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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD  
TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF  
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

(covering its work during 1967)

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CHAPTER XIII

OMAN

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\* This document contains chapter XIII of the Special Committee's report to the General Assembly. Parts I and II were previously issued under symbol A/AC.109/L.397. The general introductory chapter will be issued subsequently under the symbol A/6700 (part I). Other chapters of the report are being reproduced as addenda.

I. ACTION PREVIOUSLY TAKEN BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AND THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. The question of Oman was included in the agenda of the General Assembly at its fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth sessions and was referred to the Special Political Committee for consideration. At the fifteenth session, the Special Political Committee considered the question but decided owing to lack of time to postpone further consideration of the question until the sixteenth session. At the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions, the Special Political Committee approved resolutions whereby the General Assembly, recalling its resolution 1514 (XV), would recognize the right of the people of Oman to self-determination and independence, call for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Oman, and invite the parties concerned to settle peacefully their differences with a view to restoring normal conditions in Oman.<sup>1/</sup> The General Assembly, however, did not adopt these resolutions at its plenary meetings because they failed to receive the necessary two-thirds majority.

2. At the 1191st plenary meeting of the General Assembly at its seventeenth session, the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on behalf of the sultan of Muscat and Oman, extended an invitation to a representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to visit the Sultanate on a personal basis to obtain first-hand information on the situation there. Subsequently, the Secretary-General appointed Mr. Herbert de Ribbing, Swedish Ambassador to Spain, as his Special Representative to undertake that task. Mr. de Ribbing visited Oman in June 1963 and submitted a report which was made available to the General Assembly at its eighteenth session.<sup>2/</sup>

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes, (A/SPC/L.78 and Add.1); and *ibid.*, Seventeenth Session, Annexes (A/SPC/L.88).

2/ *Ibid.*, Eighteenth Session, Annexes (A/5562).

3. At the eighteenth session, the question of Oman was again included in the agenda of the General Assembly and referred to the Fourth Committee for consideration. A draft resolution recommended by the Fourth Committee was adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 1963, as resolution 1948 (XVIII). By this resolution, the Assembly took note of the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to examine the question of Oman and to report to it at its nineteenth session. The Ad Hoc Committee submitted its report to the General Assembly on 8 January 1965.<sup>3/</sup>

4. The question of Oman was one of the many items included in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly, which it was unable to consider at its nineteenth session. At the twentieth session, the item was referred to the Fourth Committee for consideration. A draft resolution recommended by the Fourth Committee was adopted by the General Assembly at its 1399th plenary meeting on 17 December 1965 as resolution 2073 (XX). By this resolution, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Oman (A/5846), and recognized the inalienable right of the people of the Territory as a whole to self-determination and independence. It considered that the colonial presence of the United Kingdom in its various forms prevented the people of the Territory from exercising their rights to self-determination and independence. The General Assembly also called upon the Government of the United Kingdom to implement a number of measures in the Territory and invited the Special Committee to examine the situation in the Territory.

5. The Special Committee considered the question of Oman at its meetings in 1966 and heard a number of petitioners from Oman. On 17 November 1966, the Special Committee decided that it would report to the General Assembly that due to lack of time it had not been able to complete its consideration of the item. It also

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<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., Nineteenth Session, annex No. 16 (A/5846).

decided that, subject to any further directives, the General Assembly might wish to give during its twenty-first session, it would consider the question at its meetings in 1967 with a view to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2073 (XX).

6. At its twenty-first session, the General Assembly considered the report of the Special Committee covering its work in 1966,<sup>4/</sup> and adopted resolution 2238 (XXI) of 20 December 1966 which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Territory of Oman, 5/

"Having also considered the report of the Secretary-General, 6/

"Recalling its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960,

"Recalling further its resolutions 2073 (XX) of 17 December 1965 and 2189 (XXI) of 13 December 1966,

"Having heard the statements of the petitioners,

"Deeply concerned at the serious and critical situation arising from the colonial policies pursued by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the Territory,

"1. Approves the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Territory of Oman;

"2. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of the Territory as a whole 7/ to self-determination and independence and recognizes the legitimacy of their struggle to achieve the rights laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

"3. Deplores the refusal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to implement General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2073 (XX);

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4/ A/6300/Add.8, chapter XIII.

