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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD
TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

(covering its work during 1967)

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CHAPTER VII

FIJI

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* This document contains chapter VII of the Special Committee's report to the General Assembly. The general introductory chapter will be issued subsequently under the symbol A/6700 (part I). Other chapters of the report are being reproduced as addenda.

I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE IN 1966 AND BY
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

1. In 1963 and 1964 the Special Committee adopted resolutions concerning Fiji.^{1/} After considering the question of Fiji at its meetings in 1966, the Special Committee adopted a resolution^{2/} in which it reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Fiji to freedom and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, and called upon the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as the administering Power, to implement immediately the following: the holding of general elections on the basis of one man, one vote, in accordance with the principle of universal adult suffrage, for the purpose of forming a constituent assembly which would be charged with the task of drawing up a democratic constitution; the formation of a representative government and transfer of full powers to that government; the fixing of an early date for the granting of independence to the people of Fiji; and the abolition of all discriminatory measures so as to foster communal harmony and national unity in the Territory. Moreover, it decided to appoint a sub-committee to visit Fiji for the purpose of studying at first hand the situation in the Territory and to report to the Special Committee as soon as possible.
2. At its eighteenth and twentieth sessions the General Assembly adopted resolutions 1951 (XVIII) of 11 December 1963 and 2068 (XX) of 16 December 1965 respectively concerning Fiji. It considered the report of the Special Committee on the Territory (A/6300/Add.6, chapter VIII) at its twenty-first session and subsequently adopted resolution 2185 (XXI) of 12 December 1966, the text of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Territory of Fiji,

"Having heard the statement of the administering Power,

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Eighteenth Session, Annexes, addendum to agenda item 23, (A/5446/Rev.1), chapter VII, para 165; ibid., Nineteenth Session, Annex No. 8, (A/5800/Rev.1), chapter XIII, para. 119.

^{2/} A/6300/Add.6, Chapter VIII, para. 120.

"Recalling its resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, 1951 (XVIII) of 11 December 1963, 2068 (XX) of 16 December 1965 and 2105 (XX) of 20 December 1965, also the resolution adopted by the Special Committee on 7 September 1966,

"Noting with regret that the administering Power has not yet taken effective measures to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee,

"1. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Fiji to freedom and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV);

"2. Expresses its deep regret that the administering Power has not yet taken effective measures to implement the various resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples concerning the Territory of Fiji;

"3. Endorses the decision of the Special Committee to appoint a sub-committee to visit Fiji for the purpose of studying at first hand the situation in the Territory, and requests the Chairman of the Special Committee, in consultation with the administering Power, to appoint the sub-committee as early as practicable;

"4. Calls upon the administering Power to implement without delay the following measures:

(a) The holding of general elections in accordance with the principle of 'one man, one vote' for the purpose of forming a constituent assembly which will be charged with the task of drawing up a democratic constitution and the formation of a representative government, and the transfer of full powers to that government;

(b) The fixing of an early date for the independence of Fiji;

(c) The abolishing of all discriminatory measures so as to foster communal harmony and national unity in the Territory;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to provide all the necessary facilities for the visit of the sub-committee to the Territory;

"6. Requests the administering Power to report to the Special Committee on the implementation of the present resolution;

"7. Invites the Special Committee to keep the question under consideration and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its twenty-second session;

"8. Decides to keep the question of Fiji on its agenda."

II. INFORMATION ON THE TERRITORY^{3/}

General

3. The Crown Colony of Fiji, situated in the South-West Pacific, comprises some 844 islands and islets, including numerous atolls. Almost 90 per cent of the total land mass of 7,055 square miles is contained by the islands of Viti Levu (4,010 square miles) and Vanua Levu (2,137 square miles). About a hundred other islands are permanently inhabited. This island of Rotuma (18 square miles), added to the Colony in 1881, lies several hundred miles north-west of Fiji.

4. At the end of 1965, the total population was estimated to be 469,934, made up as follows:

<u>Race</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Appropriate proportion of whole per cent</u>
Fijian	194,998	41.49
Indian	235,338	50.08
European	10,755	2.29
Part-European	9,972	2.12
Chinese	5,531	1.48
Other Pacific races	13,340	2.84
	<u>469,934</u>	

Constitution

5. Fiji's new Constitution, based on the agreement reached at the Constitutional Conference held in London from 26 July to 9 August 1965, was promulgated on 23 September 1966. The main features of the Constitution are set out below.

^{3/} The information presented in this section has been derived from published reports. Also used in the preparation of this section has been the information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the United Kingdom under Article 73 e of the Charter on 12 August 1966 for the year ended 31 December 1965.

6. Governor. The Governor is appointed by the Queen on the advice of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Executive power is formally vested in the Governor. Defence, external affairs, internal security and the public service, inter alia, are reserved to the Governor at his discretion and as his special responsibility.
7. Executive Council. The Governor appoints the non-official members of the Executive Council which has a membership of six elected and four official members. The non-official members of the Executive Council are drawn from among the elected members of the Legislative Council, and the Governor is to ensure appropriate representation of the various communities in Fiji. The Constitution provides that at the appropriate time, the Governor may appoint members of the Executive Council to be ministers with executive powers. At that time, the Executive Council will become a Council of Ministers.
8. The Governor is required to consult the Executive Council and, in general, to accept its advice, except when he considers it necessary to act against such advice in the interests of public order, public faith or good government. In such cases he is required to seek approval of the Secretary of State. However, he is not required to consult the Council on subjects specifically reserved to him.
9. Legislative Council. The Legislative Council consists of thirty-six elected members and four official members nominated by the Governor. Subject to the restrictions imposed by the Colonial Laws Validity Act, 1865, and by any provisions of the Constitution itself, such as a Bill of Rights, the Constitution gives the Legislative Council full power to make laws on any subject. The Constitution has a provision which prevents bills from being introduced without the consent of the Governor if their effect would be to impose taxes or to increase expenditure or alter terms and conditions of service of public officers. The Governor is empowered to refuse assent, to reserve legislation, and to ensure that bills are passed by certification.
10. The Governor is required to reserve certain kinds of bills, e.g., bills which appear to him to conflict with international obligations or affect the Royal Prerogative, or bills which purport to amend the Constitution. The power of disallowance is retained by the Crown. Besides these restrictions on the powers of the Legislative Council the Crown retains the power to revise or amend the Constitution and to make other laws for Fiji by Order in Council.

