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**Chairman:** Miss Angie BROOKS (Liberia).

**AGENDA ITEM 39**

**Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (A/C.4/L.728, A/C.4/L.729) (continued)**

1. Mr. YOMEKPE (Ghana) regretted that it should be necessary for the United Nations to take up the question of British Guiana's independence. His delegation, however, feeling that it was necessary to take note of the statement which the Premier of British Guiana had made at the 1252nd meeting, had with several other delegations submitted draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 with the sole intention of asking the two Governments concerned to resume negotiations immediately.

2. It was known that British Guiana would in any event attain independence in the relatively near future. If the United Kingdom could make known to the Committee its exact position on the question immediately, the sponsors of the draft resolution might decide to withdraw it before a vote was taken. If the United Kingdom representative could not give that information, however, the Committee would probably have to vote on the proposal. The sponsors of the draft resolution had not the slightest wish to intervene in the affairs of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, but considered that the United Nations had obligations towards all dependent peoples and that it could not remain idle in the face of events affecting such Territories.

3. Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom) said that he would not comment on the substance of the problem referred to in draft resolution A/C.4/L.728, because it raised a most important question of principle.

4. Throughout the discussion, the United Kingdom had stressed two important aspects of its position. First, it was most anxious to co-operate to the full with the United Nations. It had given practical evidence of that desire by announcing that it would henceforth transmit political and constitutional information on its Non-Self-Governing Territories—information which was not required by the provisions of the Charter. Secondly, the United Kingdom could not and would not shift its responsibilities. However, if there was any intervention, in any form, in the administration of the Territories for which it was

responsible, the United Kingdom would not continue its co-operation with the United Nations. The matter raised by draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 was outside the competence of the United Nations. The United Kingdom did not recognize the right of the United Nations to hear petitioners from the Non-Self-Governing Territories. He hoped that the United Kingdom would not be driven, as the outcome of the discussion, to withhold from the United Nations a form of co-operation which it was ready and anxious to provide.

5. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) felt that draft resolution A/C.4/L.728, although innocuous in appearance, might plunge the United Nations into a crisis. It would reopen the whole question of how to implement General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and how to help accelerate the process of decolonization throughout the world.

6. If that draft resolution was pressed by its sponsors and approved, the Committee would have taken the first step on a course which would inevitably lead to the withdrawal of co-operation by the United Kingdom in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Doubtless some delegations would love to see the United Kingdom forced into non-co-operation with the United Nations. However, he did not think that was what the vast majority in the Committee—or, probably, the sponsors of the draft resolution—wanted. A drafting group had spent several weeks preparing a text on the implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) and had noted the open-handed and disinterested offer which the United Kingdom had made, at the beginning of the session, henceforth to communicate political and constitutional information on its Non-Self-Governing Territories. The drafting group had been conscious of the United Kingdom's anxiety to increase its co-operation and had fully appreciated that the United Kingdom could not allow the United Nations to intervene in the administration of particular Territories. It had therefore worked out a compromise formula with great care and the United Kingdom had made known that, although it could not support the draft resolution in question (A/L.366 and Add.1-3),<sup>1/</sup> it would nevertheless co-operate in the work of the special committee of seventeen members set up by paragraph 3 of that text. Draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 shook that whole structure to its foundations.

7. The provisions of operative paragraph 1 constituted interference in the relations between the United Kingdom and British Guiana. It was admittedly a mild form of interference, but the precedent led straight to the adoption of recommendations affecting the substance of those relations, for example, the actual date of independence or changes in the Constitution of the Territory. The word "Requests" implied only

<sup>1/</sup> Subsequently adopted as General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI).

a polite recommendation, it was true; but it also represented a dangerous trend; the next step was likely to be the use of such words as "decides" or "directs" and, when the recommendation was not implemented, the use also of the word "condemns". No self-respecting Government could tolerate the interference in its domestic affairs to which that draft resolution might lead, and which would be utterly incompatible with the Charter. The matter was all the more serious in that the Government concerned had voluntarily gone beyond the obligations imposed on it by the Charter. It would be perfectly understandable if, after the adoption of such a resolution, the United Kingdom Government were to confine itself to discharging its obligations under Article 73 e of the Charter and not co-operate with the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories or the Special Committee of seventeen members set up by General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI).

8. It was open to question, therefore, whether the draft resolution would help the Non-Self-Governing Territories in any way and whether, in the case at issue, it would advance British Guiana's independence by a single day.

