

Secondly, it is not only pointless, but against the interests of this Assembly, for it to request Britain, as the Administering Power, to impose various constitutional changes on the Government of Southern Rhodesia, when Britain has no power to do so. The British Government can only exert influence on the Southern Rhodesian Government by persuasion and negotiation. It has no military forces stationed in the territory. Even if it had, can it seriously be imagined that military action could or would be taken against the Southern Rhodesian Government? And if it were, would the chaos, confusion and suffering resulting from such action really be in the interest of the people of Southern Rhodesia?

We believe that the transition to fully-representative government must be achieved peacefully. Any attempt to bring it about suddenly without the consent of the present government could only be made by force. Given the existing situation it would inevitably fail and would delay the transition for many more years.

Notwithstanding the situation in law and in fact, the majority of the Special Committee in its report, and the sponsors of the draft resolution in Document A/L.385 have implied that the United Kingdom Government is somehow capable of taking immediate steps to alter completely the constitution of Southern Rhodesia. This, of course, is untrue. Nor does the General Assembly by itself have the power to order the Southern Rhodesian Government to alter its constitution.

In these circumstances it is the view of my Delegation that the Assembly, in considering any proposed resolution on Southern Rhodesia, should be guided by two criteria: