Treatment of Persons of Indian Origin in South Africa: At every session of the General Assembly the Indian and Pakistani governments again raise the question of the treatment of persons of Indian origin in South Africa; each year the delegates of the two complaining powers reiterate their past and future willingness to negotiate with the Union and the failure of the South African government to respond to preceding UN resolutions urging negotiations. As in the question of apartheid ("the racial situation") in South Africa, the gesture seems foreordained to "utility," but the issue was duly debated again this year and another "moderate" draft resolution of the same tenor as earlier resolutions was approved by the Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee. The plenary adopted the resolution, which was supported by the United States.

Admission of Guinea to the UN: Guinea was finally admitted to membership in the UN by the General Assembly on December 12 (not December 9, as reported in the previous Bulletin). On December 9 the first difficulty was surmounted when the Security Council voted 10-0 for its admission. The French delegate abstained on the ground that the "character" of Guinea, its true independence, and its relation to other states (i.e., Ghana on the one hand and the French Union on the other) was still uncertain.

Almost immediately the Fourth Committee recommended the admission of Guinea. However, that recommendation was scheduled to be considered by the plenary session of the Assembly at the end of the Fourth Committee recommendations. This meant that Guinea's delegate would not be able to vote in the plenary on other items coming up from the Fourth Committee, a most important consideration as to any resolution requiring a two-thirds majority, for the anti-colonial powers do not lack such a majority by many votes, and could expect Guinea to support them. After some sparring on procedure, India suggested that the Fourth Committee request that its items then scheduled for the next day's plenary committee consideration be made the final items on the agenda (thus advancing the admission of Guinea to earlier consideration). This proposal aroused violent debate, including some extraordinarily intemperate conduct on the part of the delegate of the Dominican Republic, who opposed the change. The conduct of Witvold Rodzinski, presiding in the absence of the chairman, was exemplary and won the praise of all the uncommitted as well as of the African delegates. The admission of Guinea on the 12th made it possible for her delegate, Diallo Telli, to participate in a number of issues in the closing meetings of the plenary.

Non-Self-Governing Territories -- Action in the Fourth Committee: After concluding its work on the report of the Trusteeship Council, the Fourth Committee turned to the report of the Assembly's Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Committee's report was devoted primarily to social conditions in the territories on which reports were submitted by the administering powers.

After a series of challenges to the sovereignty of certain of the reporting powers (e.g., Britain over the Malvinas (or Falkland) Islands, challenged by Argentina; the Netherlands over West New Guinea (or West Irian or Netherlands New Guinea), challenged by Indonesia; etc.), the Fourth Committee began debate on the substance of the
report. A draft resolution (No. I) approving the report of the Committee on Information was adopted. The Liberian delegate then introduced the first controversial resolution on non-self-governing territories (No. II), which, as amended by Ceylon, Haiti, and the Philippines, who became co-sponsors, expressed the hope that all African territories (both trust and non-self-governing) would apply for associate membership in the Economic Commission on Africa through the member states responsible for their international relations and requested such member states to encourage and expedite such applications for associate membership. The draft resolution was adopted by a vote of 64-0, with 2 abstentions; the Belgian delegate refused to participate in the vote. Ten African and Asian states then introduced a draft resolution (No. III), (a) noting the inadequate nature of reports by administering powers on the elimination of racial discrimination in their non-self-governing territories and the limited progress made toward that objective in many of the territories; and (b) calling on the administering powers to pay special and urgent attention to the previous Assembly resolution which invited the administering powers to abolish discriminatory laws and practices in their colonies. A series of moderating amendments were introduced by five countries led by the United Kingdom, which had the effect of "toning down" the criticism of the administering countries, and many of these were accepted. As amended, the draft resolution was adopted without objection.

Sixteen anti-colonial powers then introduced substantially the same resolution which was adopted by the Fourth Committee and then defeated by the plenary at the Assembly's preceding session. (See Bulletin No. 10, January 16, 1958.) The resolution (No. IV), noting differences of opinion among UN members as to the enumeration of non-self-governing territories, called on the Secretary General to prepare a summary of opinions in members' debates and communications and in legal treatises and to refer such summary to a special 6-member committee to be elected by the Fourth Committee. Although neither the resolution nor its sponsors mentioned Spain or Portugal, every delegate knew that the draft was aimed at these two countries as a result of the similar response by each to a UN inquiry, that it had no "non-self-governing territories" but only overseas provinces of equal legal status with the metropolitan provinces. The Dominican Republic moved to refer the summary to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories instead of to a special committee; and in this form the resolution was adopted by a vote of 41-29 with 4 abstentions. The United States opposed the draft resolution, arguing strongly that the existence of colonies must necessarily be a question for the individual country to decide, and that the UN could exercise only moral suasion in such matters.

