

UNITED NATIONS
TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL



PROVISIONAL
T/PV.785
26 April 1957
ENGLISH

Nineteenth Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 26 April 1957, at 2 p.m.

President:

Mr. ASHA

(Syria)

Examination of the annual report on the administration of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration for 1955 1307 and hearings of petitioners from the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration 1347: hearing of the representatives of the "Union des Associations Traditionnelles" (A/RES/500; T/1284, 1304, 1307; T/PET.5/L.433; T/L.736)

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e., the summary record, will appear in provisional mimeographed form under the symbol T/SR.785 and will be subject to representatives' corrections. It will appear in final form in a printed volume.

57-13478

(47 p.)

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION FOR 1955 [Agenda item 3c] AND HEARINGS OF PETITIONERS FROM THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION [General Assembly resolution 1067 (XI)] [Agenda item 14]:
HEARING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE "UNION DES ASSOCIATIONS TRADITIONNELLES" (A/RES/500; T/1284, 1304, 1307; T/PET.5/L.433; T/L.736)

The PRESIDENT: The Council will proceed today with the hearing of petitioners from the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration. I should like to remind the Council that at our 756th meeting the Council granted a hearing to the "Union des Associations Traditionnelles", an organization of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration. The four representatives designated by that organization have arrived in New York. They are Mr. Philippe Mbarga, Mr. Kingué Jong, Mr. Anjembé Menye and Mr. Gustave Ngamba.

At the invitation of the President, Messrs Anjembé Menye, Kingué Jong, Philippe Mbarga and Gustave Ngamba took places at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Kingué Jong, who will make a statement on behalf of all the petitioners.

Mr. KINGUE JONG (Union des Associations Traditionnelles du Cameroun) (interpretation from French): The delegation of the Union des Assemblées et Associations Traditionnelles du Cameroun expresses its gratitude to the Council for the opportunity to make an oral statement.

We should like to give the Council a brief review of the history of the relations between France and the Cameroons because in our view certain facts must be borne in mind in order to see the problem in its proper perspective. For almost two years now the people of the Cameroons have been undergoing one of the most trying periods of their history. The Cameroons was a victim of colonialism, which swept across the world during the past century. It has

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always, at the cost of heavy sacrifices, carried on an untiring struggle for the recognition of its sovereignty. After the important events which marked the history of mankind during the first half of this twentieth century, this struggle could have been carried on peacefully through democratic institutions based on respect for the will of the people. But because of a colonial regime which is anxious to maintain the privileges from which it sprung, because of a policy which always turns its back on the most striking realities, the Cameroonian people has again been forced to demand its legitimate aspirations and to ask France to recognize that the problem of the Cameroons is not one to which a ready-made solution can be applied. However, if the nationalist Cameroonian resistance has given rise in French public opinion to a soul-searching on the real Cameroonian problem, it has not, in the minds of the leaders of France, given rise as yet to the slightest suggestion of a valid solution.

The Union des Assemblées et Associations Traditionnelles du Cameroun (UNATRACAM), to which belong all the people of the central, southern and western regions of the country and which therefore represents the most advanced sectors of the population, feels that it must pronounce itself now that the future of the Cameroonian people is at stake. We are here as representatives of the tradition of the Cameroons. Providence has willed that we should rally round this tradition to form a union which represents true Cameroonian nationalism. Our organization groups all the nationals of the Cameroons, without distinction as to tribe, religion or opinion. The four representatives who have the honour of appearing before the Council represent the Executive Committee of UNATRACAM. They come from the Assemblies and Associations of Kolo-Beti, Koupé, Ngondo, Efoulameyon, Kwasio, Kumzé, Jeunesse Beti, Association of the Tribes of Nanga-Eboko and so forth.

Ever since its creation, by an inaugural motion of its Constituent Congress last March, it has, at the same time as it defined the specific values upon which the nation is founded, stressed the urgent need of finding a just solution to the Cameroonian problem, one which would be in conformity with the right of peoples. It has done this because it realized that the colonial regime is finished and cannot be perpetuated without scandalizing the entire free world.

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The Cameroonian nationalists were the first to express their indignation at, and disapproval of, all acts of violence and all crimes committed, whoever their perpetrators might be. But the present Cameroonian tragedy is the inevitable and logical consequence of the errors, not to say political mistakes, accumulated by the Governments and the parliamentarians which have succeeded each other in France for the past forty years.

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Flagrant injustices, unbearable inequalities, a rigid and obsolete form of administration -- all these have inevitably convinced the Cameroonians that they must press their demands. The Indo-Chinese tragedy, the tragedies of Morocco and Tunisia -- and, today, the situation in Algeria...

The PRESIDENT: I would remind the petitioner that he should confine himself to speaking on the subject under discussion, the Cameroons under French administration.

Mr. KINGUE JONG: Mr. President, I thank you. But the problems of the territories under French administration cannot be regarded as separate problems -- they follow the same pattern. With your permission, therefore, I shall continue, though I shall say no more about Indo-China, Morocco or Algeria -- and incidentally I might state that this was the only paragraph containing such allusions.

There is nothing worse, surely, than promises that are not honoured and are not fulfilled. The international principles solemnly proclaimed and then distorted in the implementation; the reforms which are subordinated to the re-establishment of order and are forgotten once public order has been restored; the political motives underlying the policy of the liberation of the peoples -- which is one of the aims of the United Nations. It must be remembered that the people of the Cameroons have been struggling since 1902 to regain the sovereignty of their country which had been recognized in the German-Cameroonian Treaty of 12 July 1884. In 1952 the Cameroonians claimed the right of self-government, and it was denied them. The demands of the Cameroonians were then supported by the Union des populations du Cameroun and of the "Ngondo".