11. A Speaker, who has no vote, is elected by the Legislative Council either from within the Council or from persons qualified to be elected to the Council. The Council is also empowered to appoint a Deputy Speaker from among its members. The maximum life of the Council is five years. However, the Governor is empowered to dissolve the Legislative Council at his discretion. His power of prorogation is exercised after consultation with the Executive Council, though he is not bound by such consultation.

Electoral system

12. The thirty-six elected members of the Legislative Council are elected as follows: fourteen Fijians - nine elected on the Fijian communal roll, two elected by the Fijian Council of Chiefs and three elected according to the new cross-voting system; twelve Indians - nine elected on the Indian communal role and three elected by the cross-voting system; and ten who are neither Fijians nor Indians - seven elected on the general roll, and three by the cross-voting system.

13. The communal roll for Fijians includes the Rotumans and other Pacific Islanders. The Chinese and any other minority communities are included on the general roll with Europeans. For the election of the nine members by the cross-voting system, Fiji is divided into three constituencies, each returning one Fijian (or Rotuman or other Pacific Islander), one Indian and one European (or Chinese or member of another minority group), each member being elected by voters of all communities.

14. The new Constitution provides for universal adult suffrage by enfranchising minority communities such as the Chinese, the Rotumans and other Pacific Islanders, and by abolishing certain qualifications and disqualifications concerning candidates and electors, such as the requirements relating to property or income for candidates and the literacy tests for voters.

Political parties

15. The two major political parties are the Federation Party and the Alliance. No information is available concerning the present membership of either party. The Federation Party claims to represent most of Fiji's Indian population. This party, inter alia, advocates early independence and demands a common-roll vote (i.e., one man, one vote) for all the people of Fiji.

16. The Alliance was formed in March 1966 and is made up of a multiracial combination of organizations such as the Fijian Association, the Fiji National Congress, the General Electors' Association, the Rotuman Association and associate members. Its stated aims are racial unity and progressive development under the direction of the United Kingdom Government. It believes that, whatever its form of government, Fiji should remain a member of the British Commonwealth. In a formal statement of policy in July 1966, the Alliance declared that the agreed decisions of the London Constitutional Conference of 1965 were a fair and just basis for the establishment of democratic rule in Fiji whereby the people might proceed towards internal self-government.

17. There are also a number of minor parties such as the National Democratic Party.

Recent developments

18. General elections. The first general elections for a Legislative Council under the new Constitution were held in Fiji from 26 September to 8 October 1966. Out of a population of approximately 474,000, there were 154,635 enrolled voters. For electoral purposes the voters were divided among three communal rolls:

	<u>To represent</u>	<u>Approximate population</u>	<u>Voters enrolled</u>
Indian Roll	Indians only	273,500	74,445
Fijian Roll	Fijians, Rotumans and other Pacific Islanders	210,000	73,850
General Roll	Europeans, Part- Europeans, Chinese, and other minority groups	26,500	6,340

19. The elections were the first to be fought mainly on party lines. The Alliance Party, which emerged as the strongest group with a total of twenty-two seats, gained all the Fijian communal seats, all but two of the general communal seats and all but one of the cross-voting seats. The Federation Party won all nine of the Indian communal seats. Independents gained three seats. About 90 per cent of the Indian electorate and over 80 per cent of the Fijian and general electorate voted.

Economic conditions

20. General. The economy of the Territory is predominantly agricultural, the most important products being sugar and copra. Droughts and hurricanes, as well as the downward trend in world sugar prices, have produced serious difficulties for the economy. However, the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement enabled Fiji to dispose of 140,000 tons of sugar manufactured in 1965 at a price of £46.11.6d. per ton, which was approximately £26.0.0d. per ton more than the world market price.

21. Efforts to expand the tourist industry resulted in a record number of tourists visiting Fiji, whilst, in the sphere of secondary industry, several companies established local branches, such as a mill producing animal and poultry foods, a factory extracting fruit juices and packaging fruit for export, a sawmill, and a factory manufacturing packages, packaging materials and other paper products.

22. While domestic exports fell from an all-time high in 1964 of £23,120,846 to £17,575,078 in 1965, re-exports at £3,441,783 were higher than the 1964 figure of £2,993,927. The economy of the Territory was further supported by tourist expenditure which, in 1965, was estimated to be at least £4,350,000.^{4/}

23. Fiji Development Plan. The Fiji Development Plan, 1966-1970, was published on 2 July 1966. The plan proposed capital expenditure of £20 million in the five years, with a further £1.8 million if that was financially and physically possible.

24. In addition to detailed proposals for government expenditure on agriculture (£580,000) and agricultural subsidies (£1,343,000), land development (£690,000), education (£2,068,000), medical services (£2,523,000), roads (£3,396,000), postal and telegraph services (£2,395,000), water supplies (£1,259,000) and government buildings (£1,567,000), the plan sets out a programme of surveys to give basic information on which future development can be based.

25. To meet the cost of the plan it is hoped to draw £2,800,000 from general revenue, to obtain £7,700,000 from United Kingdom Colonial Development and Welfare funds and to raise £5,550,000 in local loans and £3,650,000 in overseas loans. It is expected that other sources of revenue will yield £800,000.