A fifth draft resolution introduced by Brazil, inviting states administering non-self-governing territories to adopt an investment policy which will balance economic development and progressive increase of per capita income of the inhabitants of such territories was adopted by a vote of 49-5, with the United States and 16 other countries abstaining. Eight anti-colonial countries then introduced a draft (No. VI) inviting administering countries to transmit to the Secretary General information on the association of non-self-governing territories with the European Economic Community and requesting the Secretary General to report to the next session of the Assembly on such association, using all available information from all UN sources. This was adopted by a vote of 48-16 with 5 abstentions; the United States opposed the resolution as "premature." Another draft resolution (No. VII) was introduced, again to urge administering powers to take steps to ensure that scholarships and training facilities offered to inhabitants of non-self-governing territories are fully utilized and that assistance is given to persons seeking or obtaining scholarships or fellowships. The resolution was adopted 64-0, with 2 abstentions.

The Fourth Committee then adopted the eighth and last draft resolution, recommending the extension of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing
Territories for another period of three years, by a vote of 61-1 with 4 abstentions. The Belgian delegate, who alone opposed approval, stated that his government considered that the Committee had no legal basis for existence and that its work had been and was of no use to the non-self-governing territories. (Ed: If all administering powers were as dilatory and uncooperative as the Belgians in reporting on their territories, it is quite clear that the Committee would be of no use.) The Fourth Committee then proceeded to elect the Dominican Republic, Ghana, India, and Iraq to the Committee on Information (which is composed of one representative each of all administering powers and an equal number of representatives of non-administering countries, elected by the Assembly). Normally one of the vacant seats would by tacit agreement have been allotted to a representative from an "Iron Curtain" country, but the Russian delegate, acknowledging the desire of the free African countries to be represented, asked that Russian supporters vote for Ghana instead.

Non-Self-Governing Territories -- Action in the Plenary Committee: When the Fourth Committee's draft resolutions I-VIII affecting non-self-governing territories came before the plenary committee of the Assembly, the Assembly President announced that Iraq, with Liberia, Mexico, Morocco, and Ghana, had introduced another resolution affecting such territories, which in accordance with established practice would be considered after other Fourth Committee business on the subject had been disposed of. (Assembly rules require at least a day to consider new resolutions.) All the resolutions except No. IV (aimed at Spain and Portugal) were adopted by the plenary without serious disagreement. However, when the fourth draft resolution was brought up, the Portuguese delegate immediately requested that the two-thirds majority rule be put into effect, as the resolution substantially affected the scope and functions of the Committee on Information, thus making it an "important question" within the meaning of article 18 of the Charter. The Iraqi delegate then stated that if the Portuguese delegate would not withdraw his request for the two-thirds majority, he would move the postponement of a vote on the resolution until the next session of the Assembly. The wrangling which followed was complicated by the fact that the special five-power resolution introduced (and tabled temporarily) asked that the International Court be requested to give an advisory opinion on two related questions: as to the majority required for resolutions dealing with non-self-governing territories as a category and also for individual resolutions affecting such territories. The Portuguese delegate did not withdraw his request, and the Assembly thereupon voted overwhelmingly to table resolution IV for this session.

When the five-power resolution was debated on the following day, opponents urged that the reference of the voting question to the International Court was a new item on the plenary's agenda, but the Iraqi delegate argued that it came under the properly inscribed item of information from non-self-governing territories. To the argument that the matter should be referred to the Assembly's Sixth (Legal) Committee for an opinion, he retorted that when a resolution similar to the present one introduced at the last session was amended to ask an opinion from the Sixth Committee and the question was so referred, the Sixth Committee, acting in due course, found the question moot by that time and returned it unanswered to the Fourth Committee. However, the Assembly adopted a New Zealand motion to table the resolution 55-2, with 21 abstentions (including the United States).