The results of the promised amnesty for the May 1955 events -- which was to create the conditions necessary for any new elections to the Territorial Assembly -- are known. Yet it was, according to the declaration made by Mr. Gaston Defferre, Minister for Overseas France, on Friday, 17 August 1956, "to enable the majority of the Cameroonians hitherto associated with the UPC to become reintegrated as individuals in the Cameroonian community by participating in the forthcoming consultation", the consultation which actually took place on 23 December last.

Even if we merely consider the conditions under which the elections were held, can we be surprised if, today, the reforms instituted by France seem to the nationalists to be cruelly inadequate? Acts of repression -- which continue in certain areas of the Cameroons -- certainly do nothing to calm the spirits of the people, nor do they demonstrate to the Cameroonians that the reforms so loudly proclaimed have actually been implemented.

At this time the Cameroons lives under a cloud of anxiety, suspicion and hatred. With the forthcoming installation of the Cameroonian Government, we are on the eve of a time filled with even more dramatic events. We know -- and we can assert, without fear of contradiction -- that certain future members of the Government classify our demands as mere demagoguery and think, in their delirium, that all those who claim to be nationalists are in error and can be exterminated.

It is our mission here to protest, first of all, against the present conditions of repression and its continuance, and then to sound the alarm against the cataclysm which threatens our unfortunate country; and finally to enlighten the United Nations regarding the state of mind of our fellow citizens. To conceal the truth, however hard and bitter, would be unworthy of our Union. We feel that silence would be a crime against the court of international opinion, which is now more than ever, entitled to be correctly informed. In the misfortunes we have endured, and which have filled us and men of good will everywhere with anxiety, we have at least the consolation of knowing that public opinion in metropolitan France has not remained indifferent to our sufferings and our fears -- our fears of the choice which France is about to make, and which is but a subterfuge to conceal the manner in which French domination is to be perpetuated in the Cameroons.

This observation leads us to a consideration of the meaning of Article 76 of the Charter of the United Nations. At the seventeenth session of the Council, contradictory interpretations of that article were given. We believe that, to truly define the meaning and the scope of the Statute adopted on 22 February of this year by a majority of the Territorial Assembly of the Cameroons, we must refer to the most important and most valid interpretation -- that of the General Assembly expressed in its resolution 567 (VI) of 18 January 1952. But there is a question which we must first ask ourselves: What are the fundamental aims of the Trusteeship System? The reply is brief:

"... to promote the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence..."

In the light of this brief definition it is clear that the Charter has provided for but two ultimate aims -- self-government, which means autonomy, or independence. I emphasize the word "or". Any third solution could not, therefore, be regarded as anything but a violation of the Charter.

We must, therefore, now consider the explanation given by the General Assembly of the two, and the only two, solutions contemplated by it. In the annex to General Assembly resolution 567 (VI) we read, under the heading "Internal self-government":

"1. Territorial government: Freedom from control or interference by the government of another State in respect of the internal government (legislature, executive, judiciary) and administration of the territory.

"2. Participation of the population: Effective participation of the population in the government of the territory by means of an adequate electoral and representative system.

"3. Economic and social jurisdiction: Complete autonomy in respect of economic and social affairs."

I have read out the explanations given by the General Assembly of the status of self-government. I shall now read what is set forth by the General Assembly under the heading "International status":

"1. Independence: The attainment of independence by the territory, or complete control over its external relations and internal affairs.

"2. Eligibility for membership in international organizations: Eligibility for membership in the United Nations or for membership or associate membership in other international organizations; representation by delegates selected by the territorial government.

"3. General international relations: Power to enter into direct relations of every kind with other governments and with international institutions, and to negotiate, sign and ratify international conventions.

"4. Voluntary limitation of sovereignty: Degree to which the sovereignty of the territory is limited by its own free will when that territory has attained independence or other separate system of self-government."

In two lengthy statements made on 16 March 1956, by Mr. Bargues, the permanent representative of France, and Mr. Lefèvre, the special representative, it was pointed out that the development of the Cameroonian population was well advanced. The Cameroonians, who are the first to be aware of this development and who do not hesitate to say that it is a result of the liberalism of French policy, are, nevertheless, surprised that the Administering Power chooses such indirect methods of attaining the objectives prescribed by the United Nations, namely, self-government or independence ... and I stress the word "or".

A jurist -- and there are many jurists in the United Nations -- will perhaps say that the French Statute meets this point; but, while it is undeniable that the self-government of a country is conceivable if there are two governments, one acting internally and the other externally, we have never been told that, to administer a self-governing Territory, it is necessary to have three governments: two internal governments and one external government.

Now, the French Statute represents a preview of this new monster of international law which the Cameroonians consider, rightly or wrongly -- and, in my opinion, rightly -- to be a plan of integration. We would refer the Council to articles 3, 7, 10, 13, 16, 30 and 31 of the French Statute, which state the following:

"Article 3. The Cameroons under French administration participates, through its elected representatives, in the operation of central organs of the French Republic. Under the conditions laid down by the laws relative to the formation of the assemblies of the French Republic, it is represented in the Parliament, in the Assembly of the French Union, and, if the case arises, in the Economic Council."

"Article 7. Cameroonian citizens, for the duration of the time that the Trust Territory administered by France remains under the present Statute, enjoy the rights and freedoms set forth and guaranteed by the preamble of the French Constitution; they have access to all public offices and may elect and be elected throughout the French Republic on the same basis as French citizens."

I would ask in what Department of France a Cameroonian citizen could vote and, above all, be elected. I continue:

"French citizens, reciprocally, enjoy in the Cameroons the same rights as those enjoyed by Cameroonian citizens." -- Of course.

Article 10 reads as follows:

"As an exception to paragraph 1 of article 9 above, the legislation and regulations concerning: the system of public freedoms and the protection of their exercise, external affairs and defence, the monetary system and foreign trade, the administration of credit and the customs services, the regulation of the exploitation of mineral wealth and the administration of the labour code shall be subject to the authority of France."

