



TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Thirteenth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Tuesday, 9 February 1954,
at 2 p.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Leslie Knox MUNRO (New Zealand).

Present:

The representatives of the following States members of the Trusteeship Council: Australia, Belgium, China, El Salvador, France, Haiti, India, New Zealand, Syria, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration: (a) annual report (T/1082 and Add.1); (b) petitions circulated under rule 85, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure; (c) report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa, 1952 (T/1043, T/1069); (d) General Assembly resolutions 655 (VII) and 758 (VIII) on the hearing of petitioners from the Trust Territory (*continued*)

[Agenda items 3 (d), 4, 5 and 10]

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Becquey, special representative of the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration, took a place at the Council table.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE TRUST TERRITORY AND REPLIES OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE (*concluded*)

Economic advancement (concluded)

1. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) asked what steps the Administering Authority proposed to take to exploit the mineral resources of the Territory.
2. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the Territory was poor in mineral resources. Research was going on, however, particularly in the Douala region, where a State company in which the Territory had an interest was prospecting for oil. In addition, the Administration granted prospecting permits, some of them for the so-called free zone, where the mineral resources became the property of the first claimant; in practice, they did not lead to any exploitation. The other permits were for the reserved area.

3. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) asked whether mining activities were regulated by legislation different from that applied in France and whether prospecting for coal had been nationalized.

4. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the regulations in force in the Cameroons were based on the corresponding legislation in the metropolitan country. No economic sector of the Cameroons had been nationalized; moreover, there were no coal deposits in the Territory.

5. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) pointed out that there was a system of import licences and inquired whether the system of trade between the Territory and the metropolitan country was identical with that between the Territory and foreign countries.

6. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that the only purpose of issuing licences was to control currency, and that the system would be abolished when those controls were lifted.

7. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) asked whether there was any regulation whereby title to land was based on a cadastral survey.

8. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that there were two different procedures: under the first, property rights were recognized by a record entered in the archives of the land office; in that case, there was no registration, strictly speaking, hence no cadastral survey. The second procedure, involving a cadastral survey, was longer, more costly, and therefore rarely resorted to.

9. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) wanted to know whether the property of a person whose land rights had been recognized could be granted as a concession.

10. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that recognition of land rights established permanent ownership of land, which could not thereafter be given away as a concession.

11. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) asked for details regarding the participation of the Cameroonians in the country's industrial development.

12. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that it took two different forms.

13. In the first place, the Territory — namely, the Cameroons as a whole — held shares in industrial companies: for example, it owned 27 per cent of the capital of an electric power company, the *Energie électrique du Cameroun*, and 35 per cent of the capital of the *Société immobilière du Cameroun*. In that connexion, to supplement the reply he had given the New Zealand representative at the previous meeting, he added that the *Edéa hydro-electric plant*, which had been built by the *Energie électrique du Cameroun*, would make it possible, when some further work had been carried out, to

contemplate the establishment of an aluminium foundry, a plan which was at present under study.

14. The indigenous inhabitants themselves did not play a great part in the industrialization of the Territory. Nevertheless, although they had not yet been able to build big factories, they had set up small repair shops, as also plants for processing coffee and drying cocoa. In addition, they took part in the administration of the slaughterhouses, which were under public management.

Social advancement

15. Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) pointed out that there had been several petitions calling for the abolition of the contributions in foodstuffs and labour with which the indigenous inhabitants were bound by custom to provide their chiefs; he asked whether such services were always freely given. It was only fair that the indigenous inhabitants should pay the officials of the indigenous hierarchy for work performed in the interests of the community, but when such remuneration took the form of compulsory labour, it was always the poor who had to shoulder the burden. Accordingly, he asked whether it was not possible to institute a system of commuting compulsory labour for cash, which would bring about a more equitable distribution of services among rich and poor.

16. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) made a distinction between work done solely in the interest of the chiefs and work done in the interest of the local communities.

17. The first type of service was now very little practised, especially in the south; in any case, the chiefs were given only voluntary assistance and the people did not give them gifts of food.

18. With regard to work of interest to the community, it was ordered by the chiefs only after consultation with the council of notables. In such cases, the ideal system would, of course, be the commutation of services, and the Administration had already taken a step in that direction in establishing rural communes which ensured that everyone would have a voice in deciding what work would be done in the general interest. As long, however, as the Territory's budget precluded the employment of a large labour force, community work could be done on a priority basis only. Thus a community which at a certain time was not due to receive either money or labour might prefer to do the work itself. At the Territory's present stage of development it would be well to encourage that practice, which was obviously to the advantage of the indigenous population.

19. Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) asked for information on the extent of alcoholism in the Territory.

20. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative of the Cameroons under French administration) said that the Administering Authority was much concerned with the matter. The former regulations had fallen into disuse because they practically prohibited the sale of alcohol to indigenous inhabitants. The regulations in force were based on a decree of 1948, which provided that the import of alcohol and its sale and transport within the country were subject to authorization by the Administration. The number of establishments selling alcoholic drinks was not allowed to exceed that of 1948, and there was an established procedure for the granting of licences.

21. Furthermore, the French law concerning the suppression of drunkenness applied in the Cameroons. The most effective step in combating alcoholism, however, was the fixing of an import quota for alcohol at the beginning of each year; in 1952 the quota had been reduced by 15 per cent in comparison with previous years for beverages with an alcoholic content of over 15 per cent. Finally, import duties and taxes on spirits had been increased in 1952.

22. Such measures must not be too strict, however, or the population would revert to fermenting or distilling its own liquor, and that would be far more dangerous for them. For the time being, the manufacture of wine and millet-beer was permitted for home consumption only.

23. In reply to a question from Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium), Mr. Becquey (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that some indigenous officials had two or three wives and from fifteen to twenty children. He asked the representative of France to explain the principle of the Lamine-Gueye Act which gave such families special allowances.

24. Mr. PIGNON (France) said that the greatest virtue of the act in question was that it established the principle of absolute equality in the remuneration of African and metropolitan officials.

25. It was his personal opinion, however, that the very liberal application of the principle embodied in article 1 of the law had in fact led to inequality: the monogamous official was penalized and the polygamous official favoured. Although the Administering Authority encouraged the principle of monogamy, it would be very difficult now to restrict the application of the act and to deprive those concerned of the advantages they had already been granted.

26. Mr. S. S. LIU (China) observed that the Territory's social security system was still rudimentary. He asked whether the French Parliament had yet considered what principles and regulations should govern the question in its overseas territories.

27. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the question was still under study, for it would involve a considerable increase in the financial responsibilities of the Territory. Some allowances were already payable in the matter of accidents at work. The only measure taken in the field of social security had been the introduction of assistance for blind people in need.

28. Mr. S. S. LIU (China) asked to what extent municipal restaurants and pilot shops had been opened to help local workers obtain foodstuffs at a moderate price.

29. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that with the exception of Douala, the system could not be extended to any great extent because its usefulness was limited to urban centres. Elsewhere, the indigenous inhabitants themselves produced the foodstuffs required for family consumption.

30. Mr. MENON (India), after paying a tribute to the devotion of the medical personnel in the Territory, asked whether any progress had been achieved in the matter of preventive medicine.

31. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that although a tremendous amount remained to be done.

mainly owing to the cost of certain health campaigns, the Administering Authority was giving the matter the utmost attention.

32. Wide-scale house-disinfecting operations had been carried out in 1952 and 1953 in an endeavour to stamp out malaria. In the south, such operations had been conducted in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The campaigns had not, however, given the results expected and experts were at present studying on the spot the possibility of intensifying the campaign against germ-carrying mosquitoes.

33. With regard to tuberculosis, the services concerned were carrying out a concerted campaign in the schools and were trying to track down the disease in services which employed large numbers of workers.

34. Mr. MENON (India) noted from page 36 of the working paper prepared by the Secretariat (T/L.406) that for a population of some 3,000,000, the medical staff at present numbered fifty-five doctors, thirty-eight nurses, and so on. He wondered how many years it would take, at the present rate of increase in medical personnel, to provide the Territory with adequate medical services.

35. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) could not say how many doctors were required per thousand inhabitants. There were at the present time, in addition to the fifty-five State-certificated doctors, who included three Africans, some sixty "African doctors" who had studied at the Dakar Medical School and were efficiently running a number of dispensaries. Although it entailed heavy expenditure, the Administering Authority was determined to make all the sacrifices necessary for the improvement of health in the Territory.

36. Mr. MENON (India) observed that the international community had a responsibility towards the Trust Territories in that respect; if, therefore, the Administering Authority was unable to provide the funds necessary for public health, it could surely appeal to international sources through the United Nations.

37. Mr. PIGNON (France) said that the French Administration was perfectly prepared to collaborate with the specialized agencies in the matter of technical assistance; indeed it had already done so. Nevertheless, splendid results had already been obtained thanks to the efforts of a medical service which, although not great in numbers, was certainly highly qualified and extremely competent. To the impartial observer, the public health situation in the Cameroons was encouraging; sleeping sickness, for instance, had been almost completely eliminated. It was interesting to note that methods of dealing with the disease which were now universally adopted had originated with the work of Dr. Jamot in the Cameroons.