5/ Ibid.

6/ A/6563.

7/ It was stated on behalf of the sponsors of this resolution that the Territory of Oman included the Trucial Sheikhdoms as well as the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman.

"4. Further deplores the policies of the United Kingdom in installing and supporting any unrepresentative régime in the Territory in contravention of the relevant General Assembly resolutions;

"5. Recognizes that the natural resources of the Territory belong to the people of Oman and that the concessions given to foreign monopolies without the consent of the people constitute a violation of the rights of the people of the Territory;

"6. Considers that the maintenance of military bases, depots and troops in the Territory constitutes a major hindrance to the exercise by the people of their right to self-determination and independence and is prejudicial to the peace and security of the region, and that their immediate removal is therefore essential;

"7. Calls upon the Government of the United Kingdom to effect immediately the implementation in the Territory of the following measures:

(a) Cessation of all repressive action against the people of the Territory;

(b) Withdrawal of British troops;

(c) Release of political prisoners and political detainees and return of political exiles to the Territory;

(d) Elimination of British domination in any form;

"8. Appeals to all Member States to render all possible assistance to the people of the Territory in their struggle to attain freedom and independence;

"9. Requests the Special Committee to continue its examination of the situation in the Territory;

"10. Requests the Secretary-General to take, in consultation with the Special Committee, appropriate measures for the implementation of the relevant General Assembly resolutions and to report thereon to the Assembly at its twenty-second session."

## II. INFORMATION ON THE TERRITORY<sup>8/</sup>

### Introduction

7. Detailed information on the Territory is contained in the chapter on Oman in the report of the Special Committee to the General Assembly at its twenty-first

<sup>8/</sup> The information presented in this section has been derived from published reports.

session (A/6300/Add.8, chapter XIII). This paper contains a summary of that information, together with supplementary information concerning recent developments.

#### A. SULTANATE OF MUSCAT AND OMAN

##### General

8. The Sultanate of Muscat and Oman lies at the extreme south-east of the Arabian peninsula, east of the Rub-al-Khali desert. It has a total area of approximately 82,000 square miles (212,000 square kilometres). The total population of Muscat and Oman is estimated at over 750,000.

9. Muscat and Oman has, in the past, been under two different political institutions. From the eighth century onwards, it was an independent State ruled by an Imam who exercised both spiritual and temporal authority. About 1775, with the death of Imam Ahmed bin Said, the first Sultanate was established in Muscat on the coast. Early in the nineteenth century the predominant institution was the sultanate, but the Imamate was revived in the interior of the country once in 1868 and again in 1913. According to the Ad Hoc Committee on Oman, the interior of Oman was an autonomous political entity under two successive Imams, Salim bin Rashid al-Kharusi and Mohamed bin Abdullah al-Khalili, from 1913 until 1955 when it was occupied by the Sultan's forces with British assistance. Although the boundaries of the Imamate were not clearly defined, it included the Jabal al Akhdar, the Dhahirah, the Sharqiyah and the Ja'lan. The Imamate seemed to have had the normal attributes of a State, with the Head of State, a Higher Council, an Assembly and its own system of administration.

10. The Ad Hoc Committee stated that the Imam was considered by his followers as the Head of State and was elected by "the leaders, elders and notables of the people from various levels and tribes" in consultation with religious figures. The Imam's authority was exercised in all fields - religious, political and judicial - in accordance with Islamic law. He was bound to consult the Higher Council in all major problems. The Assembly was composed of the members of the Higher Council, walis and tribal leaders and met whenever the Imam decided to convene it.

11. The present Imam, Ghalib bin Ali, was elected in 1954. He lives in exile in Saudi Arabia. He has a Higher Council which includes several sheikhs from the leading tribes in the area, and a Revolutionary Council whose aims are "to direct the struggle of the people to regain their independence, and to educate and train them, both inside and outside the country" (A/5846, para. 549). The Revolutionary Council has a Military Committee, a Financial Committee, a Cultural Committee and a Secretariat. It has appointed representatives to the Arab League and to several Arab States.
12. The present Sultan has maintained that all the people of Oman are his subjects and that there have never been two States. His family has been in power in Muscat and Oman for over 220 years.