As regards the regulation of the exploitation of mineral wealth and the administration of the labour code, certain Cameroonians who voted for the Statute have, nevertheless, protested these provisions. They claimed that the land was Cameroonian land. They could not recognize the decree, and contended that labour in the Cameroons should be under the authority of the Cameroonians themselves. There have been amendments to article 10. I cannot state here whether these amendments were carried by the French Parliament but the representative of France is present and he will tell us when he is questioned by you.

I now pass on to article 13. Article 13 states that the Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons may be dissolved by decree issued by the Council of Ministers of the French Republic, upon the recommendation of the High Commissioner. This proposal must be preceded by a consultation with the Prime Minister. New elections must take place within not less than two, and not more than three, months from the date of the dissolution.

Article 16 states that the High Commissioner shall preside over the Council of Ministers, or Cabinet. I am speaking now of the High Commissioner of the French Republic.

Article 30 states that the High Commissioner shall provide for the promulgation, publication and implementation of laws, decrees, decisions and directives which fall within the competence of the central organs of the French Republic. Publication shall be in the Official Journal of the Cameroons. The High Commissioner has regulatory powers. He may impose penalties up to fifteen days in gaol and 4,000 francs fine.

In article 31 it is stated that the High Commissioner of the French Republic is responsible for the administration of justice in regard to laws and regulations and, in particular, those which govern the Civil Service. He shall organize the public service and operate it. He represents the State in the courts and in all functions of civil life, subject to the regulations contained in current legislation. He controls the utilization of all appropriations from the budget of the State or from special accounts of the State Treasury. He also controls the civil expenditures of the State and in this connexion may delegate his signature. He ensures general co-ordination between the Cameroonian services and those of the Administering Authority.

Who will tell us what difference there is between this Statute and what is laid down by the General Assembly as "factors indicative of the free association (whether in a federal or unitary relationship) of a Territory on equal status with other component parts of the metropolitan or other country"? May I be permitted to read from the General Assembly's "statute" which is to be found on page 62 of Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its Sixth Session? The resolution enumerates the factors indicative of the free association -- whether in a federal or unitary relationship -- of a Territory on equal status with other component parts of the metropolitan or other country.

I wish to recall to you, respectfully, that I am reading a resolution of the General Assembly. It is resolution 567 (VI) and it states:

"A. General

- "1. Political advancement: Political advancement of the population sufficient to enable them to decide upon the future destiny of the territory with due knowledge.
- "2. Opinion of the population: The opinion of the population of the territory, freely expressed by informed and democratic processes as to the status or change in status which they desire.
- "3. Geographical considerations: Extent to which the relations of the territory with the capital of the central government may be affected by circumstances arising out of their respective geographical positions, such as separation by land, sea or other natural obstacles.

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"4. Ethnic and cultural considerations: Extent to which the population are of different race, language or religion or have a distinct cultural heritage, interests or aspirations, distinguishing them from the peoples of the country with which they freely associate themselves.

"5. Constitutional considerations: Association (a) by virtue of the constitution of the metropolitan country or (b) by virtue of a treaty or bilateral agreement affecting the status of the territory, taking into account (i) whether the constitutional guarantees extend equally to the associated territory, (ii) whether there are constitutional fields reserved to the territory, and (iii) whether there is provision for the participation of the territory on a basis of equality in any changes in the constitutional system of the State."

I have read to the Council the most interesting parts with respect to factors indicative of the free association -- whether in a federal or unitary relationship -- of a territory on equal status with other component parts of the metropolitan or other country. The text continues:

"1. Legislative representation: Representation without discrimination in the central legislative organs on the same basis as other inhabitants and regions."

The Council has heard an article of the Statute which indicates that French citizens have the same guarantees of representation as the Cameroonians but I deny that any Cameroonian has ever taken advantage of this right in France; no Cameroonian has ever run for election in France. If I may be permitted, I can cite cases not of Cameroonians but of French citizens who have been unable to rise to certain posts because they were not of French origin.

"2. Citizenship: Citizenship without discrimination on the same basis as other inhabitants."

This is not provided in the French Statute.

"3. Government officials: Appointment or election of officials from the territory on the same basis as those from other parts of the country.

"C. Internal Constitutional Conditions

"1. Suffrage: Universal and equal suffrage, free periodic elections by secret ballot, freedom of choice of electoral candidates.

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"2. Local rights and status: Equal rights and status for the inhabitants and local bodies of the territory as enjoyed by inhabitants and local bodies of other parts of the country.

3. Local officials: Appointment or election of officials in the territory on the same basis as those in other parts of the country.

"4. Internal legislation: Complete legislative autonomy of the territory, by means of electoral and representative systems, in all matters which in accordance with the normal terms of association are, in the case of non-unitary systems, not reserved to the central government."

This is the "statute" as defined by the General Assembly; it is what has been called, precisely, the "statute of integration". The Council is not unaware that for many years the Cameroonians have been stating that they wish, first, that their country be granted an independent status and that, then, if they so desire, they may accede to the French Union. One of the members of the Council -- and I am referring to the President of the Council, Mr. Asha -- has said that this was a system which did not yet exist.

A moment ago, we asked who will tell us what difference there is between the Statute offered by France to the Cameroons and that which was defined by the General Assembly, which I have just read to the Council? The Council will understand that if the Trusteeship System, under the French Statute, continues and if the Cameroonians are not yet fully integrated into the French State, this is due to the fact that, in the text of the United Nations which defines the system of integration, it is stated that the provisions of Chapter XI of the Charter shall cease to apply to a territory only as a result of a free expression of the will of the population. That expression of the free will of the population, as regards the Cameroons, is provided for by article 44, which has been amended -- I am being frank and I am saying everything that has been done -- and which reads as follows: The present statute is subject to amendment and may be amended as a result of the action of the Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons. We shall see in a moment what this Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons is.