^{4/} All monetary figures in this paper are in Fijian pounds. £111 Fijian equal £100 sterling or approximately \$280.

26. In a review of the plan by the Central Planning Office, it is stated that the traditional sugar and copra exports will not be able to support the long-term development of Fiji.

27. The plan looks forward especially to the development of tourism and forestry, and predicts that by the year 2000, Fiji's principal income earners will be wood products (£100 million), tourism (£35 million) and sugar (£20 million).

28. The new plan has been based on the general assumption that Fiji's population will increase from 450,000 to 1,200,000 between now and 2000 A.D., and that national production will rise from about £50 million to about £350 million. This implies an annual growth rate of 6 per cent in national income.

29. Survey of transport system. A survey of possibilities for a balanced, modern transport system to link the scattered islands of the Fiji group, as part of an over-all effort to promote economic and social growth, will be undertaken jointly by the Government of Fiji and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the United Nations acting as the executing agency.

30. Ways of applying the latest advances in transport techniques will be investigated in an effort to obtain maximum effectiveness with minimum investment. For example, specialists will examine the possible use of air-cushion vehicles (hovercraft) for coastal and inter-island shipping and the development of services using large cargo containers carried by landing craft. The plan of operation for the £1 million, three-year project was signed in July 1966.

Social conditions

31. Labour. More than half the total labour force is covered by some form of collective bargaining machinery and their terms and conditions of employment are set out in agreements arrived at by the normal process of negotiation. The general level of wages paid to an unskilled worker under those agreements is approximately two shillings per hour, whilst the average working week is forty-four hours.

32. In September 1965, a new venture was inaugurated in the setting up of a Joint Industrial Council for all the unestablished workers of government. This provides machinery for bringing together representatives of workers from throughout the public sector to discuss wages and conditions of employment with government officials.

33. Housing. It is estimated that the Housing Authority will have spent £300,000 on flat developments from about the beginning of 1966 to December 1967. The development is being undertaken at Suva and Lautoka.

34. Public health. There are twenty-four local sanitary authorities (including Suva City and Lautoka Town) working with the assistance of a medical health officer, a health inspector and several assistant health inspectors. In remote rural or island areas where the formation of a sanitary authority is not practicable, the Central Board of Health has executive functions.

35. The main hospital is in Suva and district hospitals are located at the three centres of Lautoka, Labasa and Levuka. There are also fourteen smaller hospitals and forty-six rural dispensaries distributed about the Territory. The three special hospitals are the Tamavure Tuberculosis Hospital, the St. Giles Mental Hospital (both in Suva) and the Fiji Leprosy Hospital on the island of Makogai.

36. The total recurrent expenditure on public health in 1965 was estimated at £1,298,229, and capital expenditure at £293,978, compared with £1,040,643 and £254,600 respectively for 1964. Other notable items of estimated expenditure (some recoverable), were:

South Pacific Health Service	£ 9,070
Fiji School of Medicine	54,107
Fiji Leprosy Hospital, Makogai	60,956
Research Library	<u>1,458</u>
	£125,591

Educational conditions

37. In 1965, the full-time school roll passed the 100,000 mark for the first time, the total of 102,498 being made up as follows:

Primary	93,983
Secondary	7,566
Technical and vocational	696
Teacher training	253

This represented an increase of 5,773 over the 1964 total of 96,725.

38. In 1965, excluding 27 kindergartens, there were 639 schools scattered over 55 islands, with 3,128 teachers of whom 2,503, or 80 per cent, were trained.

39. Government gross expenditure on education for 1965 was about £2 million, compared with £1,748,921 for 1964.

40. Primary school teacher training is conducted in three colleges, one run by the Government and two by missions. The combined roll of the three colleges in 1965 was 253. No secondary teacher training is as yet undertaken in the Territory.

41. In 1966, the Higher Education Mission to the South Pacific recommended the establishment of a University of Fiji which would serve the interests of the whole of the South Pacific region. The initial capital cost was put at £1,375,000, and operating costs at £356,000 a year.

III. CONSIDERATION BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Introduction

42. The Special Committee considered the question of Fiji at its 546th, 555th, 558th, 560th and 561st meetings between 28 August and 15 September 1967.

Appointment of the sub-committee on Fiji

43. The Chairman recalled that, by its resolution of 7 September 1966 concerning Fiji (A/AC.109/201), the Special Committee had decided "to appoint a sub-committee to visit Fiji for the purpose of studying at first hand the situation in the Territory and to report to the Special Committee as soon as possible". After considering the report of the Special Committee (A/6300/Add.6, Chapter VIII), the General Assembly, by its resolution 2185 (XXI) of 12 December 1966, had endorsed the decision of the Special Committee and requested the Chairman of the Special Committee, in consultation with the administering Power, to appoint the sub-committee as early as practicable.

44. He had therefore been in consultation on the matter with the representative of the administering Power. However, in a letter dated 28 August 1967 (A/AC.109/261), the United Kingdom had stated that the United Kingdom Government did not regard a visit to Fiji by a sub-committee of the Special Committee as necessary. After receiving that reply from the administering Power, he had had further consultations with the members of the Committee, and many of them had felt that the sub-committee should nevertheless be appointed, in the hope that it would be able to assist the Special Committee in its consideration of the question.

45. He had therefore decided to appoint Bulgaria, Chile, Finland, India and the United Republic of Tanzania as members of the Sub-Committee. He hoped that the administering Power would reconsider its position in the matter, and he trusted that the Sub-Committee would be able to submit a useful report.

46. The representative of India thanked the Chairman for the confidence he had shown in India by naming it as a member of the Sub-Committee to examine the situation in Fiji. India would do its best to discharge its responsibilities as a member of the Sub-Committee, and it shared the hope that the administering Power would reconsider its decision and agree to a visit to the Territory by the Sub-Committee.