9. On that point, moreover, the United Kingdom's intentions were quite clear and a matter of record: British Guiana had received a guarantee that the date of independence would not be later than August 1963, and it would probably be much earlier. The United Kingdom did not wish to discuss the substance of the draft resolution, because that might mean acknowledging that the question could be the subject of a recommendation under the Charter. Hence the United Kingdom could not officially inform the Committee of its negotiations with British Guiana, but the Premier of British Guiana was known to have been given an assurance that he would receive a reply within the first two weeks of 1962.

10. He need hardly say that the United States had only sympathy for the Guianan people's aspirations and had no wish to thwart them. The draft resolution was a serious matter only inasmuch as it raised a question of principle. It would be a great pity if the draft resolution was approved, and he hoped its sponsors would not press it to a vote. If, however, it did become necessary for the Committee to take a decision on the proposal, his delegation would vote against it.

11. Mr. KHOSLA (India) did not doubt that the United States sincerely wanted to see British Guiana attain independence. Nor was there any question that the United Kingdom would eventually grant independence to that Territory. For several years past, however, the Territory's development had not been as smooth as it should have been. In 1953 a Government which had been placed in power in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the population had been summarily dismissed, under conditions that brought to mind various unpleasant events which had occurred in India. The United Nations must see to it that the dependent territories attained independence in circumstances which would satisfy both parties—in the present case, British Guiana and the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom should be commended for having hitherto arranged a peaceful transition to independence in many territories under its jurisdiction. But there were certain difficulties in British Guiana which the United Nations could not ignore.

12. He subscribed to the principle which had been urged by the United States representative, namely that the Committee should be careful not to intervene in the domestic affairs of States. But in the present case the United Nations would not be guilty of any intervention, since it would merely request the two parties concerned to negotiate.

13. On the one side, the Premier of British Guiana had for a long time, at the price of many sacrifices, prepared his country for independence. British Guiana had slowly made progress; it already had a viable economy, since it exported more than 1 million tons of sugar a year. Freedom, although not an end in itself was still the basic means of development for any country. On the other side, the United Kingdom had promised British Guiana its independence. He did not see how, in those circumstances, the Committee could create difficulties for the United Kingdom by approving draft resolution A/C.4/L.728, or how the adoption of that draft would compel the United Kingdom to withhold its co-operation from the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories and from the Special Committee of seventeen members set up under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI). It was the undeniable obligation of the United Nations to concern itself with the freedom of all peoples, dependent or otherwise. Although the General Assembly, in a spirit of compromise, had not mentioned individual non-self-governing territories in its resolutions, the Committee, by the draft resolution approved at its 1251st meeting, had provided for the making of special studies which would deal with Territories separately, where circumstances required individual consideration. He did not see why draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 gave so much offence, since it took nothing away from United Kingdom sovereignty. For his part, he would not press for a vote on the draft resolution if the United Kingdom stated that, at the resumed session, it would be in a position to announce when British Guiana might count on attaining its independence. He felt that there could be no better proof of his desire for conciliation.

14. His delegation would be sorry to have created difficulties for the United Kingdom Government, and obviously did not want to create trouble for British Guiana. It did not consider, in fact, that draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 could give rise to the slightest difficulty for that Territory. The Committee could, although the United States representative did not think so, help by that kind of pressure.

15. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) said that it was because they had felt a duty to respond to the appeal made by the Premier of British Guiana that the sponsors had submitted the draft resolution. The draft was very conciliatory; it simply requested the Administering Member and the elected representatives of the Guianan people to resume negotiations with a view to setting the date for the Territory's independence. The representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States argued that such a request would constitute intervention in the domestic affairs of a Member State. He protested against the interpretation, and asked why the attempts of the United Nations to assist in the liberation of dependent peoples should induce the Administering Members to withhold their co-operation. The United Nations, which had the right to hear petitioners, was under an obligation to take into account the wishes of the peoples they represented. In requesting the Special Committee of seventeen to consider the question of independence for British

Guiana and to submit a report to the Assembly, the sponsors of the draft resolution had no intention whatever of impeding the Guianan people's progress towards independence. His delegation, for its part, attached great importance to the date of independence, and feared that the unfortunate events of 1953 might be repeated in the Territory during the next elections. Any other interpretation of the intentions of the draft resolution's sponsors would be contrary to fact. He therefore expressed the hope that, in voting on the draft resolution, the Committee would give due consideration to the interests of the peoples concerned.

16. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regarded the statement made by the United Kingdom representative and, still more, the statement of the United States representative as attempts to exert pressure on the sponsors of the draft resolution in order to compel them to withdraw their proposal. By opposing the immediate resumption of negotiations on the date of independence for British Guiana, those representatives revealed the hypocrisy of the colonial Powers, which continually affirmed their desire to take into account the interests and wishes of the peoples they oppressed, but opposed the taking by the United Nations of any step, however small, to accelerate the emancipation of those peoples.

17. Why, as the United States representative seemed to think, should the liquidation of the colonial system be a catastrophe for the United Nations? On the contrary, it could only strengthen international peace and security. But there was a great difference between the colonial Powers' statements and their practical policy. In that connexion he recalled that the delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom had opposed the hearing of the Premier of British Guiana, and that in the Security Council they had sought to condemn India in connexion with its liberation of an inalienable part of its territory. Did Mr. Bingham, who used the same language as Mr. Stevenson and argued that the approval of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 would be contrary to the interests of the Guianan people, think that the Premier of British Guiana knew and defended the interests of that people less well than Mr. Bingham himself?

18. In the Soviet delegation's view, the draft resolution, by its moderation, took account of the interests both of British Guiana and of the United Kingdom. It constituted a basic element for the peaceful solution of a colonial problem, and thus complemented General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). If the colonial Powers rejected it and withdrew their co-operation from the United Nations, they would prove that they were opposed to the peaceful elimination of the colonial system. His delegation appealed to the good sense of the representatives of those Powers, and urged them not to oppose the implementation of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)). It hoped that the members of the Committee would not submit to the United States representative's attempts to intimidate them and would vote, by an overwhelming majority, for draft resolution A/C.4/L.728, which his delegation, for its part, whole-heartedly endorsed.

19. The CHAIRMAN asked members of the Committee to confine their remarks to the item on the agenda.

20. Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom) expressed astonishment at being given lessons in co-operation by the delegation of the Soviet Union, whose devotion to the right of veto was well known.

21. Mr. MIYAZAKI (Japan) regretted that approval of the Polish motion for closure of the debate at the 1252nd meeting had prevented the Committee from giving due consideration to the question of whether a petitioner from a Non-Self-Governing Territory should be heard.

22. As to draft resolution A/C.4/L.728, his delegation saw no point in operative paragraph 1, since the United Kingdom Government was in process of negotiation with the Government of British Guiana with a view to reaching agreement on the date of the Territory's independence. The Japanese delegation might perhaps have voted for the draft resolution if the Committee had had time to study the situation in British Guiana, but it deplored the tactics employed by the sponsors and would abstain from voting, since it refused to associate itself with measures which had been proposed so hastily.

23. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) expressed astonishment at the attempts of several delegations to persuade the Committee that, as a matter of principle, the United Nations had no right to vote on the question of British Guiana's independence. The problem was extremely simple. The two main political parties in the Territory, which represented 83 per cent of the population, were asking for independence in 1962. The population was ready for independence, and for eight years had given proof of its political maturity by the way in which it had sought, by strictly constitutional methods, to overcome the obstacles raised by the administering Power. The most recent impediment was the refusal of the United Kingdom Secretary of State for the Colonies to agree to a date in 1962 being fixed for British Guiana's independence.

24. The United States representative could have used his eloquence to better effect by pleading for the immediate independence of British Guiana. It was strange that representatives of the United States had twice used the word "disaster" when questions relating to the liquidation of colonialism had been considered. He assured the Committee that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 hoped for the full co-operation of the Administering Members, which they thought essential, but he noted that it was chiefly the anti-colonialist Powers which co-operated with the United Nations. That was why, although the United Kingdom might refuse to co-operate, they wished to invite the two Governments to resume negotiations with a view to reaching agreement on the date of independence for British Guiana, bearing in mind the wishes of the Guianan people and not those of the anti-colonialist Powers themselves. It could not, therefore, be maintained that what was contemplated was interference in the domestic affairs of the United Kingdom Government. However, if the representative of the United Kingdom could announce officially that his Government was ready to grant independence to British Guiana in 1962, the sponsors of the draft resolution would consider the provisional withdrawal of their draft. Without such an assurance, they could not agree that it should not be voted upon, because the experience of 1953, when everything had seemed to be settled, should not be repeated.