(Mr. Kingué Jong)

We are told that the provisions of Chapter XI of the Charter will not cease being applicable to a territory unless, or until, there has been a free expression of the will of the population. We must be surprised at the fact that this free expression of the will of the population will not be expressed in the near future, as it was expressed on 22 February.

(Mr. Kingué Jong)

Everyone will ask the following question: Who can prove that the majority in the Territorial Assembly of the Cameroons does not express the will of the population? This can be proved simply by the statements of the leaders of that majority, statements which we are putting on record and which prove the bad faith, the duplicity, and even the ignominy of those who accept all the honours and who thus betray their brothers and the land of their ancestors which they unjustly claim to represent.

One of these people was appointed Prime Minister. He made the following statement:

"The ideal of a democratic Christian aims at the emancipation and the full freedom of all the Cameroons in accordance with the ideals of Christianity. The ideal of the Catholics, the Protestants -- I am one of them -- and the Adventists is the main basis of the true civilization of the present world. Only the people shall exercise, through their representatives and through institutions freely created and upheld, the sovereign powers with justice towards all, with full respect for the human person, for human rights and for morality, without dictatorship, oppression or favouritism, in perfect brotherly equality of all the citizens".

He tells the Cameroonians that he will ask for full independence. He was the leader of the majority which voted in favour of the Statute.

These are the liars whom France will bring here one day with their pockets full of dollars, travelling with all expenses paid, to deny what we so humbly say here.

Yet, we do love France. Without the assistance of France the Cameroons would not have progressed. We feel, however, that the time has come for a frank discussion in order that no shadow shall remain in the relations between France and the Cameroons. In our view there is only one way of settling this issue. The principle of independence for the Cameroons must be recognized formally and explicitly, and the time-limits for the different stages of the achievement of independence must be the subject of negotiations.

An opposing draft was filed with the Legal Committee of the Territorial Assembly. That draft was rejected by the Committee, although it is in perfect harmony with the desires which we express here on behalf of the Cameroonian people. I should like to be able to read this document to you, but unfortunately I do not have it in my file. I should like, however, to reserve my right to submit the document for the Council's records.

The right to independence is, for the Cameroonians more than any other people under the rule of France, a natural and inalienable right. Our people do not wish to consider France as an enemy. We will continue to turn towards France, its civilization and its perspective. Our people know that they still need France. But we affirm that the immediate recognition of Cameroonian independence -- I repeat, immediate recognition -- is not only the least expensive solution, but it is true victory for France because only through such recognition can there be fruitful relations between France and the Cameroons.

This is our conclusion. It is consistent with the international status of our country and it expresses the comparison which we cannot fail to make between the two Cameroons, the French Cameroons and the British Cameroons. The latter, with Nigeria, will achieve its independence in 1959, two years from now. What solution does the Council propose? Will it always be guided by the views of the Administering Authority alone, or will it apply resolutely, as it has a right to do, the principles of the Charter, the principal aims of which, as admitted by the French Government, have been reached by the Cameroonian population?

Peace and security in our part of the world depends upon the answer which this Council gives to the question I have posed.

But a question still remains. I should like to recall to the Council what was said in a petition addressed to the Trusteeship Council by one of the associations which I represented here at the Council's eighteenth session.

(Mr. Kingué Jong)

May I read to the Council part of this text, the second chapter of the petition which is contained in document T/PET.5/L.84/Add.1.

"In our petition of 30 October 1952, we stated: 'Too little account has been taken either of the criticisms voiced or of the earnest desires expressed in that petition (that of 26 November 1949). We do not know whether we should attribute to France the sole responsibility for the fact that no positive result has been achieved by the Cameroonian people during the last three years. Will our struggle, already too prolonged, be all in vain even in the Trusteeship Council itself? Yet it would be difficult to cast doubt on the reality of our grievances and the justice of our cause.' We added: 'Despite the doubt which has sprung up in the minds of Cameroonians as to the usefulness and efficacy of petitions, we should nevertheless like to explain our position and in so doing solemnly to declare the unanimous will of the Cameroonians.'

"Why this doubt? It is easily explained.

"The first declaration by the United Nations adopted on 1 January 1942, had as its aim 'to defend life, liberty, independence and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands'. This declaration of principle, which had been preceded by two others (those of Teheran and of St. James), concerned the international protection of the human person. The victory of the United Nations was to ensure the triumph of a genuine international democratic revolution. The place of honour in the United Nations Charter was thus rightly given to human rights, which were subsequently proclaimed in a Universal Declaration. It may be said without fear of error that this Declaration applies primarily to weak countries or to those under the direct protection of the United Nations, i.e. countries under trusteeship.

"But it is as if these peoples were being betrayed by their very protectors. For there is nothing to justify the failure of the United Nations in the case of the African territories, and especially those inhabited by people of Negro race.

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"Is it because of the rigidity of the United Nations machinery? But if anyone stops a ship, fires a few shots on a frontier, brings down a plane or condemns a few prisoners of war, the whole of the United Nations is on its feet: commissions meet, the General Assembly passes resolutions, the Secretary-General makes a world tour, even the Security Council takes decisions forthwith. But if innocent people by the hundred, by the thousand, are imprisoned, deported, tortured or even executed by 'their Governments', then all the doors of international justice remain closed."

"Is it because of the prior claims of peace among the great nations? No one here would gainsay it, but it is high time to define this 'peace', for there is the danger that the condoning of tyranny and oppression, slavery and intolerance will cause discontent to grow to a point where widespread disturbances will inevitably break out in all dependent countries or where even a new world war may be precipitated."