38. The number of Cameroonian medical personnel was increasing from year to year. A number of Cameroonians would shortly be returning to the country after completing their studies in France and they included many doctors. Budgetary provisions for public health were enormous: they amounted to 900 million francs CFA,¹ or about one-twelfth of the Territory's total budget.

39. Mr. MENON (India) was not satisfied with the reply to his question. He wanted to know whether the

Administering Authority made any effort to obtain funds from the international community if its own resources or those of the Territory were inadequate.

40. Furthermore, the representative of France had stated that a large number of indigenous doctors would shortly be returning to the Territory. Only ten indigenous inhabitants, however, were at present studying for State diplomas: it was unlikely that their arrival could appreciably alter the medical situation in the Territory.

41. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that if the specialized agencies were prepared to assist, the Administering Authority would certainly agree to accept the funds provided. Unfortunately, however, efforts made hitherto in that direction had come up against the fact that the regulations did not permit of direct financing. WHO had sent two malaria specialists and UNICEF had provided equipment but not personnel.

42. With regard to the number of doctors, it was hoped that some of the 200 students at present in France would work for a degree in medicine. It could be expected that the number of Cameroonians entering the medical profession would increase regularly and appreciably.

43. Mr. MENON (India) asked whether the Administering Authority had obtained any information on the methods and results of anti-malarial campaigns carried on in other malaria-infected countries such as India.

44. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the Administration maintained close contact with the WHO Regional Office for Africa in Brazzaville. The head of the Cameroons medical services was certainly kept informed of experiments carried out in other countries; the Administration would always be glad to receive any other information which could prove useful.

45. Mr. MENON (India) drew the Council's attention to paragraph 210 of the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa, 1952 (T/1043), in which it was said that the Labour Code for the Overseas Territories proclaimed the principles of freedom to work, equality of pay, etc. Paragraph 218, however, stated that the Confédération générale du travail had complained that the level of wages was still very low in the Cameroons and that there was still racial discrimination in the matter of wages, while paragraph 220 declared that the mission was informed by the Administration that the only reason why the indigenous workers earned less than the Europeans was that their output was lower. He found it difficult to understand the meaning of the word "equality" in that context.

46. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) stated that, in the Cameroons as elsewhere, there was a hierarchy of wages. The Labour Code, however, laid down the principle of equal pay for equal work. He himself knew many Africans who earned as much as, if not more than, many Europeans.

47. Output could not be measured very accurately, but could be determined by the figures for the work done and the figures showing the profit-earning capacity of an enterprise. Commercial companies were still obliged to bring staff from Europe, because they could not find skilled indigenous workers on the spot. The Administration was concerned with the problem and hoped to

¹ One franc CFA equals two French francs.

be able gradually to raise the professional level of the indigenous inhabitants. In that connexion, it should be noted that Cameroonians who had received the necessary education to enable them to become skilled workers were most reluctant to take on manual labour.

48. Mr. MENON (India) said that, although the special representative's explanations were most interesting, they were no reply to the observations in the Visiting Mission's report which he had quoted. The racial discrimination which was evident with regard to wages might also be observed in public health matters, since certain hospitals were reserved for Europeans. It was difficult to reconcile those facts with the principle of equality proclaimed in French legislation.

49. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) stated that there was no racial discrimination in the Cameroons. Before alleging that there was racial discrimination because the majority of the Europeans earned more than the majority of the indigenous inhabitants, it must be borne in mind that Africans who were capable of holding well-paid office posts preferred to go into business on their own, in order to earn more. Moreover, Europeans with a lower earning capacity did not stay in the Cameroons and, as a rule, did not even go there. With regard to manual work, there could be no question of bringing Europeans over as labourers; the 300 Italians brought over for the building of the Edéa dam had all been skilled masons needed for that work.

50. Reference had been made to racial discrimination in hospitals. It was impossible to apply on a large scale Dr. Schweitzer's principle, that the African should not be deprived of his *milieu*; but indigenous inhabitants were given the food to which they were accustomed and, as far as possible, they were not isolated, because isolation was to them most unpleasant. Sick Europeans, on the other hand, preferred to be isolated. In view of those considerations, two separate hospitals had been set up at Douala, a general hospital and a hospital reserved for Africans. Nevertheless, Africans who wished to go to the general hospital could do so.

51. Mr. MENON (India) thought that it would be discourteous of him to say that the special representative's assertion that there was no racial discrimination was untrue. Nevertheless, the facts brought forward by the special representative led to the conclusion that different criteria were applied for admission to hospital, that the wage scales were different and that Europeans were given work which entitled them to high wages. He did not wish to quibble over words, but he asked whether those differences were not based on racial considerations.