#### Relationship with the United Kingdom

13. British association with Muscat dates back to 1798, when a treaty was signed between Muscat and the East India Company. The written instruments on which the present relationship between the Sultanate and the United Kingdom is based, namely, the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation and Exchange of Letters of 1951 and the Exchange of Letters of 1958, were reproduced in full in the Special Committee's previous report to the General Assembly (A/6300/Add.8, chapter XIII, annex I).
14. There is a British Consul-General in Muscat who is responsible to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, whose headquarters is in Bahrein. The latter is responsible to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in London. In addition to other duties, the Political Resident has an over-all responsibility for the postal services and telegraphic communications in the Sultanate and in other States in the area. He also controls exchange transactions effected through the banks.
15. The administration of air fields which have been established in Oman under the 1934 Civil Air Agreement<sup>9/</sup> falls within the jurisdiction of the Political Resident. By this Agreement the United Kingdom received permission to establish air fields in the Sultanate. The United Kingdom acts as the agent of the Sultan in all aviation matters. While the air field at Masirah Island is used for staging

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<sup>9/</sup> The Agreement was reconfirmed in the Exchange of Letters of 1958.

purposes, Salalah Airfield is considered as an international airport for civil airlines and is managed by the United Kingdom on behalf of the Sultan according to international rules and regulations. Use of the air fields by the Royal Air Force is governed by a separate agreement between the Sultan and the United Kingdom.

16. By an order in council which came into operation on 1 January 1967,<sup>10/</sup> the United Kingdom Government ceased to exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction in the Territory of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman. The order provided for the transfer of pending cases before the consular courts to the courts of the Sultan. The revocation of previous orders, rules and regulations relating to British jurisdiction and British courts, does not have any retroactive effect over past cases settled by the courts.

#### Sultan

17. The Sultan is a traditional ruler who exercises supreme authority over his subjects. His authority is based on customs and understandings which have their origin in the tribal system prevailing in most of the country. There is no constitution or elected representative institution. The present Sultan, Said bin Taimur, has ruled Muscat and Oman since the abdication of his father in 1932.

18. The capital of the Sultanate is Muscat, although the Sultan's normal residence is at Salalah in Dhofar. The administration of the provinces and main centres of population is in the hands of walis (governors) who are responsible to the Sultan through the Minister of the Interior.

#### Security

19. There have been unofficial reports of attacks on United Kingdom military units in Oman, mine explosions, and raids against military convoys and installations. Omani organizations abroad, particularly the Dhofar Liberation Front and the Omani Revolutionary Council, have issued communiqués on the operations carried out by "commandos of the Omani Liberation Army" in areas such as Salalah, Taqah, Bahlah Uqbat Hamrus, Muscat, Al-Fuhud, Ubaylah, As-Suwayq, Nazwa and Rastaq. According to some reports, demonstrations have been held against oil companies in Oman. On

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10/ Statutory Instruments, The Muscat (Revoking) Order 1966, No. 1598.



27 December 1966, the Omani Revolutionary Council announced that it would not recognize agreements concluded by the Shell Oil Company with any party other than the Government led by the Imam of Oman.

20. In April 1966 an attempt was made on the life of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman at a military parade in Salalah. The Sultan escaped unhurt but five other persons were reported killed, including the commanding officer of the Sultan's forces in Dhofar, and several were wounded.

#### Economic conditions

21. In general, the economy of the Sultanate is mainly pastoral and agricultural. The chief products are dates, fish and cereals (the latter being grown for local consumption), as well as limes and other fruit. Breeding of livestock, particularly camels, is widely practised.

22. The chief exports of Muscat and Oman are dates, dried limes, dried fish, tobacco leaf, hides, goat hair and vegetables. Imports include rice, wheat, flour, sugar, cement, vehicles and accessories, cotton piece goods and other consumer goods. A part of these imports is financed by the oil companies for their exploration and other operations.

23. In 1964, the value of total imports to the Sultanate was £2.4 million, excluding £500,000 of imports for government use. Exports were valued at £480,000. In 1965, trade with the United Kingdom was as follows:

(thousand pounds sterling)

Exports to the United Kingdom	9
Imports from the United Kingdom	2,207
Re-exports from the United Kingdom	26

24. The revenue of the Sultanate is derived mainly from customs receipts and annual payments by the oil companies. In 1965, total revenue was estimated at 11 million rupees.