"Is it because of the dangers of intervention? Has not the father at all times the right to watch over everything connected with the education of his child? And what is the United Nations in relation to the Trust Territories if not a father? We know, however, that peaceful intervention is not always successful and that because of the great distances involved it cannot take place immediately and continuously. But is that not precisely why numerous petitions have asked the Trusteeship Council to station its representatives in the Trust Territories so that they may keep permanent watch on the application, if not strict at least regular, of the laws of justice and humanity of which the Trusteeship Agreements are, in democracy's present state, but the too frail instruments. Then again, what is the purpose of these visiting missions which come to us every three years after putting their names to three successive annual reports? Is it just to fill a few boxes with petitions which are merely a clever forecast or a repetition in other terms of the report of the 'Administering Authority'?"

The petition goes on to say:

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"The Cameroonians are evidently ready to place their trust in the United Nations again, but first they are waiting for certain gestures to be made, certain positions to be taken up. As long as the United Nations disregard this 'frank explanation' of the status of the Cameroons and the Cameroonians remain subject to odious pressure as at present, their interest will progressively decline; the petitions received will be only of the kind submitted by the present Territorial Assembly of Togoland... and hope will sooner or later give way to lamentations and despair."

Mr. BARGUES (France)(interpretation from French): I listened with great interest to the statement which has just been made by the petitioner. I wish to ask a few questions on minor points, but before doing so I shall undertake to make certain rectifications.

The petitioner quoted from General Assembly resolution 567 (VI) and he referred to Chapter XI of the Charter. These are interesting texts, but there is one defect in the petitioner's allusion to them: they are not applicable to the Trust Territory. We regret any confusion in the mind of the petitioner regarding these texts, but I scarcely believe that the members of the Council are similarly confused. It is evident, however, that this confusion detracts somewhat from the interest of the petitioner's statement.

Similarly, I would say that the petitioner in referring to the Statute for the Cameroons did not refer to the actual text of that Statute but rather to the draft which was prepared by the French Government in consultation with members of the Territorial Assembly and presented to that Assembly for examination. As the Council is no doubt aware, the Territorial Assembly introduced certain amendments, of which I shall give but one example, for I do not wish to weary the Council. I think this example will suffice to show how superficially the petitioner dealt with this matter. He said that the Cameroonians wished to legislate their own labour code and to have the right to decide on the conditions of its implementation in the Territory. Now article 11 of the Statute, in the form in which it has been promulgated in the Journal Officiel and perhaps by now in the Cameroonian Journal Officiel also -- and if it has not already been published there, it will be very soon -- this final text of article 11 indicates that the competence of the Legislative Assembly exists in all matters of interest to the Cameroonians, and goes on to state certain specific matters which lie within the competence of the Legislative Assembly. This enumeration, I might add, is not limitative. The article states that the competence of the Legislative Assembly is extended to all matters of community interest, especially in certain fields which are mentioned in a long list, and the list includes "the labour code and its implementation". I think that this example suffices to show the superficial nature of the arguments which have been adduced.

The petitioner launched an attack, a rather personal attack, against members of the Legislative Assembly who, according to him, are not entirely honest. He even accused them of ignominy and duplicity and so forth. Since he did not address his remarks to me I need not take up the gauntlet, but the strictures he applies to the moral and material outlook of members of the majority in the Legislative Assembly may be extended to include the minority party members, some of whom are his friends.

To take up another point, the petitioner referred to one of the members of the majority party without actually naming him but indicating that he has been elected as Prime Minister and quoting certain points from the political platform endorsed by that leading personality. I shall say in passing that the petitioner has no power to promote anyone to the rank of Prime Minister. This power rests solely with the Legislative Assembly, which has the right to grant or refuse the appointment to any one of its members. However, I do not want to make a mystery of this matter: the person referred to is Mr. Mbida, and it is rumoured that he will be the Prime Minister. This depends, however, on the decision of the Legislative Assembly. The petitioner quoted a part, but only a part, of the political platform of Mr. Mbida. In his partial quotation, the petitioner selected from among the numerous statements of Mr. Mbida the one which appeared most advantageous to him, and he twisted it into the form that suited his purpose. But this is not a faithful reproduction of the facts, nor is it an accurate report of the avowed intentions of Mr. Mbida. Certain wrong intentions have been ascribed to Mr. Mbida, and while it is difficult to read the mind of a man and thereby learn his intentions we can at least ~~mention~~ quote his own statement that the Rassemblement has as its objective to achieve emancipation and complete independence for the Cameroons in all fields. This having been said by Mr. Mbida, the petitioner accuses him of duplicity and deceit because he has promised his constituents to proceed towards the goal of the complete liberation of the Cameroons but has not called for the ultimate achievement of independence.

In the first place, I would point out to the petitioner that Mr. Mbida included in his political statement a list of objectives, which mentioned the evolution of the Territory, its emancipation and, in due course, its independence.

(Mr. Bargues, France)

These objectives correspond closely with another part of Mr. Mbida's political statement. In it he declares that in collaboration with colleagues who have shared in the arduous work of the Assembly he is presenting a statement of the objectives which have been before all over a long period of hope and preparation, namely, the emancipation of the Cameroons in a quiet, orderly and peaceful fashion; the establishment of a truly representative Legislative Assembly and a Government of the Cameroons which would function in perfect internal autonomy -- and I would emphasize his further words -- which would serve as a preparatory stage for the attainment within a few years of complete independence. It is therefore false to declare that Mr. Mbida deceitfully promised independence and then failed to demand independence. I have no reason to question Mr. Mbida's good intentions; I believe that he is still of the same mind, and that he still desires evolution, emancipation and eventual independence, as he clearly states in his political platform.