52. Mr. PIGNON (France) asserted that there was no racial discrimination with regard to labour or wages and that the principle of the Labour Code was absolutely unequivocal. There were, of course, various categories of employment, but they were open to everyone, without any distinction. It must be admitted that a commercial or industrial company would not bring workers from Europe if it could find a sufficient number of skilled indigenous workers on the spot. The commercial or industrial companies were not concerned with racism where their interests were involved.

53. With regard to hospitals, the assertion that there was racial discrimination would stand only if it could be proved, as it could not, that the indigenous inhabitants did not receive the same care in hospitals where

they had priority as that given in hospitals where Europeans were treated. Moreover, there was no racial discrimination in private clinics or in hospital wings reserved for paying patients, to which the indigenous inhabitants were admitted on an equal footing with Europeans.

54. Mr. MENON (India) said that it could only be concluded from the French representative's explanations that the complaints about racial discrimination were unfounded.

55. Mr. PIGNON (France) declared that, in spite of the complaint in paragraph 218 of the Visiting Mission's report, there was no racial discrimination in the Cameroons.

56. Mr. MENON (India) noted, in connexion with human rights and fundamental freedoms, that certain foreign publications had been prohibited in the Territory since 1940. He asked what type of publications they were.

57. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that the publications concerned were propaganda pamphlets of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

58. Mr. MENON (India) drew attention to the Visiting Mission's comment on the extremely low purchasing power of indigenous workers and asked whether there was any tendency for the situation to improve.

59. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that there was an appreciable tendency towards an improvement of the conditions. Indeed, it was stated in the annual report² that the purchasing power had been rising for some years. Furthermore, since the adoption of the Labour Code, wages had increased by an average of 20 per cent.

60. Mr. SEARS (United States of America) asked whether Cameroonian medical students who might receive scholarships for training in a country other than France could practise in the Cameroons with medical degrees from foreign universities.

61. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied in the affirmative. Generally speaking, doctors holding degrees from universities of States Members of the United Nations could practise in the Cameroons.

62. Mr. SEARS (United States of America) thought that in the Cameroons there had formerly been a system of training auxiliary doctors. He asked whether that category of medical staff still existed.

63. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that the Territory continued to train male nurses, but had never trained doctors. The "African doctors", who had no State diploma, were trained at the medical school at Dakar, but could not be assimilated or compared to male nurses.

64. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) asked for some details on the incidence of leprosy and on the measures which were being taken to combat it.

65. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) explained

² See *Rapport annuel du Gouvernement français à l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies sur l'administration du Cameroun placé sous la tutelle de la France, année 1952*, Paris, Imprimerie Chaix, 1953.

that immunization against leprosy was practised on a very wide scale in vaccination campaigns. Moreover, there were some leprosaria in the Territory. The number of days spent in hospital was diminishing; it was now almost possible to guarantee a cure and hence to arrest all subsequent danger of contagion.

66. He regretted that he could not give technical details of the campaign against leprosy; he could state, however, that the incidence of the disease was decreasing.

67. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) asked approximately how many trained female African nurses there were and whether there was a school for nurses in the Territory.

68. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) regretted that he could not give the number of female nurses. There was no special nursing school; all indigenous nursing staff, both male and female, were trained at the school at Ayos.

69. The Administration was experiencing some difficulty in training nurses, since Cameroonian women had but recently acquired the necessary independence to exercise that kind of profession. Nevertheless, young African women were attracted to social service and it had been possible to set up a special group of social workers.

70. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) asked what was the minimum wage rate at Douala.

71. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that, owing to the application of the forty-hour week, wages were calculated on an hourly basis. At present, the hourly minimum inter-professional guaranteed wage-rate at Douala was 16 francs for the normal forty hours and was increased by 15 per cent for the first eight hours' overtime and by 30 per cent for the subsequent eight hours. In practice, wages were always higher than the minimum rate. When that rate had been 90 francs a day at Douala, the minimum wage of a manual worker had been 110 francs.

72. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) recalled the reference in the special representative's preliminary statement (488th meeting) to the housing programme at Yaoundé and asked whether the undertaking was controlled by the Administration, for whom the housing was intended and whether the dwellings would be sold or leased to the occupants.

73. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) explained that the Société immobilière du Cameroun was a mixed company, in which the Territory held 35 per cent of the capital and the remainder was held by the Caisse centrale de la France d'outre-mer and by private interests. The latter had hitherto subscribed only 14 per cent and the Caisse centrale held 51 per cent of the capital. The company had begun to operate in 1952 and for the first year had undertaken a building programme on three pieces of land. The first lot consisted of some houses with two or three apartments; the second comprised the "African village" type of dwelling, with more primitive sanitary installations; on the third lot the company had built dwellings for the indigenous staff of the Yaoundé hospital.