General statements by members

47. The representative of the United Kingdom said that at the 1652nd meeting of the Fourth Committee his delegation had described the background to the present constitutional position in Fiji. He would therefore only recall the salient features of the position.

48. The population of Fiji (477,000) could be divided into three main groups: the Indian community, representing 50.5 per cent of the population; the indigenous Fijian people and the Pacific Islanders (45 per cent); and the Europeans, Chinese and others (4.5 per cent). Because of the different distribution of age groups between the various communities, however, the pattern of actual enrolled voters was rather different and the Indians represented less than 50 per cent. The balance between the two largest communities was thus very delicately poised. For many years there had been only very limited effective integration on the political or social level between the two main communities. Until the introduction of the new Constitution in September 1966 political life had been based on the communities with exclusively communal representation and communal voting. The Constitutional Conference held in London in July-August 1965 had recognized that the aim should be a single common roll, regardless of community or race, but there had been wide divergencies of view about the rate and method of achieving that objective. The constitutional arrangements which had come into effect in September 1966 represented the best available compromise. Although there was still a substantial measure of communal representation and voting, three of the members drawn from each of the three main communities were elected on a cross-voting basis. In other words, each candidate for each of the nine cross-voting seats must seek election by the votes from all three communities. The aim was to encourage the political parties to develop a broader national, multiracial and multicommunal appeal. In view of the delicate communal situation in Fiji, the importance of those changes should not be belittled.

49. In the elections held in October 1966, as his delegation had already informed the Fourth Committee (A/C.4/SR.1652), some parties had sought and obtained support on a nation-wide rather than a communal basis. The Alliance Party, which had won twenty-two seats as against nine for the Federation Party and three for Independent members, had won all nine of the indigenous Fijian communal roll seats with

68 per cent of the vote in the contested seats and five out of the seven seats allocated to the third communal group, with 67 per cent of the votes cast. It had also won 40 per cent of the votes cast in the one-third of the Indian seats which they contested, and obtained 47,309 votes in all the communal seats combined compared with 43,705 votes for the Federation Party. The Alliance Party won 57 per cent of the votes cast by all three groups voting together in the cross-voting constituencies. The figures showed beyond any doubt that the Alliance Party had obtained substantial support among all sections of the population and had secured a clear majority of all the votes cast in the elections, whether on a communal or cross-voting basis. Ratu Mara, leader of the Alliance Party, himself a Fijian, had appointed two Indian members of his party to the Executive Council, and an Indian member of the opposition Federation Party had been appointed Deputy Speaker of the Legislature. Other Alliance Party nominations to posts in the Executive Council had included Fijians and Europeans so that the Council was in every sense multiracial, which was an encouraging sign. Thus, the new Constitution was already encouraging the growth of multiracial politics in Fiji.

50. In September 1967, a ministerial system had been introduced. Ratu Mara had become Chief Minister and the members of the former Executive Council had become Ministers and had taken over full and formal charge of the departments for which they were responsible.

51. Another important development had been the unanimous adoption by the Legislature in 1966 of the Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, which should help to promote inter-communal co-operation and harmony. The question of land tenure had been a great source of tension between Fijians and Indians in recent years, since the landowner often belonged to one community and his tenant to another. The new law gave added protection to tenants with justice for landlords also and established a tribunal for the settlement of disputes.

52. The situation in Fiji was unique in many respects, since the indigenous inhabitants represented a minority, albeit substantial, of the total population, while the Indian majority formed a minority of the electorate. Each community had been apprehensive lest the other should secure a dominant position in the life of the country, to its own possible disadvantage. This apprehension lay behind much of the purely communal politics of the past. The problem was to find

a framework in which people of different races, proud of their distinct cultural heritages and ways of life, could live together in peace, friendship and co-operation. The heritage of the past could not simply be swept away by a stroke of the pen, nor by a law of the Fiji Legislature, nor by a decree of the United Kingdom Government, nor by the application of a United Nations resolution which demanded that the problems should be solved by simply ignoring them. It would take time to solve such problems; to attempt to do so overnight would only accentuate them. The people of Fiji should be given time to grow accustomed to their new constitutional arrangements and to political parties with a multicommunal or non-communal approach, and time to build up trust and the habit of co-operation. Progress was, however, being made, as demonstrated by the introduction of non-communal voting arrangements, the success at the elections of a party approved by members of all communities, the formation of a multiracial government and the agreement of the legislature to a new law on landlords and tenants.

53. There was mounting evidence to show that the new Fiji Constitution was beginning to pave the way towards the objectives from which he was sure the Special Committee would not dissent. For that reason, his delegation had been unable to support General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI), whose recommendations appeared to be misconceived and contrary to the declared objectives of communal harmony and national unity. Similarly, his Government did not agree that any useful purpose would be served by the visit of a United Nations mission to Fiji, especially in view of the unacceptable nature of recent resolutions concerning the Territory. Although the United Kingdom Government, as the administering Power, had taken the decision not to agree to such a visit, it had taken into account, inter alia, the declared view of the leader of the majority Party in Fiji who had publicly stated that the Fiji Government did not agree that a United Nations mission should go to Fiji. He hoped that the honest differences of opinion which might exist on that question would not prevent the Committee from taking a fair and objective view of the declared objectives of the United Kingdom Government in the Territory and of the substantial progress which had been and was being made. Fiji had embarked on a great experiment in political harmony and racial co-operation and its people had a right to expect the Special Committee to show understanding, patience and forbearance so that the experiment might succeed.

54. The representative of India asked whether the United Kingdom representative could give the breakdown by communities of the former Executive Council, now the Council of Ministers.

55. The representative of the Ivory Coast, referring to operative paragraph 4, sub-paragraph (c) of General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI), said that the United Kingdom representative had mentioned only one measure, namely, the introduction of a cross-electoral system, taken in that connexion. He wondered whether there had been any others.