It is true that Mr. Mbida was a member of the majority party, and perhaps the most influential member -- as the petitioner himself stated or implied -- and he may be designated as Prime Minister. It is also true that certain members of the Assembly, as the petitioner well knows, have proposed a different platform, but this rival proposal was rejected. That is quite in line with parliamentary procedure. Certain proposals failed to win majority support and were rejected. This does not necessarily mean they were worse than the proposals that were adopted, but simply that they failed to win the support of the majority. This is democratic procedure. Furthermore, I wonder whether certain members of the minority -- and especially the leaders of that minority -- wanted the Territory to achieve independence immediately. In saying this, I have in mind statements made by Mr. Assalé, who is the leader of the opposition group in the Assembly -- a statement made by him in the course of debate.

(Mr. Bargues, France)

He said that the counter-proposal which was presented by his group and rejected by the Assembly provided for the recognition of the independence and sovereignty of the Cameroons, but not immediately. He stated that the reforms proposed by France, and the amendments voted by the Assembly, had no solid political basis unless France undertook, at some time, to grant independence to the Cameroons. In general, this is the opinion of the minority there: namely, the minority did not want immediate independence but, rather, a promise from the Administering Authority; whereas the majority did not actually demand such a promise.

To be more specific, I shall quote the words of Mr. Assalé. I have given a brief summary but, since I do not wish what I have said to be misinterpreted, I shall read out to the Council a passage from the record of the plenary meeting, held in the afternoon of 22 February 1957, of the Territorial Assembly of the Cameroons. Mr. Assalé said the following:

"For some time, certain people have been accusing my group of being made up of persons who are demanding immediate independence. This is absolutely false. We wish to stress that independence, and the enjoyment of that independence, must be preceded by a transitional period. This can be proved by the record..."

Hence, the petitioners are attributing incorrect intentions to Mr. Mbida, and also -- which is more serious -- to the leaders of the opposition, that is, the authors of the counter-proposal.

The petitioners also asked in what French Department a Cameroonian citizen could be a voter or a candidate for office; for, indeed, the Statute gives to Cameroonian citizens, for the duration of time that the Cameroons remains under the Statute, the right to be voters or elected to office throughout the French Republic. The reply is very simple. Cameroonian citizens are voters, not only in all French Departments, but throughout the Territories which form part of the French Union. Perhaps there are not many; but there are, in fact, a number of Cameroonians who live permanently in France -- in particular, students -- and who are entirely free, so long as they fulfil the residence requirements, to register as voters. They may not have been elected to office; but I would remind the petitioners that that is the law of democracy.

One of the petitioners is, himself, a holder of office. He is Municipal Councillor in Yaoundé. He was, of course, less fortunate in the elections for the Territorial Assembly, for the list on which his name appeared received only some 5,000 votes out of more than 100,000 votes, whereas the opposing list, the winning list -- the list which included the name of the person whom we cited, Mr. Mbida -- received 109,000 votes. In that case, of course, the law of the majority militated against one of the petitioners present here; but it must be noted that he won in the municipal elections. In view of this, it would be somewhat unfair of him to complain about the effect of this law of democracy.

Having given some clarifications which I think will serve the debate and offer a more correct representation of the situation, I should like now to put some questions to the petitioners. The petitioner who spoke stated that he and his colleagues represented the more advanced sectors of the population of the Territory. I must refer, however, to what I said about the law of the majority. Can we consider as spokesmen for the population of the Territory those who claim to represent only the most advanced elements? The law of democracy means that more than just the most advanced elements must participate in the drawing up of petitions. It is true that political rights were reserved, at one time, for the most advanced elements; but the people have developed to such an extent recently that the formula should be expanded, and it should be brought more into line with the formulae which are applicable to more advanced democratic countries. There is universal suffrage in the Cameroons, and I think that the entire mass of the population should be considered. I should like to have the views of the petitioner on this.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Philippe Mbarga to reply to the representative of France.

Mr. MBARGA (interpretation from French): I should like to draw the attention of the Council to the very purpose of our presence here before the Council. I do not think it is a good policy that, instead of discussing the principle which motivated our coming here, we should spend our time here on minor questions which are really of secondary importance. My colleague has explained that our purpose is to discuss the Statute which has been proposed to us in the

Cameroons. He read from the draft statute in order to clarify the situation for the Council with regard to the drafting which was done by the French Government. He emphasized the fact that, if the representative of France put questions to us concerning the Statute, we would then be in a position to reply; he made it clear that the United Nations General Assembly had envisaged two formulae for a statute: a statute should either give us the right to self-government, according to the freely expressed wishes of the people, or independence. The Assembly did not envisage some third or fourth stage before we achieved self-government or independence.

I should like to put a question to the representative of France, before replying to his question. What is the name which he gives to the present status of the Cameroons? Is it internal self-government, international self-government, independence? What is the present system of government which he wishes to ascribe to the Cameroons?

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I think we should not reverse our roles. The petitioner is not here to question the representative of France. The representative of France is here to question the petitioner. At the proper time I shall ask a question about the subject which was raised by the petitioner.

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): This debate is very hard on me because we must debate with France questions which, as Mr. Mbarga has said, are of a secondary nature. Before coming to the question of the more advanced sectors of the population, with your permission I should like to reply to the general question which he brought up. First of all, he said that Chapter XI of the Charter did not concern Trust Territories. I am very much surprised because, comparing my understanding with the understanding of the representative of France, I see that Chapter XI of the Charter reads "Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories" and Article 73 was what I was quoting. Now the representative of France contests the veracity of what I said and quoted.

However, the Charter puts the emphasis on the nature of "Non-Self-Governing Territories" and I am surprised that anyone here could say that that is not so and that I quoted incorrectly. I quoted from the Charter. I simply said that the Charter speaks of non-self-governing territories and that the Cameroons is one of these territories.