Ethiopia-Somaliland Boundary Dispute: The Fourth Committee had as the last item on its agenda the border dispute between Ethiopia and the Italian Trust Territory of Somaliland. (The background of this dispute was set forth in great detail in Bulletin No. 5 for March 13, 1957.) A satisfactory settlement of this question is essential both to the economic viability of Somalia when it obtains its independence in December, 1960, as well as to the political
stability of the entire area where ancient and modern religious, political, and social differences are always ripe for exploitation. An arbitration tribunal of three members was established by the Ethiopian and Italian governments at the urging of the last session of the General Assembly, but the countries have since been unable to agree on terms of reference.

On the night before adjournment the Fourth Committee sat until 2:25 a.m. trying to encourage a settlement between the representatives of the two countries after a draft resolution sponsored by Ghana, Liberia, and Ceylon was withdrawn as useless in the situation. However, the Committee's final report to the plenary on this item contained only a factual account of its discussion and no recommended resolution, and the Secretary General announced that, failing steps toward a solution, he would offer his assistance to the two countries to try to help them resolve their differences.

Immediately after the Fourth Committee report was brought before the plenary, a request was made for a short adjournment while further negotiations took place. When the plenary again took up the question, the Irish delegate announced that both countries would agree to a resolution recommending that if the two countries failed to agree within three months on the appointment of an independent person to assist in drawing up mutually satisfactory terms of reference for the arbitration tribunal, then they should invite the King of Norway to nominate such a person. The resolution was adopted without objection.

Algeria: The "question of Algeria," raised by countries of the Asian-African bloc, was considered by the First (Political) Committee at the end of this session, by which time it was hoped, political changes in France and Algeria resulting from the establishment of the Fifth Republic and the recent parliamentary elections might either make the question moot or indicate an effective line of procedure for the UN. Committee discussions took place in the absence of the French delegate, who in a reversion to a much earlier French position walked out of all discussions of this matter of French "internal concern." (For the last two Assembly sessions the French delegates had participated in the debate on Algeria and merely abstained themselves from any vote.)

After four days of debate by the Committee a draft resolution was introduced by seventeen countries on December 12, one day before the scheduled adjournment, which: (a) recognized the right of the Algerian people to independence; (b) stated that the Assembly was deeply concerned with the continuance of the war in Algeria; (c) considered the present Algerian situation a threat to international peace; (d) noted the willingness of the Provisional Algerian Government to negotiate with the French, and therefore urged negotiations between the parties. After a paragraph by paragraph vote, this draft resolution was passed by a vote of 32-18, with 30 abstentions. The United States opposed the resolution.

As the last item on the agenda of the plenary, this draft resolution was defeated in the General Assembly on December 13 by a vote of 35-18, with 28 abstentions. (The two-thirds rule of Article 18 of the Charter applied.) The United States abstained, along with most of the South American countries.

Economic Commission for Africa: An Economic Commission for Africa, similar to the Economic Commissions for Europe, for Asia and the Far East, and for Latin America, was established by the Economic and Social Council in April of last year upon the recommendation of the General Assembly. The geographic
scope of the Commission is "the whole continent of Africa, Madagascar and other African islands," and all independent countries in the area and states administering territories in the area are eligible for full membership (the latter until the administered territories become independent and are eligible for membership in their own right). In a closely contested resolution adopted at this session the Assembly provided that non-self-governing and trust territories may apply for associate (non-voting) membership through the member states responsible for their foreign relations. (In order to prevent Russia's membership on the Commission, the United States refused membership and argued successfully that only countries with political responsibilities in Africa should be eligible for membership.)

Perhaps the most significant provision establishing the Commission is that giving it power to deal, as appropriate, with the social aspects of economic development and the interrelationship of economic and social factors; the provisions establishing the earlier Economic Commissions do not mention social factors.

ECA held its first meeting in Addis Ababa, the Commission's permanent headquarters, on December 29. The General Assembly appropriated $500,000 for its first year's work.

UN Technical Assistance: The United Nations program of technical assistance to underdeveloped countries represents one of its most important, but easily overlooked, contributions to international peace and security.