56. The representative of the United Kingdom said that he would comment on those questions at a later stage in the debate.

57. The representative of India said that the working paper on Fiji prepared by the Secretariat (see paras. 1-41 above) was, inevitably, not as up to date as his delegation would have wished. The representative of the administering Power had described the most recent developments, but with some significant omissions.

58. The remarks made by his delegation in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly in 1966 (A/C.4/SR.1652 and 1655) were still valid. The administering Power had made very little effort to fulfil the provisions of various resolutions of the Special Committee and the General Assembly, concerning Fiji, in particular General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI). It had not so far carried out any of the measures called for in operative paragraph 4 of that resolution, which were necessary to lead Fiji to independence as a unified and multiracial State, and had refused to allow a visiting mission to enter the Territory.

59. The present electoral system in Fiji discriminated against the indigenous Fijians and the Fijians of Indian origin to the benefit of the small but powerful European community. The latter, which represented less than 5 per cent of the population, had ten seats in the legislature out of the thirty-six filled by election. Moreover, under the electoral system, one European vote actually equalled nine indigenous Fijian votes and ten so-called Indian votes.

60. It was significant that the representative of the administering Power had not yet provided an answer to his question concerning the composition of the former Executive Council, now the Council of Ministers (paragraph 54 above). However, he understood that, of the eleven members of the Executive Council, six had been members of the European community - or rather of the community which was neither

Fijian nor Indian - three had been Fijians and two had been members of the so-called Indian community. In the Council of Ministers, the Europeans had four seats, the Fijians three and the so-called Indians one. The European community therefore retained a disproportionate share of power.

61. He agreed with the representative of the administering Power on the need to develop racial harmony in Fiji but differed from him with regard to the steps to be taken to achieve it. The administering Power could not escape responsibility for the fact that there had been very little effective integration between the different communities on the political or social level. It had been its deliberate policy in Fiji, as elsewhere, to accentuate racial differences in order to retain its own position of dominance. The differences between the Fijian community and the community of Indian origin had been grossly exaggerated by the administering Power, and he was sure that, given the opportunity, the two communities would be able and willing to live in peace and harmony. In 1929, elections to the municipality in Suva had taken place successfully on a common-roll vote, yet the system had been discontinued. The success of the new cross-voting system was further proof that the communities could maintain a harmonious relationship.

62. His delegation submitted that it was wrong to refer to the people of Indian origin as the Indian community; they were no less Fijian than the indigenous Fijians themselves. Such unnecessary labels certainly did not promote communal harmony.

63. As the representative of the administering Power had said, both the main communities in Fiji agreed that the long-term aid should be a single common electoral roll, and his delegation had no reason to doubt that, if introduced immediately, it would be very beneficial for the people of Fiji as a whole. The Chief Minister, Ratu Mara, had already proved himself to be a very competent leader and was successfully working towards a multi-racial society.

64. Full powers had still not been transferred to the legislative and executive bodies in Fiji, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI). No additional executive powers appeared to have been given to the members of the new Council of Ministers, and the Governor still retained very wide discretionary powers.

65. His delegation had been disappointed by the United Kingdom Government's refusal to agree to a visit to the Territory by the Sub-Committee on Fiji, since an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly had been of the opinion that such a visit to obtain first-hand information would serve a very useful purpose. A United Nations visit would also allay the fears which, according to the administering Power, some of the people of Fiji felt with regard to the possible repercussions of United Nations "interference". He was glad that the Sub-Committee on Fiji had been appointed despite the lack of co-operation by the administering Power. He hoped that the latter would reconsider its decision; otherwise, the members of the Special Committee would be entitled to draw their own conclusions.

66. The representative of Yugoslavia said that it appeared from the Secretariat's working paper (see paras. 1-41 above) and from the statement by the representative of the administering Power that there had been no change with regard to the decolonization of Fiji. The administering Power continued to pursue a policy which it alone considered useful and to disregard the provisions of the various relevant United Nations resolutions, especially General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI). Such a situation was unacceptable and unsatisfactory. The administering Power's claims that its own policy of introducing a complicated constitutional and electoral system would solve the serious racial and communal problems in Fiji and bring the Territory to independence more swiftly and more effectively than the policy advocated in resolution 2185 (XXI) were unconvincing. Such a system could not bring independence, communal harmony and national unity to Fiji, but might result in a widening of the gap between the communities, which could then be used by the administering Power to justify the perpetuation of the colonial régime. In the latest elections in Fiji, the Europeans and their allies, who numbered only 6,340 out of 156,683 registered voters, had won almost 30 per cent of the seats in the Legislative Council. In the Executive Council, the Europeans, representing only 4.5 per cent of the population, had an absolute majority, while more than 50 per cent of the population was represented by only two members. In addition, the Governor had extremely broad powers. In contrast, resolution 2185 (XXI), by recommending various specific measures in its operative paragraph 4, had outlined the course which alone could secure the strengthening of communal harmony and national unity in the Territory and the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) in respect of Fiji.

67. The negative attitude of the administering Power with regard to a visit to the Territory by the Sub-Committee on Fiji only increased the doubts already voiced by most delegations in the Special Committee and in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly concerning its readiness to facilitate the rapid attainment of independence by the people of Fiji. There could be no other reason for the United Kingdom to oppose the visit of the Sub-Committee, whose only purpose was to study the situation in the Territory at first hand. His delegation fully supported the Chairman's decision to appoint a Sub-Committee despite the administering Power's opposition; it would still be able to make a substantial contribution to the study of the situation in the Territory.

68. The Special Committee should express its strong dissatisfaction with the refusal of the administering Power to implement the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and with its determination to pursue its colonial policy in Fiji, and should recommend to the General Assembly such measures as would ensure, without further delay, the implementation of resolution 2185 (XXI) and consequently of resolution 1514 (XV).