The representative of France spoke of the labour code in connexion with article 11 of the Statute. If he has one draft of the Statute, and I have another, we would have a proposal, and then a counter-proposal, and so on, and this could continue for a long time. We have been told that the labour code was mentioned in article 11 as amended. Now article 11, as proposed by France, tells us that the colonial laws and regulations are drawn up by the Cameroonian authorities but that they must respect international treaties and conventions, the Trusteeship Agreement of 1946, the principles inscribed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the United Nations, the preamble of the French Constitution and the provisions of the present Statute. I do not see in article 11 any reference to the labour code. If it has been amended, let us hear the amendments.

I have here the text as amended and it states that Cameroonian laws are drawn up by the authorities in the Cameroons; they must respect international treaties and conventions, the Trusteeship Agreement of 1946, the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the United Nations, the principles set forth in the preamble to the French Constitution as well as the provisions of the present Statute. Hence, the article is the same even

as amended. It is the same as that proposed by France. If anyone has seen anything about the labour code in it, I should be glad to be informed.

The representative of France said, in speaking of the labour code, that I had mentioned article 9 whereas article 11 was relevant, but I maintain that article 11 is not relevant.

Regarding a quotation out of context, I know it is always said in the Cameroons that Kingué Jong has a personal opinion which does not represent the opinion of the masses, but I know something about the masses because I have been representing it for twenty-eight years -- more than half of my life. Now the text which I quoted was not out of context at all. I said that I would file it with the Council, that is, I would file with the Council the platform of the Rassemblement démocratique chrétien. I did not give the name of the individual concerned but I am now presenting this platform here, to be incorporated in the Council's records. I know that the person whose platform I have cited has announced a second, but can we say that in a single election we can have different platforms? Is one a chameleon which is a pencil one day and the next day a ship? That is incomprehensible.

The representative of France certainly will introduce another platform, but what of that? He and I know our country. We know that our country was not prefabricated.

Here I have the first platform. If the representative of France has a different one, then shall I tear up mine? When someone appeals to the voters of a country, he must know what he is talking about.

As for the question of the Prime Minister, France knows very well how it stands now and how important it is to the people of the Cameroons and what an uproar it may make there. I know that the leader of the majority assumes a heavy burden when he accepts the post of Prime Minister. I know that this has been offered to the individual of whom the representative of France spoke. I know that others have refused this post. This is a question which will be settled in the Cameroons but whatever vote is cast here, regardless of what is represented here -- and it is not I who say this, it was said by the representative of France; I am not here in this Council every day and so I cannot cite all the texts -- I could bring before the Council

a text in which the representative of France himself has recognized that we represent the most advanced mass of the population.

Now what is that? It is a mass, after all -- and they are the people whom we represent.

We are told about universal suffrage but I say to the Council that we were wrong in agreeing to it. There are people who vote as they are told to vote, something that did not happen a few years ago. The representative of France speaks of self-government but I would ask him to be specific and cite his sources. After all, in the United Nations, there are specific documents like the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement, which must be respected.

I spoke a moment ago of the definition of self-government as given by the General Assembly, of what all of you have in mind when you speak of self-government. I mentioned what the General Assembly understood by independence, and what you must mean when you speak of independence. However, we are not speaking of perfect self-government, but only of that self-government which is referred to in the French text; we only ask one thing of France and that is to respect the international instruments which we accept. That is all. We do not ask anything else.

I shall urge my countrymen to remain under the authority of France but on the condition that it respect the legitimate aspirations of the people of the Cameroons and respect international agreements. That is all I ask. As long as France does not do that, I shall continue to protest against France on behalf of my country.

The meeting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I must confess that, in the last statement of the petitioner, I did not find any precise reply to my question. However, I shall be content with his reply, from which I note that he confirms that he and his friends represent the most advanced part of the population and that he and his friends were wrong -- and they now regret it, belatedly -- in accepting universal suffrage for the Territory. This statement is, perhaps, not very democratic but we were told that this was a personal opinion and all personal opinions are permitted in the Cameroons.

I shall now pass on to the next question. In his initial statement, the petitioner criticized the acts of violence, no matter who the perpetrators were. I wish to pay a tribute to the moderation of this statement and to the noble sentiments which inspired it. I might say that I share these feelings. However, the petitioner added, somewhat later, that more serious events were about to take place -- after the installation of a new government -- and that the future Ministers were thinking of exterminating those who did not share their opinions. Is the petitioner expressing a purely personal opinion here, or is he basing himself on specific information and facts? I feel that this is a very grave statement and he should, therefore, completely clarify this point. It is certain that if he has any information of some value, then the Administering Authority could certainly be guided thereby and possibly take the necessary steps.

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): Quite frankly, I expressed a personal opinion, but I do not wish to retract it. The statement which I made, I must emphasize, was my statement as the spokesman for an authentic organization which no one, I believe, will deprecate.

I mentioned grave incidents which are expected by some Cameroonians; I said this quite sincerely, as the representative of France has just stated. I shall simply say that I was at Yaoundé and I, personally, and as a journalist, have heard representatives of the majority who voted for the Statute say that we -- those whom they call "nationalists" -- should be careful because we want to

(Mr. Kingué Jong)

organize public meetings at Yaoundé; we asked for official permission from the district chief at the headquarters of the National Assembly. We wanted personal permission from the National Assembly, but we were refused such authorization.

Now, I simply wonder whether it is possible to have freedom of speech in the Cameroons; if it is not possible to have freedom of speech -- particularly in certain regions -- then I think that in a short while even more grave events will occur, because as a minority member in the Cameroons I do not have the right to speak out. Then, what will happen to that party? It will have to avail itself of the right, which is recognized for all human beings, to defend itself publicly and it will have to organize a meeting; it will have to hold this meeting despite the refusal of the authorities.

