrity of other Member States.

34. The thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.173) did not, of course, go as far as that. It proposed the establishment of a good offices commission which would seek a just and peaceful solution. But, though that proposal seemed harmless at first glance, it was unrealistic, since a good offices commission in the present case would face an insuperable obstacle: the fact that the only basis on which the Government of Indonesia would negotiate was the recognition of its sovereignty in West New Guinea. That was something which the United Nations could not recognize at all,

especially since that Government had torn up the only document on which any claim on its part, even to negotiations, could have been based. The commission would be contrary to the Charter of the United Nations.

35. The problem that faced the Committee really stemmed from the fact that the question was being discussed. Since there was at present no threat to peace and security in the area, continued discussion and attempts to persuade the parties to engage in groundless negotiations could only tend to create unrest in the territory and to embitter relations between countries. For that reason, and because the draft contravened the Charter, his delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

36. Mr. BRYN (Norway) recalled that the present item was the third of its kind to be discussed by the Committee under what many considered to be the heading "Colonial Rule and Colonialism". His Government's attitude toward colonial rule had been repeatedly stated. Colonialism indeed meant the domination of other peoples against their will and the exploitation of their natural resources to one's own selfish ends. Taken in that sense, it was a concept which applied to the Western Powers as well as to others in Eastern Europe, in Africa, in the Far East or in South-East Asia, and it could also be exercised by peoples not of the white race. He had been astonished at the Soviet Union representative's charges (859th meeting) against other countries; evidently that representative was forgetting recent events which had taken place in Central Europe. He wondered whether the Soviet representative really believed that the peoples' memories could be so short. Colonialism or imperialism was a state of mind aimed at running other people's affairs for them, something which Norway repudiated.

37. Colonialism was not at issue in the present case. His delegation accepted without reservations the statements of the representative of the Netherlands with respect to granting self-determination to the people of West New Guinea at the proper time. Furthermore, it had noted with satisfaction the absence of vehemence on the part of both the Netherlands and Indonesian representatives and the assurance that there was no question of war.

38. He wished to assure the Indonesian delegation that Norway judged each case on its merits. But Norway had been unable, in all fairness, to believe in the validity of the Indonesian case. The Indonesian representative had failed to convince the Norwegian delegation that the population of West New Guinea was Indonesian in the normal and generally accepted sense of the word. Furthermore, it was an established fact that the indigenous population itself had no strong wishes to alter its present status. Thus, there were no cogent reasons for the United Nations to take action with respect to West New Guinea, as desired by Indonesia, since the best interests of the population would not be served through such action.

39. Mr. MAKSIMOVICH (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) stated that the question of West Irian presented the same issue that had been encountered in the questions of Algeria and Cyprus: that of colonialism. One could see in all those cases that the same policy of coercion was applied in striving to keep the peoples in a condition of serfdom. Parallel to that situation was the liberation movement developing in those territories against administration from overseas and for the establishment of the right to self-determination. The struggle to shake off the yoke of colonialism

was the characteristic of the present era. The anti-colonial movements were a sign of the times, and the efforts of the colonial Powers to retard that process were doomed to failure.

40. He recalled that the resolution on West Irian adopted at the tenth session of the General Assembly (resolution 915 (X)) expressed the hope that the problem would be settled by bilateral negotiations. The negotiations had failed because of the unwillingness on the part of the Netherlands to give up its colonial domination.

41. The Indonesian Declaration of Independence in 1945 had covered the whole of the former Netherlands East Indies, including the territory of West Irian. While that territory remained under foreign rule, Indonesia could not be said to have been liberated as a whole. Even prior to 1945, Indonesia, including West Irian, had been a unit from the viewpoint of political, economic, cultural and legal administration. Furthermore, all the peoples of Indonesia, including the people of West Irian, had participated in the national liberation movement, and the Netherlands Government had actually committed itself to hand over the whole of the territory of the former Netherlands East Indies. Subsequently, however, the Netherlands had made efforts to separate West Irian from the other parts of Indonesia and was striving currently to retain colonial hold on that territory by adducing inconsistent arguments to the effect that, racially and culturally, the population of West Irian were not linked to the Indonesian people. However, the ties that existed between these peoples were certainly stronger than the ties between West Irian and the Netherlands.

