

The most controversial topic discussed at the thirteenth session relating to information from non-self-governing territories was that dealing with the questions (1) whether the General Assembly was competent to decide which territories are non-self-governing territories under the terms of Chapter XI of the Charter and (2) whether the General Assembly is competent to oblige the administering powers concerned to supply reports on such territories under the terms of Article 73 (e) of the Charter. These questions were also the subject of controversial debate at the eleventh and twelfth sessions, following the admission of Spain and Portugal to the United Nations. Of the powers administering overseas territories, Portugal and Spain, together with Belgium, have not submitted reports to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories. Belgium transmits information on the Belgian Congo only to the United Nations Library. Spain and Portugal do not admit that their overseas territories come under the terms of Chapter XI; they maintain that these territories are constitutionally integral provinces of the metropolitan states. Portugal, which administers the large African territories of Angola and Mozambique, has come under strong attack in the Fourth Committee for its stand. Prior to the thirteenth session, Spain announced that as a courtesy it would transmit reports on the "overseas provinces of Metropolitan Spain" for the enlightenment of the Secretary-General, but not of the Committee on Information.

Approval was sought at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly for a resolution which invited the Secretary-General to prepare a summary of opinions on the principles underlying the enumeration of territories coming under the terms of Chapter XI, and called on the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories to study the Secretary-General's summary and to consider the question of transmission of information. In the debate, Canada took the position that the objectives sought by the General Assembly would be best reached through the voluntary co-operation of the powers concerned, and in this belief Canada would be obliged to vote against the proposal. The draft resolution was not put to a vote in plenary. Instead, it was moved and carried that consideration of the question of transmission of information should be postponed to the following session.

The possible effects on the non-self-governing territories from their association with the European Economic Community was also debated at the thirteenth session by the Fourth Committee. This matter was first discussed at the twelfth session when some members had suggested that the European Economic Community was designed to serve the interests of the administering powers at the expense of the dependent territories. A resolution was adopted at that session requesting the Secretary-General to examine the possible effects on some dependent territories of their association with the European Common Market. The Secretary-General's report on this matter to the thirteenth session stated that it had been found "somewhat difficult" to make a general evaluation of the impact of the association of the non-self-governing territories with the European Economic Community. While several possible benefits were seen for the dependent territories associated with the European Common Market, the report stated that it was "uncertain whether all the benefits expected to result [from the association]. . . will be achieved, and whether they might not be counter-balanced by new disadvantages."

This possibility of adverse effects on the dependent territories was emphasized by many speakers in the Fourth Committee's debate. A resolution introduced by Ceylon and co-sponsored by nine members, noted "with