74. The European-type villas were either leased or sold on the hire-purchase system. It was not at present considered advisable to sell the African-type dwellings on the hire-purchase system; they were to be rented

only, to avoid speculation. The dwellings for the Health Service personnel were purchased by the Administration.

75. In reply to a question by Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) on the measures taken to amend the decree on trade unions to conform with the provisions of the Labour Code, Mr. BECQUET (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that all the provisions of that decree which were contrary to the Act of December 1952 and which might hinder the free exercise of trade-union rights, especially the educational qualifications required of trade-union leaders, would be automatically rendered null and void, because the act had precedence over the decree.

76. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) observed that the Union des populations du Cameroun complained that freedom of association was restricted to the organizations favoured by the Administration and that members of the UPC were persecuted by the local authorities (T/L.406, p. 30). He asked for some explanations in that connexion.

77. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that those complaints were absolutely unfounded. The activities of associations were governed by the same law in the Cameroons as in the metropolitan country and no organizations were persecuted. If an organization violated the regulations in force, it would naturally be liable to prosecution. Since the Secretary-General of the UPC had been able, on his own admission (A/C.4/261), to hold eighty-three public meetings in one year, it did not seem that he was being actively persecuted.

78. At the request of Mr. TARAZI (Syria), Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) outlined the main aspects of the problem of the bride-price. The bride-price was the sum which a suitor paid to the family of the woman he wished to marry in accordance with a custom common to all the peoples of Central Africa. As long as the bride-price had been limited to a reasonable amount, the Administering Authority had not intervened except to ensure the freedom of choice of the parties by a decree of 15 June 1939. Later the maximum bride-price had been established by decree. However, the sums named in marriage settlements in accordance with the decree had been purely nominal and the fathers of brides had in fact exacted much larger amounts. The previous legislation had been strengthened by the decree of 14 September 1951, which still permitted marriage according to custom but specified that women of twenty-one years of age and women whose marriages had been dissolved could marry freely. In the case of girls under age the parents' consent was required, but marriage could take place without their consent if consent was withheld solely because of the excessive demands made by the parents. The Administering Authority could not use coercion to reform a custom that was generally accepted by the indigenous inhabitants. It had attempted to regulate the custom, in collaboration with the Territorial Assembly, under the decree of 1951 which provided that the maximum bride-price could be established by local regulations. While the Assembly fully agreed with the principle of limiting the bride-price, it was reluctant to set a figure. A draft decree had been submitted to the Assembly but no decision had been taken. The Administering Authority was making every effort to persuade the members of the Assembly that it was necessary to deal with the problem without delay. However, any regulations

adopted would be effective only when they had been accepted and had become part of the local customs. Since 1939, very few women had appealed to the courts to obtain the rights they enjoyed under the decree. To solve the problem, the Administration would have to make a further major effort to educate the people along those lines. A campaign was being undertaken by some of the more advanced indigenous inhabitants, through the Press and lectures.

79. In reply to a further question by Mr. TARAZI (Syria), Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that he could not state whether the Administering Authority had given any assistance to women's organizations. There had been reference to a subsidy to the Union des femmes camerounaises but the subsidy had been for the purpose of financing evening classes organized by the Union.

80. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) asked for information regarding the Labour Code applied in Overseas France. In a petition from the Fédération d'agriculture et forêts de l'Union des syndicats confédérés du Cameroun (T/PET.5/L.8), it was stated that hours of work were not the same in agriculture as in industry. The Association des chômeurs de la Sanaga maritime had also submitted a petition (T/PET.5/229) complaining that the Labour Code had not yet been applied.

81. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the system applied in the Trust Territory was the same as that applied in France. There were differences between industrial and agricultural workers. For the latter the working week was approximately forty-six hours. That provision was intended to take into account the special needs of agriculture, with its varying seasonal requirements. The Labour Advisory Committee, which included five representatives of the Union des syndicats confédérés du Cameroun, had considered various orders issued under article 240 of the Labour Code. Those orders had introduced the forty-hour week, laid down wage rates and fixed minimum wages. The orders had also made provision for the appointment of workers' representatives and had laid down the period of notice to be given to persons employed under a contract.

82. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) asked why the Administering Authority had banned publications of the World Federation of Trade Unions, particularly in view of the fact that the Confédération générale du travail, which had its headquarters in Paris and to which seventy-four unions were affiliated, was a member of the WFTU.

83. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) pointed out that the WFTU headquarters was not in France. The Administering Authority could not therefore institute proceedings against the WFTU in accordance with the legislation in force in the Cameroons and in France, or demand the right of reply. It could only prohibit publications in which it had regularly been the target of unfounded and, in many cases, mendacious accusations. If the pamphlets had been published in France under the responsibility of a French organization, there would have been no barrier to their importation to the Cameroons. So long as they were published abroad by an organization against which the Administration had no means of taking action, there could be no other solution.

84. In reply to Mr. TARAZI (Syria) Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that information concerning the liberal professions in which Cameroonian and Europeans were engaged could be included in future reports.

The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and was resumed at 4.35 p.m.

85. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wondered why the population of Douala had tripled from 1946 to 1952.

86. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the increase was largely due to the influx of labour employed in the schemes for the development of the Territory. In addition, the indigenous workers were joined by relatives and friends who wanted to share in their prosperity and live at their expense while looking for a job. The Administering Authority viewed the second phenomenon with concern but had not wished to take any steps to remedy the situation.

87. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked for further information regarding the causes of the vagrancy mentioned on page 51 of the annual report, and the economic, social and political measures which the Administering Authority had taken to eliminate it.

88. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that, owing to the absence of a civil register, there was no really effective legislation against vagrancy. Moreover, even in civilized countries, vagrancy was not a crime and was never subject to severe penalties. In the Cameroons, vagrancy was due to two causes: the influx of people with no fixed abode or means of support of their own living at the expense of the indigenous workers and the occasional unemployment of the indigenous inhabitants. In the Cameroons there was no unemployment in the strict sense of the word. The indigenous inhabitants did not tie themselves to regular employment and gave up work as soon as they had earned a little money. The problem of vagrancy was thus due to the fact that the population was not sufficiently industrious.

89. Any legislation to prevent people from coming to Douala would be unconstitutional. In regard to housing, the Administration had relied on persuasion rather than on direct action. It had provided non-local racial groups with land on which they could build houses and had paid compensation to the community of Douala. In addition, it did not provide relief for unemployed persons since to do so would attract more people to Douala and encourage vagrancy. The Administering Authority had concentrated on attacking the problem at the source. It had offered free transport to their homes to persons not regularly employed at Douala and tried to persuade the indigenous inhabitants that it was not in their interest to come to Douala unless they had jobs there. It was also trying to arrest the drift of the rural population to the large towns and to interest them in their villages. Primary education, coupled with propaganda, had a particularly important part to play in that respect. Lastly, the Administration hoped soon to improve rural living conditions as a result of funds allocated to the Cameroons and of the work of the provident societies. The programme would take time but would, he was sure, be successful.

90. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) was not sure that the poor housing conditions in the villages were sufficient to explain the drift of the population to the towns. He wondered whether the real reason was not that the indigenous inhabitants could not even maintain a minimum standard of living in the villages.

91. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the drift of the rural population to the towns was found everywhere and was due to many causes, among which housing was perhaps not the most important. The movement was due, among other things, to the lure of the large towns. The indigenous inhabitants could earn a decent living in the villages but young people who had been to school tended to despise agricultural work; although the Administering Authority had tried to give pupils agricultural training, it had not been very successful in that respect.

92. In reply to Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative of the Cameroons under French administration) said that there was unfortunately a misprint on page 211 of the annual report. In the last paragraph, under the heading "*La situation de la main-d'œuvre*", the first sentence should read: "*Il n'existe donc pas à proprement parler au Cameroun un problème de chômage.*" At Douala, about 3,000 persons were registered as seeking employment; but when work was offered, only about 150 responded.

93. In reply to a further question by Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said the surveys conducted in the Yaoundé and Garoua regions to determine the standard of living (annual report, pp. 222-223) had not yet been completed.

94. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he would like to know the reasons for the decline in the population of the Lom-et-Kadéï region, and of the Batouri, Bertoua and Bétaré-Oya subdivisions.

95. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that a number of gold mines which had been worked in the area had been closed, and all the workers had left together with their families. Furthermore, the population had suffered severely from sleeping sickness in recent years. Steps had been taken to prohibit companies seeking labour from recruiting workers in the area.

96. In reply to a question by Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) explained that the hospital services referred to on page 226 of the annual report provided a European diet for patients in the first category and an indigenous diet for patients in the second. The charges were different in the two categories, and varied in each category according to the number of patients per room. The State paid the hospital expenses of indigent persons. The hospitals admitted both Europeans and Africans. Africans had been given rooms in the first category.

97. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wondered how the eighty-two doctors in the Cameroons could adequately staff the Territory's 236 health establishments.

98. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) pointed out that there were also sixty African doctors. Moreover, some dispensaries near health centres or hospitals had qualified male nurses instead of doctors.

99. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) said that the Visiting Mission had stated (T/1043, para. 245) that the problem of the bride-price had become more acute since the entry into force of the Lamine-Gueye law. The mission had expressed the opinion that the law should be reviewed in the light of the abuses to which it had given rise. He asked whether the Territorial Assembly had considered the possibility of reviewing the law, which would provide an opportunity of determining the feelings of the people on the subject.

100. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) stated that the question of reviewing the law had never been brought before the Territorial Assembly. The draft order which had been submitted had actually related to the maximum amount of the bride-price. It would be very difficult to modify the law in the present state of public opinion. The parties principally concerned did not avail themselves of their right to free themselves of the burden of the bride-price by taking their cases to the courts.

101. Furthermore, the law embodied a principle which was intrinsically just. The family allowances were intended to help parents to bring up their children. Although they might still in many cases be misused, it was legitimate to hope that the situation would gradually improve; it was primarily a question of education in citizenship.

102. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) did not think that the problem could be solved overnight but felt that measures to eliminate the custom should be considered. He asked whether the Administration had already taken steps along those lines as part of its educational programme.

103. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that in all schools an attempt was made to change the girls' traditional outlook. Young people were beginning to show a marked reaction against the old ideas.

104. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) said that at its eleventh session the Council had expressed the hope that it would receive more detailed information regarding the methods used by the Administration to evaluate standards of living (A/2150, p. 181). He wondered whether the surveys undertaken had been completed.

105. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that the surveys were still in progress.

106. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) noted with satisfaction that, so far as the prison system was concerned, the Administering Authority had acted on the suggestion made by the representative of El Salvador at the Council's eleventh session (450th meeting). He wondered whether visits of inspection could be made more frequently.

107. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said he was unable to answer the question, as he could not commit his Government on the point.

108. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) said he would like to know whether all prisoners had derived equal

benefit from the reform and whether further improvements were envisaged.

109. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that it had not been a question of radical reform but of making a few improvements of detail. The treatment applied to European prisoners was not completely the same as that applied to Africans, for whom cellular confinement would be unbearable and inhuman. The Africans went outside the prisons to do small jobs. The Europeans did not leave the prisons. Consequently, there were separate premises for Europeans and Africans.

110. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) said that he had not had a general reform of the prison system in mind. What he was concerned with was the significance of the individual improvements introduced, and of the policy pursued by the Administration. He had thought it was the intention of the authorities gradually to make the prison system uniform and to provide the same treatment for all prisoners from the point of view of diet, sanitary conditions etc.

111. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) remarked that in general the Africans did not like European cooking. There had been no question of instituting a common diet: a local diet was maintained for prisoners accustomed to local ways. On the whole, the Administration's policy was to improve living conditions. Premises had, for example, been remodelled as far as possible. He was sorry he could not supply more exact information on that point.

Educational advancement

112. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted, from the annual report, that the schools were attended by more than 160,000 children. He asked what percentage of the total number of children in the Territory that figure represented.

113. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that the Administering Authority did not have enough statistical information to estimate the percentage correctly. He drew the Council's attention to the observations of UNESCO (T/1091).

114. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he was familiar with the UNESCO report, but doubted the accuracy of the figures quoted. It seemed unlikely that UNESCO should have been able to make a complete count, if the Administering Authority said it was unable to do so. That was why he had hoped to obtain more exact information from the Administration.

115. He asked what the rate of illiteracy was in the Territory.

116. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that he had no exact figures on the question.

117. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked what was the final date for completion of the programme to provide school facilities for all children in the Cameroons referred to in the annual report.

118. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that he could not say at what rate the programme to provide education for all children would be developed.

119. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted from the Visiting Mission's report

that 70 per cent of the pupils in the Territory attended educational establishments belonging to the religious missions. Pointing out that the Administering Authority had sole responsibility for education, he said that the schools should belong to the Administration, which was responsible for drawing up the curricula and appointing teachers. He wondered what action the Administration was contemplating to secure direct control of the schools and ensure that the education provided would be secular.

120. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that it was impossible at the moment to eliminate private education, which was rendering considerable service in the Cameroons, and which, incidentally, was subject to inspection by the public education authorities.

121. Furthermore, the Administering Authority was endeavouring to extend its activities more and more by building as many schools as possible and by training the maximum number of teachers. The number of primary-school pupils had risen from 19,077 in 1948 to 50,000 in 1953. Efforts were continuing and would be continued on an increasing scale.

122. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) wished to know the situation with regard to higher education in the Territory. The Salvadorian delegation, together with the New Zealand delegation, had in the past drawn attention to the desirability of setting up centres for the study of law or medicine. The Administration might consider the possibility of bringing teachers from abroad to train a qualified teaching staff in the Cameroons.

123. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) still felt that it would be premature to set up a university centre. France intended to provide the Cameroonianians with the highest possible standards of education, and that requirement could not easily be met under present conditions. For the time being, the Administration did not think it possible to bring teachers from abroad and to establish institutions of higher education within the existing framework.

124. Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) asked whether there were still public libraries, whether there were mobile libraries distributing literature dealing with the United Nations and whether a campaign against illiteracy was being conducted.

125. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that mobile libraries existed, and that fairly good results had been obtained.

126. With regard to mass campaigns, he drew attention to the experiment in basic education being undertaken at Endingding, near Yaoundé. The competent authorities planned to expand their activities in the near future and to start a campaign in the Bamiléké region and in the Diamaré.

127. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) noted that only one *lycée* offered courses leading to the *baccalauréat*. He wondered whether the Administration expected to raise the level of education in the other secondary schools.

128. He also asked whether in the Cameroons, as in France, curricula were laid down by the government and applied to private education as well as to public education.

129. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) explained that the Administering Authority intended to add new classes to the *lycées* every year.

130. The curricula were uniform throughout the Territory and similar to those in France, with some modifications, in particular with regard to local history.

131. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) felt that if the Administering Authority considered it premature to set up a university, it might consider establishing a kind of teachers' training college which would at least train secondary-school teachers. It might also award scholarships for study in France.

132. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that anyone who wished to open an educational establishment must have a *baccalauréat*. The Yaoundé *lycées* trained pupils for that certificate and the other schools would eventually do likewise. Secondary-school teachers had to have a licence, and for some years to come, it would be necessary to go outside the Cameroons, to France or elsewhere, to obtain university education. Scholarships were granted for that purpose, and there were Cameroonians studying at the *Ecole normale supérieure* at St. Cloud. There were at present two training schools for primary-school teachers. Their number would be increased as soon as the preparatory courses and the schools training assistant teachers—of which there were now six—could furnish the necessary personnel.

133. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) inquired whether the Administration supervised private educational establishments from the point of view of curriculum, discipline, etc.

134. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) explained that inspectors visited private schools in the same way as they visited public schools. Moreover, the Directorate of Education maintained constant contact with representatives of the three types of private education: Catholic, Protestant and secular.

135. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) asked whether the new schools built in the north of the Territory were modern and properly equipped.

136. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the new schools were so far as possible fully equipped.

137. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) asked what was the situation with regard to mass education and what the Administration intended to do to stimulate it. According to the annual report, 12,000 adults had taken special courses.

138. Furthermore, the Administering Authority stated in its report that a method, based on the Laubach method and using the vernacular in the initial stage, had been worked out. The Administration intended to consider means of effecting the transition from that language into French. He wished to know what progress had been made in that field since 1952.

139. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the figure of 12,000 adults included the number of persons who had registered for the courses at the beginning, but that towards the end of the year, only about half had remained. Nevertheless, that figure was perhaps justified if the number of persons who had participated in the Endingding basic education experiment was taken into account. The Administering Authority

encouraged courses for adults, and had subsidized them during the past year.

140. The transition from the vernacular to French was a very technical question on which he was not qualified to give information.

141. Mr. SINGH (India) asked whether religious instruction was compulsory in the educational establishments of the religious missions and, if so, what was the attitude of parents if they belonged to another faith.

142. He also asked whether religious instruction was given in the public schools.

143. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that religious instruction was not compulsory in the private schools. The Administration was endeavouring to avoid competition and the formation of spheres of influence in educational matters, and it was clearly understood that private schools would not accept pupils of their faith only.

144. Public schools were completely secular and no religious instruction was given.

145. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) asked whether the Administration experienced any difficulty in training teachers for the new primary schools it was setting up.

146. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) replied that the only difficulty was that a good many schools had monitors, rather than teachers. Some time would be required to replace all the monitors by teachers. Nevertheless, the Administration was not at present experiencing any special difficulty.

147. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) asked whether the existing vocational schools were able to train sufficient numbers of technicians and skilled workers to meet the Territory's growing needs.

148. He also asked whether the curriculum of village primary schools included manual crafts, elementary agriculture, natural science and domestic arts or whether a purely classical course was given.

149. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that the existing number of vocational schools would become inadequate if the Cameroons became rapidly industrialized. The Administration hoped to be able to build new vocational schools very soon.

150. In the primary schools, elementary agricultural training had always been part of the curriculum. The agricultural services took an interest in the matter, and their officials worked with the teachers whose training in that respect was sometimes deficient.

151. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) asked whether any of the teachers were girls. The annual report gave no information on that point. He asked whether the Administration had special difficulties in training women teachers.

152. Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative for the Cameroons under French administration) said that education for girls was a recent development in the Territory; that was the principal difficulty. Fortunately, old prejudices were gradually disappearing and girls were beginning to attend school in large numbers. A school for women teachers had been opened at Ebolowa during the previous year and had been attended during the school year by forty students.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.