69. The representative of Chile said that his delegation had supported General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI), paragraph 3 of which provided for the setting up of a sub-committee to visit the Territory for the purpose of studying the situation there at first hand. He agreed with the Chairman's decision to appoint the Sub-Committee, despite the lack of co-operation from the administering Power. Chile was honoured to have been named as a member and would do everything in its power to fulfil the tasks entrusted to it.

70. Nevertheless, his delegation was not sure how the Sub-Committee was to operate. In his letter to the Chairman (A/AC.109/261), the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom had referred the Special Committee to the statement made by the United Kingdom delegation in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, which had made it clear that the administering Power did not consider it necessary for a sub-committee to visit the Territory. Chile believed that such a visit would be most useful, since it would allow the Special Committee to become fully cognizant of the situation in the Territory, and it could then recommend whatever measures it deemed appropriate to accelerate the process of decolonization there.

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71. The situation in the Territory was very complex. The majority of the population was not adequately represented in the legislature or in the Council of Ministers. An electoral system based on a single electoral roll should be adopted as soon as possible, so that each sector of the population would have the representation to which it was entitled. The representative of the administering Power had told the Special Committee at a previous meeting that progress was being made and that the different population groups were gradually becoming integrated. The Chilean delegation nevertheless considered that progress in the Territory had been inadequate.

72. The representative of Poland said it was evident from the statement made by the United Kingdom representative in the Special Committee that the situation in the Territory had remained basically unchanged during the past year and that the administering Power had been continuing its own policy aimed at the perpetuation of its domination over the Territory. That policy was also reflected in other available documents, such as the Fact Sheets on the Commonwealth concerning Fiji, which stated:

"A Conference was held in London from 26 July to 9 August 1965 to work out a constitutional framework for Fiji which would preserve a continuing association with Britain and within which further progress could be made towards self-government."

73. The premise that a "continuing association with Britain" was the only possibility open for the time being to the people of the Territory contradicted the position taken by the Special Committee and the General Assembly on the basis of resolution 1514 (XV), which called for the granting of immediate independence to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

74. The attitude adopted by the administering Power so far had been totally negative. It had rejected the recommendations of General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI), had refused to allow a United Nations mission to visit the Territory and had not made any declaration as to when the people of Fiji would be able to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. In particular, the administering Power had failed to implement the measures called for in resolution 2185 (XXI), paragraph 4, sub-paragraphs (a) and (b).

75. Under General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI), the Special Committee had been instructed to keep the question of Fiji under consideration and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its twenty-second session; it must therefore make a pronouncement on whether the policy of the administering Power was consonant with the provisions and recommendations of that resolution.

76. The representative of Bulgaria welcomed the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fiji and said that his delegation was highly honoured to have been asked to serve on it.

77. The representative of the United Kingdom, speaking in exercise of his right of reply, pointed out to the representative of Yugoslavia that the course which was being followed by the United Kingdom Government was not "considered useful" by that Government alone; it had the full support of the majority party in Fiji and coincided with the latter's views and wishes. In so far as General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI) called for the fixing of an early date for independence and the formation of a constituent assembly, it in no way reflected the publicly stated views of either the Alliance Party, which was supported by the majority of voters, or the opposition party, the Federation Party, at the present time. His delegation could not accept that matters of such vital importance to the future of the Territory could be decided either in the Special Committee or in the General Assembly in isolation from and in disregard of the stated wishes of the representative organs of public opinion in the Territory.

78. At the next meeting, the representative of the United Kingdom, speaking in exercise of his right of reply, said that the representative of India had said that the immediate introduction of a single electoral roll throughout the Territory of Fiji would have been very beneficial. That was not the view taken by the United Kingdom, which felt that this system, if introduced prematurely or precipitately, would do more harm than good. It was better to concentrate on measures which, though possible less spectacular, were more useful, and to act by stages. The electoral system which had been put into effect already represented considerable progress. It should also be pointed out that, following the local consultations which had been held in 1965 and 1966, steps had been taken to institute a single common roll in some municipalities in 1966, with the best of results. That system might shortly be extended to other municipalities, subject to local wishes and the necessary legislative proposals.

79. Another point raised by the representative of India concerned the Indian community in Fiji. He had stated that the first Indians to arrive in Fiji had been brought there forcibly by the Europeans. That assertion was totally at variance with the historical facts. The Indians who had gone to Fiji at that time had done so quite voluntarily after having, of their own free will, signed a contract on the expiration of which they were free to return to India with passages paid; only about one third of them had chosen to do so.

80. The representative of India had also asked why Fijians of Indian origin were always referred to as the "Indian community". Ninety per cent of the Indian community had been born in the Territory, but they were usually described as the Indian community and so described themselves, to distinguish them from the indigenous Fijians. These communal problems would not be solved by changing labels. He objected to the Indian representative's unwarranted assertion that the United Kingdom had deliberately fostered and encouraged tension between the two communities. Such statements were not calculated to promote the solution which both the United Kingdom Government and Indian Government were seeking.

81. What must be done was to endeavour to promote inter-communal harmony and co-operation. The two main political parties in the Territory had avoided communal titles and had appealed for - and obtained broad-based support. As he had already had occasion to stress, the situation in Fiji was not exactly comparable with any other, because of the near equilibrium between the two main communities, although some rather similar cases - for example, Guyana and Mauritius - showed that such problems could be overcome. What was needed was time and patience.