25. Mr. JENSEN (Norway) noted Sir Hugh Foot's statement that the United Kingdom Government might

have to reconsider the question of its co-operation with the United Nations in the event of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 being approved. Members of the Committee should carefully consider the consequences of such a decision, both for the Organization itself and for the dependent peoples. Whatever one might think of the United Kingdom delegation's attitude, the active and continued co-operation of the United Kingdom was essential. It was all the less necessary to run risks in that the United Kingdom had already given an assurance that British Guiana would become independent. There was no reason to think that the United Kingdom would break its promise.

26. The Norwegian delegation had listened with great interest to the statement of the Premier of British Guiana, and had been struck by his sincerity. It did not doubt that Mr. Jagan would obtain his people's independence by agreement with the United Kingdom, and it wished the Guianan Government and people all success.

27. Mr. RIFAI (Syria) assured the Premier of British Guiana of Syria's support and sympathy for the cause which he had pleaded in the Committee. Syria had always defended colonial peoples throughout the world, especially those fighting for independence. Its reasons for doing so lay in its own past, which inclined it to sympathize with those who fought for the enjoyment of their rights.

28. As a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728, the Syrian delegation wished to say that the draft had been submitted in order to hasten the transfer of powers from the administering Power to the people of British Guiana. That development had reached its final stage, and the United Kingdom had expressed no substantial disagreement on that point. The Syrian delegation had therefore been sorry to hear the statements just made by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States. He could not see why they had reacted in that way because of a mere legal consideration, at best debatable, to the effect that the Committee was not authorized to hear petitioners from Non-Self-Governing Territories. An appeal as moderate as that contained in draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 could not be regarded as interference in a country's affairs, in violation of the Charter. Everyone knew that British Guiana was moving towards independence with the full co-operation of the United Kingdom, and an appeal designed to hasten that development could not be considered a form of intervention which might lead the Administering Member to withdraw its co-operation from the United Nations.

29. The Syrian delegation would be the last to wish to undermine the efforts which had been made to lead a people towards independence and to liquidate colonialism. It hoped that questions of prestige and pride would not arise, and that draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 would be approved.

30. Mr. KYARUZI (Tanganyika), speaking as the representative of a country which had just become independent and which had remained on good terms with the United Kingdom and the British people, said that those who could not understand the colonial peoples' impatience should try to put themselves in those peoples' place. Time seemed much longer to people who were waiting for independence, and many misunderstandings could in consequence arise. The Prime Minister of Tanganyika, in his statement to the General Assembly (1078th plenary meeting), had

spoken of the need for efforts to liquidate colonialism, the disappearance of which would free both the rulers and the ruled.

31. If the delegations of the United Kingdom and the United States would see the problem not from their own point of view but from that of the colonial peoples, they would understand those peoples' attitude. In any case, how could those delegations now object to a draft resolution appealing for negotiations, when they themselves had called for negotiations on another problem which had just been discussed in another organ of the United Nations?

32. Mr. DARMAN (Somalia) wished, first of all, to record his delegation's sympathetic attitude towards the Premier of British Guiana. He hoped that the aspirations of the Premier and his people would soon be satisfied by their country's complete independence. Only through independence and political freedom could a people attain to economic and social welfare.

33. The delegation of Somalia would support draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 which, in its view, in no sense constituted interference in a country's domestic affairs. The draft was in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and in harmony with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. The delegation of Somalia hoped that it would be approved by an overwhelming majority, if not unanimously.

34. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) said he wished to thank those representatives who had recognized his delegation's sincerity. The representative of the Soviet Union had challenged the good faith of the United States, just as might have been expected; but he would not take up the Committee's time by answering that representative.

35. He noted the fact that not one delegation had asserted that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 would advance by a single day the date of the achievement of independence by British Guiana. He would inform the representative of the Soviet Union that he had no inside information on the subject. Nevertheless, every delegation was entitled to its own opinion as to whether the adoption of the draft resolution in question would accelerate the progress of British Guiana towards independence. No one had expressed the view that it would.

36. A number of delegations had asserted that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 would not constitute interference in the internal affairs of a Territory, because it only called for negotiations. He wondered what would be the reaction of the representative of India, for example, if his Government were asked to enter into negotiations with the Naga people on the latter's demand for greater self-government.

37. The United States delegation did not consider that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 would contribute to the solution of the problem under review. On the contrary, it would prejudice the interests of the people of British Guiana by complicating the problem of the achievement of independence. There was even less need for such a draft resolution because negotiations were actually in progress and the date of achievement of independence by British Guiana had been fixed. The Committee should avoid embarking on a course which would hinder the achievement of the purposes it had in view.