25. Oil. The first oil concession was obtained by a foreign company in 1937, when a subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Company, Petroleum Development (Oman) Ltd., was granted a seventy-five-year concession extending over the whole area except Dhofar. In 1953, a concession covering Dhofar was granted to Dhofar Cities Service Petroleum Corporation for a period of twenty-five years from the date of commercial production.

In 1960, Petroleum Development (Oman) Ltd., was acquired by Royal Dutch Shell and Partex. In March 1966, an off-shore concession was granted to a concern in the Federal Republic of Germany, Wintershall A.G.

26. In 1964, Petroleum Development (Oman) Ltd., announced that drilling had proved the existence of sufficient reserves to go into commercial production. Export of crude oil was expected to start in the second half of 1967 at a rate of about 6 or 7 million tons a year. A pipeline was to be built through Wadi Sumail to an oil-loading terminal at Saih-al-Malih, a few miles to the west of Muscat town.

27. Development. Subsidies are paid by the United Kingdom Government towards development. Under the agreement concluded between the Sultan and the United Kingdom in 1958, the latter agreed to assist in carrying out "a civil development programme which will include the improvement of roads, medical and educational facilities and an agricultural research programme".

28. In September 1966, a United Kingdom firm of architects and planners, John R. Harris, was commissioned by the Sultan to prepare a development plan for the region of Muscat and Matrah. The plan would include main transport services, a fresh water distribution system, electrical supply and drainage. The Sultan was reported to have asked the firm to begin construction work towards the end of 1967, the plan to be progressively carried out as the export of oil grows from the autumn of 1967.

## B. TRUCIAL SHEIKHDOMS

### General

29. The Trucial Sheikhdoms lie north of the Rub-al-Khail, between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman; the area, also known as Trucial Oman or the Trucial Coast, extends for nearly 400 miles from the south-eastern end of the peninsula of Qatar along the southern coast of the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman. The boundaries of the Trucial Coast have not been clearly demarcated and in several places have been the subject of disputes with neighbouring countries. The total area is estimated roughly at 32,000 square miles (83,000 square kilometres).

30. No census has ever been taken of the population: the estimated total is 110,000, of whom about one tenth are nomads.

31. The Sheikhdoms consist of seven separate political entities each headed by a Sheikh or Ruler. They are (from west to east): Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, Sharjah, Umm al Qaiwain, Ras al Khaimah and Fujairah.

Relationship with the United Kingdom

32. Contacts between the East India Company and the rulers of the Sheikhdoms date back to the seventeenth century, but it was not until 1806 that the first agreement was signed with the Sheikh of the Qasimi (Ja'simi) tribe. In 1820, following hostilities between a British naval expedition and local Sheikhs at Ras al Khaimah and other points of the Oman coast, a general "Treaty of Peace" was concluded between the Sheikhs and the British Government. In 1835 a "Maritime Truce" was signed by the Sheikhs providing for a temporary cessation of hostilities between them. The Truce was renewed several times in subsequent years until in 1853 a "Treaty of Peace in Perpetuity" was concluded, whereby the United Kingdom acquired the right to watch over the maintenance of the peace and to take steps to enforce the treaty at all times.

33. In 1892, the Sheikhs signed identical "Exclusive Agreements" with the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, whereby they undertook "not to cede, sell, lease, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation" any part of their territory except to the British Government. The United Kingdom was also to become responsible for the conduct of their foreign relations. These agreements constitute the basis of the present relationship between the United Kingdom and the Trucial Sheikhdoms. In 1911 and 1922, further agreements were concluded whereby the granting of pearling and oil concessions respectively became subject to the approval of the United Kingdom Government. The full texts of these documents were reproduced in the Special Committee's previous report to the General Assembly (A/6300/Add.8, chapter XIII, annex II). The Rulers have also undertaken to recognize the right of the United Kingdom to fix their State boundaries and to settle disputes between them.

34. There is a British Political Agent in Dubai and another in Abu Dhabi; both are responsible to the Political Resident in Bahrein. In addition to the conduct of the Trucial Sheikhdoms' foreign relations, the functions of the Political Resident include over-all supervision in certain administrative fields with international aspects or matters chiefly affecting foreigners and the implementation of international conventions such as the Sanitary Convention and the

Dangerous Drugs Convention. These fields are mainly postal services, telegraphic communications, exchange transactions, control of immigration, imports of arms and narcotics and civil aviation.