82. The representative of the Ivory Coast had asked what had been done to abolish discrimination, with particular reference to General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI), paragraph 4 (c). He pointed out that discrimination based on race, origin, political or religious belief, or colour was prohibited under section 13 of the 1966 Constitution. It was not clear what particular type of discrimination was referred to in resolution 2185 (XXI), paragraph 4 (c); if it was the 1966 Constitution that was being criticized, it was too soon to consider modifying it, because both the United Kingdom and Government and the local party supported by the majority of Fiji voters considered that the Constitution must be allowed time to prove itself. If the representative of the Ivory Coast was referring to economic

and social conditions, the difficulties experienced in those fields were not necessarily due to discriminatory legislation; in any case, steps had been taken to improve the situation, and mention might be made, in particular, of some legislative reforms, particularly those concerning relations between landlords and tenants, which he had described in detail in his earlier statement. Many primary schools were operated on a multi-racial basis, 231 of the 581 schools at primary level being interracial. The case of Fiji was unique, and barriers to intercourse inevitably existed because of the presence of two distinct societies, in almost equal numbers, one indigenous and the other established for at most three or four generations, whose culture, language and customs differed. That gave rise to difficulties of a kind not confined to Fiji that were not easy to overcome, but even so it could hardly be said that discrimination in social relations existed in the Territory. The barriers to integration were not the same thing as deliberate discrimination.

83. The representative of India, speaking in exercise of his right of reply, said that the United Kingdom had replied, although somewhat unconvincingly, to several points which he had raised but had left aside two very important factors. The first was the preponderant share of power held by the small European community in Fiji. The European community constituted only 4.5 per cent of the population but had 55 per cent of the seats in the Executive Council, while the remainder of the population, or 91 per cent of the inhabitants, had the other 45 per cent. He had asked a question on that point which the United Kingdom representative had not answered. He had merely talked about the difficult situation which prevailed in the Territory, but had refused to acknowledge that that situation was due solely to the policy of the colonial Power. The results achieved in some cases by the United Kingdom in the matter of decolonization did not place it above all criticism, and there were other cases, especially Southern Rhodesia, where it had failed to take the necessary measures and where there was justification for doubting its goodwill. The United Kingdom representative's statement that the system of a common electoral roll had been successfully employed in some municipalities in Fiji only served to prove the validity of the Indian delegation's claim that the system would work well in Fiji. If the system had been found satisfactory in several cases there was no reason why it should not be employed

throughout the Territory. The reply given by the United Kingdom representative to his objection to the people of Indian origin being called the "Indian community" was far from satisfactory. In addition to the example he gave earlier of an Englishman being called a Rhodesian in Rhodesia, the Englishmen who went to Gibraltar also became Gibraltarians and did not remain Englishmen. He paid a tribute to Chief Minister Ratu Mara and said that because of the leadership provided by people like him, his delegation was convinced that a common roll if introduced in Fiji would only have beneficial consequences for the Territory.

84. The United Kingdom apparently did not have any objection now in principle to visiting missions, as it had agreed to a visiting mission with respect to one of its colonies. In the case of Fiji, it had simply stated that the Special Committee had all the information it needed and that a visiting mission would not produce anything new. If the Sub-Committee would find that the facts in Fiji corresponded to the situation described by the administering Power, why was the United Kingdom afraid of having a visiting mission go to the Territory? As Fiji was not yet independent, it was the British Government which did not want a visiting mission to go to the Territory and not the people of Fiji. The reasons for the reluctance of the British Government were only too obvious.

85. Once again, he regretted that the United Kingdom representative had failed to answer those two important questions.

86. The representative of the United Kingdom said the comments made by the representative of India proved that any difference of views between the two countries related less to the objective than to the speed with which it could be attained.

87. The representative of India had said that 55 per cent of the members of the Fijian Council of Ministers belonged to the European community. Of the six European members among the eleven members of the Council of Ministers, three were expatriate officials appointed by the Governor. These could not be regarded as members of the resident European community in Fiji. In addition to the three expatriate officials and one other official, there were seven members of the Council drawn from among the elected members of the legislature, chosen by the Governor after consultation with the Chief Minister, and three of these were also Europeans.

88. The representative of India said he was pleased to note that the United Kingdom representative had finally given the Committee the information concerning the composition of the Executive Council which he had previously refused to provide.

89. The representative of the United Kingdom said that contrary to the implications of the Indian representative's statement, he had received the information in question only that very morning.

IV. ACTION TAKEN BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

90. At the 560th meeting on 14 September 1967, the representative of Iraq introduced a draft resolution on Fiji (A/AC.109/L.429) jointly sponsored by Afghanistan, India, Iran, Iraq, Mali, Syria, United Republic of Tanzania and Yugoslavia. He urged the administering Power to reconsider its position and realize the benefits which could result from a visit to the Territory by the Sub-Committee on Fiji. The draft resolution contained neither drastic measures nor unrealistic requests, and the sponsors hoped that it would receive overwhelming, if not unanimous, support.

91. The representative of Yugoslavia said that the draft resolution was actually a reaffirmation of General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI); the sponsors had decided to submit it because that resolution had not been implemented by the administering Power. His delegation believed that the measures recommended in resolution 2185 (XXI) were the only correct means of accelerating the process of decolonization and realizing the objectives of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) in Fiji. He hoped that the members of the Special Committee would give the draft resolution the consideration it deserved.

92. The representative of Syria said that the draft resolution, which reproduced the tenor of previous resolutions that the administering Power had failed to implement, was highly relevant and deserved the fullest support. It rightly drew attention to the administering Power's policy of maintaining national division and encouraging discriminatory practices, thereby hindering any kind of progress.

93. The representative of Chile said that the draft resolution under consideration reflected the concern felt by his delegation. It expressed regret at the administering Power's failure to implement General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2185 (XXI) in the Territory and urgently appealed to the administering Power to reconsider its refusal to allow a visit by a sub-committee to the Territory. The draft resolution was a realistic one; his delegation fully endorsed the principles set out in it and would give it its unreserved support.

