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INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: SUMMARIES
OF INFORMATION TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

PACIFIC TERRITORIES

Fiji

In accordance with the statement of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 27 September 1961, the Government of the United Kingdom has transmitted to the Secretary-General the following political and constitutional information on the Territory of Fiji.

This information, which was received on 4 April 1962, is herewith submitted to the General Assembly at its seventeenth session.^{1/}

^{1/} In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1700 (XVI) of 19 December 1961, this information is also submitted to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories.

FIJI

POPULATION

The Territory consists of more than 300 islands with a total land area of over 7,000 square miles; but most of the land area, and of the population, is concentrated on the two largest islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The estimated population of Fiji at May 1960 was 401,081. The break-down by races is as follows:

Fijian	167,473
Indian	197,952
European	10,667
Part European	8,696
Chinese	4,943
Others	11,287
Total	401,018

CONSTITUTION

The main provisions of the present Constitution are as follows:

Governor

The Governor (at present Sir Kenneth Maddocks) is head of the administration of the Territory. In the exercise of his powers he is advised by the Executive Council and normally acts in accordance with the advice he receives.

Executive Council

The Executive Council is the chief executive body of the Territory; it consists of 3 ex-officio civil servants and 5 other members appointed by the Governor. The appointed members include one Fijian, one European and one Indian drawn from among the non-official members of the Legislative Council. When a vacancy occurs amongst these three members of the Executive Council, the European, Fijian or Indian non-official members of the Legislative Council, as the case may be, customarily select one of their number for their vacancy.

FIJI

The present members of the Executive Council, under the chairmanship of the Governor, are:

Mr. J.N. Falvey
Mr. C.W. Cayzer
Ratu K.K.T. Mara
Mr. A.I.N. Deoki
Mr. P.D. Macdonald (Colonial Secretary)
Mr. A.N. Greenwood (Attorney-General)
Mr. E.R. Bevington (Financial Secretary)
Mr. A.C. Reid (Secretary for Fijian Affairs)

Legislative Council

The Legislative Council passes laws, with the Governor's assent (which is normally given), on all matters within the competence of the local government and controls its budget. It consists of 31 members under the chairmanship of a Speaker (Mr. H.M. Scott), of whom 16 are official members and 15 are non-officials. The non-official members comprise 5 Europeans, 5 Indians and 5 Fijians; 3 of the European and 3 of the Indian representatives are elected, and 2 are appointed by the Governor, while the 5 Fijian members are all elected.

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The five Fijian members of the Legislative Council are elected by the Council of Chiefs who vote by secret ballot. The Council of Chiefs is representative of both chiefs and people; its membership includes 6 chiefs, the heads of the 14 provinces of Fiji, a Fijian magistrate, a Fijian school teacher and a Fijian medical officer, a representative of each province elected by secret ballot at a full meeting of the Provincial Council, 4 representatives of the workers in urban areas and others. The European and Indian elected members are elected by their respective communities, electors at present being required to have a small property qualification and to be literate in either English or a specified Indian language. The last elections took place in September 1959.

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court in Fiji exercises similar jurisdiction, powers and authority to the High Court of Justice in England. There is a Chief Justice and one puisne judge. Criminal trials are either by a judge or a jury of seven or by a judge sitting with assessors. The Supreme Court is the Court of appeal in criminal and civil matters from decisions of magistrates and provincial courts; appeal from the Supreme Court itself lies to the Privy Council in London as of right from any final judgement where the matter in dispute or claim involved exceeds £500 sterling, and at the discretion of the court if the question involved is one which, by reason of its general or public importance, ought to be submitted to the Privy Council for decision.

There are also provincial and district courts which exercise limited civil and criminal jurisdiction in cases where the parties are Fijians.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The city of Suva is administered by a City Council; there are 6 European and 6 Indian elected councillors, and 2 councillors appointed to represent minority interests. The second largest urban centre, Lautoka, has a Town Council with a majority of elected councillors, while the smaller towns of Nausori, Ba, Labasa, Levuka and Nadi have township boards. These councils and boards exercise normal local government functions.

There is also a special local government system with jurisdiction over all Fijians in the Territory, known as the Fijian Administration. For this purpose, the Territory is divided into 14 provinces (yasana) each of which comprises a number of districts (tikina). The chief executive officer of each province is called a Roko Tui and the head of each district is called a Buli. Each province has its own council and controls its own budget. The principal source of revenue is a personal rate payable by all male Fijian adults, at a rate assessed by each provincial council.