35. Advice is given to the Rulers in the administration and development of their Sheikhdoms by the Political Agents. Relations between the oil companies and the Rulers are usually conducted through, or with the knowledge of the United Kingdom authorities. Company officials are required to keep the British Political Agents or officers informed of important developments in their dealings with the Rulers.

36. The United Kingdom enjoys extraterritorial jurisdiction in the Trucial Sheikhdoms. The scope and machinery used in the exercise of this jurisdiction has been described in the Special Committee's previous report to the General Assembly (A/6300/Add.8, chapter XIII, paras. 49-52).

#### Rulers

37. The Sheikh (or Ruler) is essentially a tribal leader and a descendant of a ruling family which has had the ascendancy among the tribes for several generations. On the death of a Sheikh, succession is decided according to custom by a meeting of the senior members of the ruling family. In recent times, the tendency has been to allow succession to pass from father to son. The Political Resident usually extends the recognition of the United Kingdom Government to the new Ruler at a formal ceremony.

38. The Rulers exercise authority over their subjects in conformity with local customs and traditions. Their rule is entirely personal and there are no constitutions or elected representatives of the people.

39. On 6 August 1966, Sheikh Shakbut of Abu Dhabi was deposed by leading members of his family and replaced as Ruler by his brother - Sheikh Zaid bin Sultan. The new Ruler was immediately recognized by the United Kingdom Government. A statement by the British Political Resident in Eahrein reported that the family decision had been taken "in the public interest because of Sheikh Shakbut's manifest inability, despite all their advice, to govern Abu Dhabi State properly or use the country's increasing wealth in the interests of the people".

Armed forces

40. In 1952, the United Kingdom established a joint Arab Force in the Sheikhdoms - the Trucial Oman Levies - now called the Trucial Oman Scouts. In 1953, the Scouts were expanded from 100 to 500 men, and in 1958 to 1,000 men; there are about thirty-nine British officers and ninety non-commissioned officers in the Scouts. The headquarters of the Trucial Oman Scouts is at Sharjah, although squadrons are stationed in various points inland and along the coast. The Scouts are under the control and direction of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and their costs are borne by the United Kingdom Government. Their duties include the maintenance of peace and good order in the Trucial States, the providing of escorts for British Political Representatives and the execution of warrants, orders and judgements issued by the British courts. A special wing of the Scouts has been formed to carry out police duties.

41. At the end of June 1966, a new agreement was signed between the United Kingdom and the Ruler of Sharjah, Sheikh Khaled bin Muhammad, to provide additional land for new facilities and accommodation for British forces in Sharjah. An initial payment of £100,000 was to be made to the Sheikh, and subsequently an annual payment of a similar amount beginning January 1967.

Economic conditions

42. General. Economic activity has been confined, in the past, to ocean trade, off-shore fishing, pearl diving and the growing of date palms in the few existing oases. Since 1930, the pearl industry has lost its importance because of foreign competition; at the same time, however, the search for and exploitation of oil resources have gradually become the leading concern and most important economic activity in the Trucial Sheikhdoms.

43. In addition to oil, the chief exports of the Trucial Coast are dates, vegetables, hides and fish products (including pearls). The port of Dubai is a commercial centre serving both the Trucial Sheikhdoms and the northern part of the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman. It has a relatively large entrepôt trade,

particularly with Iran and other neighbouring areas. In 1965, United Kingdom trade with the Sheikhdoms, with the exception of Abu Dhabi, was as follows:

	(thousand pounds sterling)
Exports to the United Kingdom	2,535
Imports from the United Kingdom	2,708
Re-exports from the United Kingdom	69

Exports to the United Kingdom from Abu Dhabi totalled £19.6 million against £17.3 million in 1964; imports from the United Kingdom were worth approximately £15 million, against £2.3 million in 1964; re-exports from the United Kingdom amounted to £7,000 as against £14,000 in 1964.

44. The revenue of the Sheikhdoms is derived principally from customs duties and income from the oil companies. No accurate figures on revenue are available. Oil income in Abu Dhabi and Dubai has been increasing rapidly.