42. The Netherlands had asserted that the claim of Indonesia to West Irian was in opposition to the interests of the people of West Irian because Indonesia lacked resources with which to develop the territory. The Indonesian Republic had, however, made significant economic and cultural progress during its short history, like many former colonial countries which had demonstrated that the very fact of their existence was an incentive to economic and cultural development. Indonesia had achieved much greater progress since becoming independent than it had achieved under colonial domination.

43. Regarding the claim of the representative of the Netherlands that the transfer of sovereignty over West Irian would deprive the people of their right to self-determination, Mr. Maksimovich asserted that the people of West Irian had already expressed their will by taking part in the Indonesian independence movement. He reviewed the attitude taken by the Netherlands since the Round Table Conference and observed that it consisted of unilateral assertions aimed at retaining West Irian as a colony.

44. West Irian was rich in natural resources and provided great profits to the Netherlands monopolies. Moreover, the Netherlands authorities still cherished the hope of dominating Indonesia through the establishment in West Irian of military bases to be used subsequently against Indonesia. In striving to retain West Irian as a profitable colony, the Netherlands authorities were not taking into account the interests of the inhabitants. Indeed, the people of West Irian were very poor and maltreated. The Indonesians regarded the union of West Irian with Indonesia as an act that would free the people of West Irian from Netherlands domination. At the All-Indonesian Peoples Congress in 1955, all the prominent participants had noted that the occupa-

tion of that part of Indonesian territory and the establishment of military bases there constituted a threat to the independence of Indonesia. The Congress had requested the United Nations to support the Indonesian desire for the reunion of West Irian with Indonesia.

45. He felt that as long as the problem remained unsettled there would be concern in Asia. The African-Asian Conference at Bandung in 1955 had supported Indonesia's claims. That Conference, at which the representatives of half of mankind had participated, had issued a statement with respect to West Irian which had proved that the question was an international dispute and that it constituted a potential threat to the peace and security in that region of South-East Asia.

46. It was the duty of the United Nations to make the necessary recommendations that would promote the peaceful settlement of the question.

47. Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand) welcomed the moderation shown by the representatives of Indonesia and the Netherlands in their opening statements (857th meeting). He remained, unconvinced, however, of the wisdom of a discussion of the item. There was an important distinction to be drawn between the purely legal considerations involved and the desirability on practical grounds of a discussion in the General Assembly. His doubts had grown even stronger during the past year. Developments in the dispute since it had last come before the Committee had all but extinguished any hope there might previously have been for a fruitful outcome from a debate. Indeed, a contest in the Assembly might worsen the relations between the parties. His delegation had therefore opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda and it hoped that any action would be avoided which might make the situation even more intractable.

48. Despite its doubts concerning the usefulness of a debate, his delegation had a duty to make its position clear. The dispute not only affected an area whose interests were closely linked with those of New Zealand, but also affected relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia, with which New Zealand had very strong and cordial associations. New Zealand therefore had a proper concern in looking towards the establishment of friendly relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia, and he was confident that, but for the continuation of the dispute, such a relationship would quickly be achieved. His Government profoundly regretted that Indonesia had thought it expedient, on three occasions, to air an alleged grievance against the Netherlands before the Assembly.

49. At the ninth session (730th meeting), he had stated his Government's views on the legal issues. It was true that there was now a new element in the Indonesian legal argument, but that was only to be expected when Indonesia had itself torn up the document upon which it had based its claim. The new grounds upon which Indonesia based its case were even more dubious. The representative of Indonesia had presented no fresh evidence to change the views of his Government. New Zealand continued to recognize that the Government of the Netherlands exercised full sovereignty over West New Guinea. He rejected the Indonesian contention that the issue was a colonial question, for it was in reality a territorial claim. Three fundamental questions arose: Were the people of West New Guinea striving to change their political status? Were they at the present stage of their development capable

of expressing a collective political will? Were they even aware of the existence of the cause that Indonesia so zealously espoused on their behalf? Even if affirmative answers could be given to those questions, Indonesia's claim to West New Guinea could not be established; but since affirmative answers were impossible, Indonesia had no case for bringing the question before the Assembly as a colonial problem. Moreover, an approach based on such false premises was unlikely to establish an atmosphere of impartiality and conciliation, and without such an atmosphere the debate could not be fruitful.