94. The representative of Bulgaria recalled that his delegation had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI). Having carefully studied the documentation prepared by the Secretariat and listened attentively to the statement of the administering Power, he regretted to note that the latter had not taken the

necessary action to implement resolution 2185 (XXI). The draft resolution before the Committee clearly reflected that state of affairs. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of it and hoped that it would be supported by the great majority, if not all, of the members.

95. The representative of the United Kingdom said that he had studied the draft resolution thoroughly and had also listened carefully to the statements of the representatives of Bulgaria, Chile, Iraq, Poland, Syria and Yugoslavia in support of it; he regretted, although he was not surprised, that the progress and the new and hopeful trends which his delegation had mentioned in its statement of 13 September had been ignored - despite the fact that some delegates had recently met the Chief Minister of Fiji and heard from him at first hand of these facts and of his efforts to promote interracial harmony. He appreciated the respect felt for the General Assembly's resolution but it ought to be possible to acknowledge the hopeful experiment in train in Fiji and to allow some flexibility of opinion or at least a suspension of judgement. The United Kingdom had already clearly explained its position on resolution 2185 (XXI), and, in particular on paragraph 4 of that resolution, in the Fourth Committee. It had stated its belief that the recommendations made in the resolution failed to take account of the progress achieved and that it sought to impose a solution unacceptable to at least one of the main Fiji communities. It had therefore been unable to support it. The draft resolution had the same defects, and his delegation would have to vote against it for that reason.

96. The draft resolution (A/AC.109/L.429) was adopted at the 561st meeting on 15 September 1967 by a roll-call vote of 17 to 3, with 3 abstentions, as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Chile, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Poland, Syria, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Against: Australia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Finland, Italy, Sierra Leone.

97. The representative of Australia recalled that, at the twenty-first session of the General Assembly, Australia had voted against resolution 2185 (XXI) and had given a detailed statement of its views on the very complex question of Fiji. His delegation therefore regretted that the resolution which the Special Committee had adopted merely repeated what had already been said in resolution 2185 (XXI), without taking any account of the important changes in the Territory during the past year. In the course of the debate, the members of the Special Committee had not accorded due importance to the political advances which had been achieved in the Territory, particularly the results of the latest elections and the formation of a new Council of Ministers. Nor had they taken note of another important fact mentioned by the United Kingdom representative in his statement, namely, the unanimous adoption by the House of Assembly of the Landlord and Tenant Ordinance, which marked an encouraging advance toward the settlement of a most complex question that lay at the very heart of the difficulties experienced by Fiji. Australia was not opposed to the principle of "one man, one vote", on which its own political system was based, as was the electoral system it had introduced in New Guinea. It recognized, however, that in Fiji the problem was not quite the same, because of the existence of a number of distinct communities. For that reason, his delegation had hoped that the Special Committee would go deeper into the problem and not merely adopt a resolution similar to previous ones, without taking account of the actual situation.

98. The Chairman said that, following the adoption of the resolution concerning Fiji, he would like to make an appeal to the administering Power. At its previous session, the General Assembly had endorsed the decision of the Special Committee to appoint a sub-committee to visit Fiji for the purpose of studying at first hand the situation in the Territory, and had requested the Chairman of the Special Committee, in consultation with the administering Power, to appoint the sub-committee as early as practicable. The Chairman of the Special Committee had approached the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, who had subsequently informed him, in a letter dated 28 August 1967 (A/AC.109/261) that the United Kingdom Government did not regard a visit to Fiji by a sub-committee of the Special Committee as necessary and was unable to agree to a visit by the sub-committee as then proposed. On behalf of the Special Committee, he urgently appealed to the administering Power to

reconsider its position, and he wished to assure the people of Fiji that the Special Committee took a keen interest in their well-being and would do all in its power to protect their interests.

99. For several years, the Special Committee had been asking the United Kingdom to allow it to send a visiting mission to Aden. The United Kingdom had always refused, and what had happened in that Territory was now history. If the administering Power had acceded to the Special Committee's requests and allowed it to send a visiting mission to Aden, the bloodshed could perhaps have been avoided. The United Nations was in a position to make a significant contribution to the process of decolonization. One need only mention as an example the case of Equatorial Guinea, and to some extent Aden. He therefore hoped that the inhabitants of Fiji would appreciate that it was in their interest that a visiting mission should go to the Territory and that they themselves would appeal to the United Kingdom to reconsider its decision and allow the newly established sub-committee to visit Fiji.

100. The representative of the United Kingdom said that he would transmit the resolutions just adopted by the Special Committee and the Chairman's appeal to the United Kingdom Government, which would study them carefully.

101. The resolution (A/AC.109/274) adopted by the Special Committee on the question of Fiji at its 561st meeting on 15 September 1967 reads as follows:

"The Special Committee,

"Having considered the question of Fiji,

"Having heard the statement of the administering Power,

"Recalling General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, 1951 (XVIII) of 11 December 1963, 2068 (XX) of 16 December 1965, 2105 (XX) of 20 December 1965, 2185 (XXI) of 12 December 1966 and 2189 (XXI) of 13 December 1966,

"Noting with regret that the administering Power had not yet taken effective measures to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,

"1. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Fiji to freedom and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV);

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"2. Reaffirms its view that the administering Power must expedite the process of decolonization in Fiji by holding elections on the basis of one man, one vote and by fixing an early date for independence;

"3. Regrets that the administering Power has not yet taken measures to implement General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI);

"4. Deeply regrets the negative attitude of the administering Power in refusing to agree to the visit by the Sub-Committee on Fiji to the Territory in accordance with operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2185 (XXI);

"5. Urgently appeals to the administering Power to co-operate with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and to reconsider its decision concerning the visit of the Sub-Committee on Fiji in order to facilitate the work of the Special Committee;

"6. Urges the administering Power to implement without further delay the provisions of resolution 2185 (XXI) and, in particular, operative paragraph 4 thereof;

"7. Decides to keep the question of Fiji on its agenda."
