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Chairman: Mr. Santiago PEREZ PEREZ (Venezuela).

Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter (*continued*)

[Item 32]*

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. MENDOZA (Guatemala) said that his country had never been able to accept the mutilation of its territory or recognize the United Kingdom occupation of Belize (British Honduras), which was historically, legally, economically, geographically and by moral right a part of Guatemalan territory. The Government and people of Guatemala were sure that the United Kingdom would agree to the friendly negotiations to promote an appropriate solution to the problem which his Government had proposed on several occasions in recent years. Those proposals had been repeated by the head of the Guatemalan delegation at the 442nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly. In view of the fact that one of the documents before the Committee included information on Belize (A/2413/Add.7), submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom, he had been obliged to place on record his Government's renewed protests against the occupation of Belize and to reiterate its reservation of its rights, lest his silence on the matter be interpreted as a tacit recognition of United Kingdom rights over that territory.

2. Chapter XI of the Charter was not a unilateral declaration by the administering Powers of goodwill towards the dependent peoples, but formed an integral part of the Charter, and its provisions were legally binding on Administering and non-administering Members alike. The Administering Members had certain legal obligations under Chapter XI and the United Nations must supervise their fulfilment of them. The argument that colonial problems were exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of the administering Powers was therefore untenable; nor could Article 2, paragraph 7, be invoked to prevent the United Nations from discussing the status, conditions and problems of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and making recommendations thereon. After eight years there should no longer be any need to discuss the issue of competence. Certain Administering Members had recognized that fact—in

* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

that connexion he cited a statement by the United States representative at the seventh session at the 252nd meeting of the Committee—but certain others persisted in advancing their erroneous interpretation of Article 2, paragraph 7, whenever they were asked to fulfil their sacred trust under Chapter XI.

3. His Government whole-heartedly supported the principle of self-determination of peoples and urged the United Nations to do everything within its power to ensure its universal application. Only thus could the objectives of the Charter, and in particular of Chapter XI, be achieved. It was essential that the political advancement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories should be accomplished in such a way as to give the peoples of those territories the opportunity to attain a full measure of self-government through the attainment of complete independence. The absence of the term "independence" in Chapter XI had been used as a basis for the argument that independence was not necessarily the objective of that chapter. Nevertheless, Chapter XI was permeated by the spirit of independence, which was certainly one of the most glorious of the "political aspirations of the peoples" mentioned in Article 73 b.

4. In his delegation's opinion, a full measure of self-government could not be attained through the granting of a limited degree of authority in economic, social and educational affairs. Self-government in those matters was impossible so long as the administering Powers retained political control. For centuries the colonial system had been based on the economic exploitation of the colonies and on a social order which maintained a low standard of living to ensure a cheap supply of man-power. In the field of education, too, it had been in the interests of the colonists to perpetuate ignorance and superstition, so that the indigenous inhabitants would not know their rights or be able to further their aspirations. Until the dependent territories had full self-government in political as well as economic, social and educational matters, they would necessarily be subject to the economic and other interests of the metropolitan Powers. Local legislation that was aimed at promoting independence or the true interests of the indigenous population would certainly meet with the disapproval or veto of the administering Power. Hence, while he applauded every economic, social or educational advance in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, he categorically rejected the contention that self-government in those matters could amount to the full measure of self-government to which the Charter referred. Self-government was indivisible. In the statement to which he had already referred the head of his delegation had made certain very pertinent remarks in that connexion.

5. At the Ninth International Conference of American States those States had adopted resolution XXXIII, categorically declaring that the emancipation of the American continent would not be complete while any colonial territories—or territories occupied by extra-continental Powers—remained on that continent, and

had called for the complete disappearance of all such territories. Hence it was doubly regrettable to see European troops landing once again on American soil to maintain the colonial régime by force. His Government had believed that such procedures were a thing of the past and that the administering Powers intended to solve colonial problems by democratic means, and to promote the political advancement of the dependent territories towards a full measure of self-government. It now appeared, however, that in order to progress the dependent peoples must subject the exercise of self-government to the interests and convenience of the metropolitan countries. A very limited Constitution which had scarcely begun to operate was now being suspended and annulled, because it had enabled certain elements of the local population who were opposed to colonialism to gain important governmental posts. There seemed little justification, at any rate at first sight, for the allegation that those elements had been preparing a communist *coup d'état*. There was a regrettable tendency to attach the appellation "communist" to any movement for national liberation or independence in the dependent territories or to any anti-imperialist or anti-monopolist activities on the part of countries which had long been economically exploited. He hoped that such cases would not recur and that, in keeping with their own democratic traditions, the metropolitan Powers would take the necessary steps to guarantee the right of self-determination in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and that they would not resort to force to suppress the nationalist aspirations and desire for independence of the dependent peoples.

6. The Guatemalan delegation had given careful study to the report of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/2465). He would refrain for the time being from making any reference to chapter VII of that report, which related to another item on the Fourth Committee's agenda. He praised part two of the report, the report on education in Non-Self-Governing Territories, for a remarkably comprehensive picture of the general situation, giving credit to the efforts made by some administering Powers in that field but not disguising the immense deficiencies which still remained and the vast obstacles which stood in the way of repairing them. The problem of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories was serious indeed, but it was encouraging to note that the States responsible for the administration of those territories were ready to face the problem and to do their best to bring about a gradual solution. The Guatemalan delegation applauded those efforts and the work being done by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organisation in co-operation with the administering Powers. It was sure that the Committee's next report on education would note substantial progress in that important sector, which was the key to development in all fields of human activity in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

7. While reserving the right to participate at a later stage in the detailed discussion of the draft resolution on education adopted by the Committee on Information (A/2465, part one, annex II), he pointed out that the Guatemalan delegation would be in favour of incorporating in it the list of the objectives of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories given in paragraph 12 of the report on education.