50. The representative of the Netherlands had presented (857th meeting) a concise account of the difficulties facing the efforts of his Government to bring the territory of West Irian under administration. He had mentioned that only about half of the population were aware of the existence of other people in the world besides themselves. The representative of Indonesia, on the other hand, had stated (857th meeting) that the people of West New Guinea had nevertheless expressed their will to link their destiny with that of Indonesia, claiming that the Republic of Indonesia had already achieved the end desired by all the Indonesian people including those of West Irian. He had said that they had representatives in the Indonesian legislature. The claim that the people of West New Guinea had already exercised self-determination when only a small minority was at the present stage capable of expressing its political will was a claim which flew in the face of both the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter. If the Indonesian attitude were contrasted with the solemn affirmation of the Netherlands Government to grant to the people of West New Guinea the right to decide their own destiny, there could be little doubt which course of action was more in line with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter.

51. Those political considerations were of utmost importance; but they were long-term considerations. In the immediate future, the administration of West New Guinea faced staggering difficulties in promoting economic and social progress which could not be achieved without sustained efforts and financial support from the outside. The question was whether Indonesia or the Netherlands was better equipped to promote the well-being of the people of West New Guinea. He wondered what Indonesia, which itself had enormous problems of development, could spare from its own hard-pressed resources for West New Guinea.

52. New Zealand was not prepared to support any United Nations action which endorsed directly or indirectly Indonesia's claim to sovereignty over West New Guinea, nor should the Assembly seek to promote negotiations with United Nations good offices as long as Indonesia continued to insist that any such negotiations must be based on advance acceptance of Indonesia's claim to sovereignty over West New Guinea.

53. The thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.173) did not offer the prospect of an equitable solution. If the authority of the United Nations were lent to the Indonesian demands an absurd position would come about in which any State advancing claims against another could establish *prima facie* that the non-satisfaction of its claim was in itself likely to impair friendly relations among nations.

54. In conclusion, he enquired whether United Nations intervention in a territorial dispute against the wishes of one party would strengthen the principle of sovereign integrity and equality and—an even more fundamental question—whether the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia without any consultation of the people concerned would be in the interests of the population of the territory and in accordance with the Charter. There was, in his view, no ground for a positive answer to either question.

55. Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon), replying to the representative of the Netherlands, observed that there had been some misunderstanding concerning his statement on Cyprus (849th meeting).

56. Ceylon had never been a part of India, whereas West Irian was historically and geographically a part of Indonesia. That made all the difference in the world. The question before the Committee was not a question of annexation, since West Irian had been part of East Indonesia long before the arrival of the Dutch. After the arrival of the Dutch, it remained politically a part of Indonesia. The Netherlands Government had undertaken to transfer the whole of Indonesia to the Indonesians. All that Indonesia asked for was a restoration of its rightful boundary, which was accepted as such since 1924 and again confirmed in 1948. Moreover, the matter of self-determination had already been settled when the people of West Irian had taken part in the Indonesian independence movement. Resistance to the Dutch constituted part of the campaign for self-determination of the people of West Irian. Thus, West Irian was a part of the territory and community of Indonesia, and the major part of that community had expressed its will for self-determination. All constitutional and other official documents bore out the contention that West Irian was indeed a part of Indonesia.

57. Furthermore, Indonesia could look after the Papuans better than the Netherlands could, since it had closer ties and association with that population. Among other things, the Indonesians were better able to endure the climate and the diseases of the area. The showing of the Dutch regarding economic and social developments in West Irian had not been very impressive. By contrast, the Indonesian record in social and economic progress had been very commendable. Therefore, it would be in the best interest of the Papuans that the area should be returned to the administration of Indonesia.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p. m.