The Chairman of the Technical Assistance Board reported on October 20, 1958, to the Assembly's Second (Financial and Economic) Committee on the progress made by his organization in 1957 and its plans for the future: The three great developments of the year, he stated, were the creation of the UN's Special Fund for economic development, the establishment provisionally and on a small experimental basis of an International Administrative Service to supply certain governments with administrative personnel, and the decision of the International Atomic Agency to participate in the expanded program of technical assistance. His report continued that the 1957 technical assistance involved over 31 million dollars, in connection with which the aided governments incurred expenses of twice that amount. Services were extended to 132 countries or territories in some form; 2,560 experts participated, from 67 countries; and 2,061 persons obtained fellowships of 75 countries and territories for training. A notable increase in proportion of assistance was received by African -- especially the newly independent -- countries. The expanded program of the Board was said to have contributed significantly to capital investment and to the promotion of domestic and foreign trade. It was noted, however, that the increased support given to recently independent countries does not even approach the needs of such countries for technical assistance.

Acting on the report of the Economic and Social Council the Second Committee unanimously adopted several draft resolutions, calling for an increased level of operations in 1959. The only draft resolution which raised great controversy was the sixth, which authorized the Secretary-General to establish on a modest scale and on an experimental basis an international administrative service. This proposal by Chile, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Honduras, Ireland, Pakistan, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, and Venezuela was based on the realization that some underdeveloped countries need personnel not merely to advise the government, but actually to execute policy and carry out programs. The propriety and dangers of nationals of one country acting as a part of the executive of another were seriously debated, and the final form of the resolution was modified to make clear that such assistance should be temporary in nature and that the administrators supplied by the UN should be required to assist in training nationals of the assisted country to take over the work. The resolution was finally adopted by a vote of 62-0, with 13 abstentions.
The Second Committee also adopted a draft resolution inviting all governments to provide special financial assistance to Libya and requesting the various UN agencies to give "due consideration" to the country's needs. The UN has always felt a special obligation to Libya, which gained its independence in 1951 by UN action, and which was and still remains one of the world's poorest countries both as to natural resources and as to population. The UN gave some six million dollars in technical assistance to Libya from 1950-58, but the average amount of such aid was scheduled to drop in 1959 because of the increasing demands of other newly independent countries. In addition to UN technical assistance, seven countries including the United States are providing assistance on a bilateral basis.

The Fourth Committee, it should be noted, unanimously adopted a similar resolution expressing hope that when the Italian Trust Territory of Somaliland becomes independent (1960), the various UN technical assistance agencies will give due consideration to its problems, beyond and above the aid which Italy has promised.

On December 4 the Secretary-General proposed the appointment of Paul Hoffman, former president of the Ford Foundation, ECA administrator, and American representative to the UN, as managing director of the UN's Special Fund. The Special Fund, established by the Assembly at this session, is to provide assistance for integrated development of less developed countries, especially by concentrating its activities on a small number of relatively large projects which should lead to early results, have the widest possible impact on economic development, and in particular facilitate new capital development. The Fund is maintained by voluntary contributions by governments. So far, approximately 50 countries have contributed close to 20 million dollars, but it is expected that contributions will reach about 25 millions. The United States contributed 38 million dollars for technical assistance under the Fund and the Expanded Program, on condition that its contribution was not to be more than 40 percent of the total contributed for both.

Self-Determination: The Third (Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural) Committee considered again this year the complicated problem of "self-determination," a term which has numerous meanings within, as well as outside, the UN, but which is generally considered to refer to two coordinate rights (or principles): political development free of outside interference; and sovereignty over natural resources by indigenous peoples. The United States and European governments, moved by "cold war" considerations, are concerned with the first of these phases; the underdeveloped countries, which feel that their natural resources (particularly those of colonial areas) are being depleted by advanced countries without adequate compensation, are far more concerned about the latter phase.

Before the Committee were three draft resolutions. Two were proposed by the UN Commission on Human Rights: establishment of a commission to survey the rights of peoples and nations "to permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources"; and establishment of another commission to examine "alleged denial or inadequate realization of the right of self-determination." The third was proposed by the Economic and Social Council: establishment of an ad hoc commission to "conduct a thorough study of the concept of self-determination."

The anti-colonial countries outvoted the colonial group (supporting ECOSOC's proposal), to adopt the first draft resolution, and the plenary accepted it 52-15, with 8 abstentions. Mrs. Lord, the American delegate who opposed the resolution, warned that it might increase the fears of those best able to supply private investment capital. However, she stated that since the Commission had been voted into existence, the United States would be willing to serve on it, and she acknowledged that her delegation had been encouraged by the proponents' statements reaffirming their belief in the sanctity of contract!