

External Affairs  
Supplementary Paper

No. 53/39 Decision of the United States to cease transmitting information under Article 73(e) of the Charter about Puerto Rico

Text of a statement given on November 4, 1953, in the Fourth Committee of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, by the Canadian Representative, Dr. G.S. Patterson. Agenda Item 34(b).

I should like first to associate the Canadian Delegation with those others who have congratulated both the United States and the Puerto Rican Governments on the progress that the Puerto Rican people have been able to achieve in the economic, social and educational, as well as in the political fields. My Delegation was impressed by the able statement made by Mr. Fernos Isern, the United States Special Representative on this Committee. It provided the Committee with valuable information on which to form a very objective opinion as to the new constitutional status of Puerto Rico.

My Delegation has been no less impressed by the comprehensive report submitted by the United States Government this year on Puerto Rico. The total documentation that has been provided has been extensive, and my Delegation is grateful to the United States Government for its efforts to present as complete a picture as possible of the constitutional evolution of Puerto Rico.

It has always been the Canadian view, Mr. Chairman, that it is to be expected that non-self-governing territories will normally advance towards self-government by stages and that, at a given time, they will reach a stage at which administering powers in fact no longer exercise effective practical control over the social, economic and educational matters on which information has been submitted. As we indicated during the debate on the question of factors, the obligation of the Administering Power to submit such information would then, at that stage, come to an end. This has been the frame of mind of my Delegation in examining the documentation submitted by the United States on Puerto Rico.

In the light of this documentation it is with pleasure that my Delegation has reached the conclusion that on economic, social and educational matters the Government of Puerto Rico now exercises the required effective control.

Another part of this documentation which has also assisted my Delegation in reaching this conclusion is that which describes the procedure which was followed in providing the Puerto Rican people with a full opportunity themselves to come to a decision on a new constitutional status for their own country. As all members of this Committee are aware, there has been much discussion in the United Nations,