45. Currency. Following the devaluation of the Indian rupee, in June 1966, six Trucial States adopted a new currency, the Saudi rial, while the seventh, Abu Dhabi, adopted the Bahrein dinar. The "Gulf" rupee had formerly been tied to the Indian rupee at the old exchange rate of RS13.33 to the pound sterling.

46. Oil. In 1965, on-shore and off-shore output of crude oil in Abu Dhabi reached 13.5 million tons, an increase of 50 per cent over 1964. In 1966, production was expected to exceed 17.5 million tons; Abu Dhabi Marine Areas Ltd. - owned jointly by British Petroleum and Compagnie Française des Pétroles - increased the output of its Umm Shaif field (about twenty miles from Das Island off the coast of Abu Dhabi) to 5 million tons in 1966. A submarine pipeline carries the crude petroleum from the oil field to Das Island where an export terminal has been constructed. The land concession in Abu Dhabi is held by the Abu Dhabi Petroleum Co., a wholly owned subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Co. This company was reported to be planning to export 10 million tons in 1966. According to press information, total annual output in Abu Dhabi should reach 60 million tons in a few years.

47. Abu Dhabi received £10,750,000 in royalties in 1965 and about £25 million in 1966. It has been estimated that Abu Dhabi's oil revenue would reach £45 million by 1970. Royalties are now computed on the basis of a 50-50 division of profits. In January 1967, Abu Dhabi granted a new oil concession to a consortium of three companies, Phillips Petroleum of America, the American Independent Oil Co., and the Italian Agip Group.

48. In June 1966, it was reported that Dubai Petroleum had struck oil in commercial quantities off shore in Dubai Sheikhdome. The company holds 35 per cent of the concession. In the remaining Sheikhdoms, the exploration concessions are held by several other companies, mainly from the United States of America.

49. Development. According to press reports, the new Ruler of Abu Dhabi has initiated the preparation of development plans which would include the building of a road network, schools and hospitals, sewerage schemes, corniches, housing and barracks and power stations. Contracts have already been given to United Kingdom firms for building three hospitals and dispensaries, and eight schools. A United Kingdom consortium of town planners, civil and structural engineers, architects and surveyors named Arabicon has reportedly started work on projects for 100 miles of road between Abu Dhabi town and Buraimi, 60 miles of urban roads, a new sea-wall and land reclamation scheme, sewerage works, a water pipeline system and a new covered market. Private contracts for other projects have been granted and plans have been worked out for a new airport and harbour. Another consortium reported to be advising the Ruler on development is Cansult, a group of Canadian companies. Recently a Development Council has been formed. It includes the Sheikh, five other members of his family, including the Minister for Public Works, Education and Health and a Financial Director who is a United Kingdom citizen. The Financial Director has been appointed in order to organize a modern budget for the State.

### III. CONSIDERATION BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

50. The Special Committee considered the question of Oman at its 564th meeting on 27 September 1967.

51. The representative of the United Kingdom recalled that his delegation considered the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman to be an independent State. Since Article 2 (7) of the Charter prohibited the United Nations from intervening in the domestic affairs of any State, the United Kingdom could not take part in the discussion of that question.

52. The representative of the United States of America said that her Government had maintained official relations with the Sultanate, whose sovereignty and independence it fully recognized, for 133 years. Consequently, her delegation could not take part in the discussion of the item, whose inclusion in the agenda was open to serious objections of both a legal and a substantive nature.

53. The representative of Australia stated that the Sultanate was not a colonial Territory and did not fall within the Committee's competence.

54. The Chairman pointed out that the General Assembly, in its resolutions 2073 (XX) and 2238 (XXI), had characterized the Oman régime as a colonial one and had referred the question to the Special Committee.

55. On the proposal of the Chairman, the Special Committee decided, without objection, to report to the Assembly that, in view of the limited time available to it, it had not been able to complete its consideration of the question of Oman and that, subject to any further directives the General Assembly might wish to give during its twenty-second session, it would consider the question at its meetings in 1968 with a view to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2238 (XXI).

56. The representative of Syria said he would like it to be made quite clear that lack of time, and not any lack of interest, was the sole reason for the Committee's not having completed its consideration of that question, which in fact it regarded as a matter of great importance.