38. Mr. KHOSLA (India), exercising his right of reply, stated that the United States representative had tried to confuse the issue by quoting an example which had no connexion whatsoever with the problem before the Committee, the example of a people belonging to India. As was well known, problems relating to minorities arose in all countries. He was convinced that the representatives of the peoples which had been liberated from colonialism would not let themselves be misled by the remarks of the United States representative.

39. Mr. YOMEKPE (Ghana) regretted that the United States representative had seen fit to draw a parallel between India and the problem with which draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 was concerned. The case of the Nagas of India was quite different from that of the people of British Guiana, since the latter Territory did not form part of the United Kingdom. He deeply regretted that the question had been raised.

40. According to the United States representative, the United Kingdom had agreed to grant independence to British Guiana within a maximum period of two years and sooner if the Federation of the West Indies achieved independence. His delegation could not see why the dates of the achievement of independence by those two Territories should be linked.

41. If the United Kingdom delegation had stated its position clearly the delegation of Ghana might perhaps have been able to reconsider its attitude with regard to draft resolution A/C.4/L.728. In the absence of any statement by the United Kingdom representative, he urged that the draft resolution should be put to a vote.

42. Mr. UMAÑA BERNAL (Colombia) observed that a further draft resolution (A/C.4/L.729) had just been distributed. That draft resolution and draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 concerned very important matters and the delegation of Colombia would like to have time to study them before voting. Ever since the United Nations had been established, Colombia had defended the cause of oppressed peoples and it would much regret to be obliged to abstain if the two draft resolutions were put to a vote precipitately. He hoped that the members of the Committee would be given time to consult the leaders of their delegations or their Governments before voting.

43. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America), replying to the representatives of India and Ghana, explained that he had not intended to offend the Indian representative or to suggest that it would be proper for the Committee to adopt a resolution requesting the Indian Government to negotiate with the Nagas. His impression was that if he had taken Wales as an example his remarks would not have been misinterpreted. All he had wished to say was that when a Committee or the General Assembly requested a Power to enter into negotiations with the people of a Territory, that decision obviously constituted an intervention.

44. Mr. KHOSLA (India) denied having taken offence at the remarks of the United States representative. He merely regretted that that representative had quoted an example which had no connexion with the question before the Committee. His delegation would have reacted in the same manner if the United States representative had quoted Wales as an example. He reiterated that the people of British Guiana had no connexion with those of the United Kingdom except

the relationship between a people under domination and the people which dominated it.

45. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) stated that while there might be some confusion in the mind of the United States representative, there was none in the minds of other representatives. It would never occur to them to request the United States Government to enter into negotiations with organizations of American Negroes who desired independence.

46. He asked whether the date of the achievement of independence by British Guiana had been fixed. He also wished to know whether, in the opinion of the United States delegation, the statement made by the Premier of British Guiana was in accordance with the interests of the people of that Territory.

47. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America), replying to the representative of Guinea, said that British Guiana would achieve independence by August 1963 at the latest; in all probability, however, the Territory would be free before that date.

48. While the United States delegation did not endorse all the accusations made by the Premier of British Guiana, it agreed with much that was in his statement. It would have had no objection to make if the statement in question had been made publicly in different circumstances. The United States delegation's objection was to the fact that the Premier of British Guiana had been heard, not as a guest of the Committee or as a member of the United Kingdom delegation, but as a petitioner. That was a precedent to which his delegation could not agree.

49. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) said that after listening to the remarks of the United Kingdom and United States representatives he felt that the problem might be solved by replacing the word "Requests" in operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.4/L.728 by some phrase which might be acceptable to the United Kingdom delegation. Perhaps if the meeting were to be suspended those concerned might be able to reach agreement on the point.

50. Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom) proposed that the Committee should vote on draft resolutions A/C.4/L.728 and A/C.4/L.729 at the same time, since they dealt with similar questions.

51. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia), referring to the statement by the United States representative concerning the date at which British Guiana was expected to achieve independence, asked whether that was a recent decision of the United Kingdom Government or whether it had been reached some time earlier.

52. So far as draft resolutions A/C.4/L.728 and A/C.4/L.729 were concerned, they related to different questions and should be discussed and voted upon separately.

53. Mr. YOMEKPE (Ghana) wished to make it clear that draft resolution A/C.4/L.729 was of the utmost importance. The sponsors hoped that the debate on item 39 of the agenda would not be closed before the end of the session.

54. He proposed that the Committee should examine draft resolution A/C.4/L.729 at the resumed sixteenth session.

55. Mr. KHOSLA (India) supported that proposal.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.