8. With regard to chapter XIII of the report of the Committee on Information, dealing with the participa-

tion of representatives from Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of the Committee, the Guatemalan delegation had the impression, particularly upon examining the draft resolution on that point submitted to the Fourth Committee (A/2465, part one, annex II), that ground had been lost rather than gained. That was borne out if General Assembly resolution 647 (VII) was compared with the draft resolution now proposed by the Committee on Information. The Guatemalan delegation felt that the Fourth Committee should pay special attention to the important matter of increased participation by the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of the Committee, since it presented, among others, the very considerable advantage of contributing to a closer relationship between the United Nations and the non-self-governing peoples, which was essential if the Non-Self-Governing Territories were to understand the purposes and principles of the United Nations and its work on their behalf.

9. The Guatemalan delegation would, as always, support with enthusiasm and complete faith in the principles of the Charter any action for the improvement of living conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the promotion of political independence and the exercise of a full measure of self-government.

10. Lord HUDSON (United Kingdom) regretted that the earlier part of the Guatemalan statement compelled him to repeat a statement which had often been made in the Fourth Committee. The Government of the United Kingdom had no doubts as to its sovereignty over the territory of British Honduras and it reserved fully its position on the question. The Government of the United Kingdom regarded the matter as a purely legal dispute and, in accordance with that view, had declared as early as 14 February 1946¹ its readiness to accept the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. That offer had been renewed on 12 February 1951² and would remain valid for five years from that date. The Government of the United Kingdom maintained the view that the International Court was the proper forum for the settlement of disputes of that kind and not the Fourth Committee.

11. Mr. ESPINOSO Y PRIETO (Mexico) wished to repeat the statement of the Mexican Government that if the status of Belize were changed the rights of Mexico over part of that territory would have to be taken into account.

12. Mrs. MENON (India) said that the Indian delegation had done its utmost to contribute to the success of the work of the Committee on Information. During its past session the Committee had concentrated upon the educational aspect of administration. Although it had relied entirely on information supplied by the Administering Members, the Committee had arrived at certain conclusions which were set forth in the report.

13. The Indian delegation felt that it was difficult to study education in isolation, because the educational policy of any State was interwoven with its politics and administration. That difficulty was further complicated in the Non-Self-Governing Territories by the fact that for decades education had been in the hands of voluntary and denominational agencies, with unfortunate consequences for the social and cultural values of the people concerned. Thus educational progress was hampered by social forces and social forces in turn were influenced by political considerations. If the

¹ See *United Nations Treaty Series*, vol. 1, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 80, p. 304.

nations really wished to solve their difficulties, they should learn from each other's experience. To stop discussing the item in its larger implications would be to yield to a groundless fear that would sap initiative and co-operation.

14. Progress in education was bound to be slow, but that merely meant that increased efforts should be made and resources diverted for the purpose. In the Non-Self-Governing Territories progress was hampered by financial limitations, undeveloped economic resources and an unsuitable system of education. The Committee had repeatedly urged the necessity of preserving the social and cultural values of the communities concerned. The formerly widely accepted belief that European culture was the only culture worth striving for had proved baseless. In the territories which had fallen a prey to the civilizing mission of the Western Powers, there was often an undisputed acceptance of values which were disappearing owing to the impact of modern civilization. The African tribes had in their social organization certain cultural values which should be preserved, and if the educational policy pursued undermined those values and broke up the traditional family system without replacing them by something equally valuable it could only result in failure. Much of the unrest and frustration in the territories was due to a wrong educational policy.

15. The Committee's report laid emphasis on quality as well as quantity, and also on equality. The question of wastage, the need for post-school education to prevent a relapse into illiteracy, and the reorganization of the whole system of education to meet the changing needs of society had been discussed and had led to agreed conclusions.

16. The Indian delegation was satisfied with emphasis given in the report to the question of women's education. Few inquired into the underlying reasons why educational and social reconstruction policies did not produce the expected results. Women could be the

greatest obstacle to, or the ablest promoters of, progress. But they needed training. Where women's education had been neglected, progress had been slow. Where women had taken the initiative, problems had been fewer and easier of solution. In all the under-developed countries women's social status had been affected by the lack of opportunities for education. The Indian delegation was firmly convinced that there would be no progress in education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories unless precedence were given to the training of women. That was being done by the Administering Members, but progress was not rapid enough.

17. Much had been said about the participation of the indigenous peoples in framing education and other policies. She would confine herself to the subject of education. The Fourth Committee could not ignore the treatment meted out to independent schools in Kenya. When the question had been raised in the Committee on Information, the Committee had been told that those schools were teaching terror to the children. That was the point of view of the administering Power, but there was also an African point of view. It had been said that the issue in Kenya was the problem of land and that the Mau Mau revolt was the outcome of the demand for land. In such cases the relationship between educational policies and political problems in the Non-Self-Governing Territories could not be ignored.

18. India was justifiably alarmed by what was taking place in Central Africa. She asked the United Kingdom delegation what would be the consequence of Central African federation on educational policy in the two protectorates, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. She understood that a communication was being addressed to the Committee by a number of African chiefs and hoped it would be circulated to the members as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.