

Canadian Statement in Explanation of Vote on  
British Guiana in the Fourth Committee given  
by Dr. Haidasz, December 10, 1965

Mr. Chairman:

I should like to explain the vote which the Canadian Delegation has just cast on the resolution on British Guiana contained in Document A/C.4/L.809.

Canada has close ties with British Guiana, and has therefore noted with satisfaction the successful outcome of the recent constitutional conference which resulted in the setting of a date for independence. The resolution took the outcome of the conference into account and my Delegation has therefore supported it.

We had reservations however about Operative Paragraphs 1 and 3. While the necessity for a state of emergency is to be regretted, we consider it worth drawing attention to the fact that the state of emergency was declared in May 1964 at the request of a freely elected government. It remains in force as a result of a vote in the Legislature of British Guiana which was freely elected in December 1964 under a system of universal adult suffrage and which, under the constitution, has the power to determine this matter. We understand also that a large proportion of persons who were detained when the state of emergency was originally declared have now been released.

Now that the date for independence has been set it is the view of my Delegation that the General Assembly should not recommend any measure which might indirectly or otherwise tend to disturb the peaceful transition to independence.

Mr. Chairman:

I should like to explain the vote which the Canadian Delegation has just cast on the resolution on British Guiana contained in Document A/C.4/L.802. Canada has close ties with British Guiana, and has therefore noted with satisfaction the successful outcome of the recent constitutional conference which resulted in the attainment of a date for independence. The resolution took the outcome of the conference into account and my Delegation has therefore supported it.

I had reservations however about operative paragraphs 1 and 2. While the necessity for a state of emergency is to be resisted, we consider it worth re-emphasizing the fact that the state of emergency was declared in May 1964 at the request of a freely elected government. It remains in force as a result of a vote in the Legislature of British Guiana which was freely elected in December 1964 under a system of universal adult suffrage and which, under the constitution, has the power to determine this matter. We understand also that a large proportion of persons who were detained when the state of emergency was originally declared have now been released. Now that the date for independence has been set it is the view of my Delegation that the General Assembly should not recommend any measure which might indirectly or otherwise tend to disturb the peaceful transition to independence.