We have the French administration in front of us. While I may have a brother -- as we say -- with whom I have no special connexions, although I know that he has been named Prime Minister or placed in some high post by the French administration, I do not recognize the authority of that brother. However, according to the Statute, he can call upon the police. Then, what will happen? He will act on behalf of the French authorities and, at that time, grave events will take place. This is the reason why I say that the Council must be made aware of this; that is why we are sounding an alarm.

The French authorities will soon install a new government in the Territory, but we will not recognize this new administration because it will run counter to the aspirations of the population; I can state that this will be against the aspirations of the masses in the Cameroons, no matter what they are, for they all want independence for the Cameroons -- that is the first prerequisite for any understanding between France and the Cameroons. The masses are not deceived by these political platforms. I have already spoken about one; if the Council wants more data, I shall furnish more. The masses will react if they are deceived, as they react everywhere; that is why I said that very grave events may occur.

We are speaking of our own brothers in the Cameroons and we know how these matters must be settled.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I take it that the fears of the petitioner as to the possibility of serious disturbances result from mere impressions. However, it was a good thing that he expressed these misgivings before this Council and before the representative of the Administering Authority. I understand that he made some reservations in regard to the exercise of freedom of assembly; I must say that the public authority was justified in showing some reticence in view of the position of the petitioner and his friends who refuse to recognize the authority established on the basis of universal suffrage. Now, the petitioner has not replied specifically to the question. However, if his friends were not able to hold further meetings, that is not the general rule.

The Mouvement traditionnel held meetings, for instance, on 10 March in a village near Yaoundé. At that meeting the Mouvement traditionnel decided to create a federalist movement, the "Union des Associations traditionnelles du Cameroun". After 17 March the executive body of that movement was constituted. Therefore there is evidence that even the opposition is able to hold meetings.

Since the petitioner told us that he is a journalist, I should like to ask him whether, in his capacity as a journalist, he feels that freedom of the press exists in the Cameroons.

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): The representative of France has spoken of the meeting of 10 March. He will certainly have learned that that meeting was a private meeting held in the living room of my home. That is not what we mean when we speak of a mass meeting. There are public meetings and there are private meetings. That was a private meeting to which only members of certain organizations were invited. When one wishes to express an opinion one does not invite only those who already share that opinion, but one invites the public. I affirm here that public meetings are prohibited, particularly in the area of Yaoundé.

I had no wish to present a personal situation here, but when I went to Paris I was accused by certain people of having published certain articles. These articles did not reflect opinions hostile to the United States. Now, like my neighbour, I am subjected to special surveillance because the United States authorities have been told that I am a dangerous character.

I have never engaged in any acts against France, and even less against the United States. I have had no ill-intentions towards the United States.

This shows that these freedoms have a very limited meaning. Freedom is not complete. When the representative of France said that I was expressing a personal opinion, he was quite correct. However, this opinion reflects the opinion of my Government and that of the French Government, which considers me an enemy, as being anti-French. But I must repeat that I fought in the resistance movement at a time when certain Frenchmen stayed at home -- eating very good meals there, too. Therefore I am not an enemy of France. I am a human being and I will say that a country as independent as the United States will understand that freedom of the press can be interpreted in different ways, and it is interpreted in different ways in my country. I was accused of a crime simply because I asked nothing of anyone.

Mr. BAIGUES (France)(interpretation from French): I put the question about the freedom of the press because I had the good fortune to read in the February issue of the local publication called the Presse du Cameroun an article bearing the signature of Mr. Kingué Jong and entitled "What is this Statute Worth?". In this article he gives opinions which are not really different from those which have been expressed before us here. This shows his good faith and the consistency of his views, but it also proves that there is a certain freedom of the press in the Cameroons, allowing any citizen to write in a newspaper even if these views are rather critical of the authorities.

With regard to freedom of assembly, I wish to recall to the Council that the legislation in force in the Cameroons is the same legislation in force in France. Public meetings are not forbidden unless they might lead to public disturbance, and the municipal authorities have the right to authorize such meetings or to refuse to do so. I suppose that if the petitioner and his friends wished to have a meeting in Yaoundé it was the Mayor of Yaoundé who refused to grant permission for such a meeting. I would point out that the Mayor of Yaoundé is an African who belongs to the same party to which one of the petitioners belongs. I see him smiling, which shows his approval.

Now I come to my last question. The petitioner told us that the present Statute for the Cameroons is not a Statute for self-government nor for independence. Certain of his compatriots may say just the opposite. But I would say that they are perfectly free to express a personal opinion. Has a representative public authority, whether metropolitan or African, officially claimed that the Statute for the Cameroons was a Statute for self-government or independence?

Mr. ABAGA (interpretation from French): I wish to thank the representative of France for asking this question because this is one which really concerns us very much. All the minor questions which we have discussed here are only secondary.

We should like to know whether the representative of France could tell us, on behalf of France which he represents here, what is meant by "autonomous status", or what reforms have been introduced in the Cameroons as a result of the decree? This is not the first time that we are here before this international body, because after the vote on this so-called Statute we of the Associations traditionnelles introduced a motion which was adopted unanimously. A copy of this motion was sent to the High Commissioner and to the Territorial Assembly of the Cameroons -- and perhaps you have a copy of it before you.

(Mr. Ibarga)

We sent the following message to the French Government:

"During the important political events which have taken place in recent years in the Cameroons there have been differences of opinion among our youth;

"Considering that in the interests of better relations between the Cameroons and France the causes of those differences should be removed;

"Considering that the Minister of Overseas France indicated the intentions of the Government of the Republic by stating that the sole purpose of the Assembly to be elected was to discuss the new Statute which should not be merely imposed;

"Considering that the High Commissioner of the Republic confirmed that statement when he told the Councillors at the opening of the Territorial Assembly in 1955 that when we was called upon to make important decisions for the future of the Cameroons the most important would be the adoption of a new Statute;

"Considering that the Statute could only be a set of rules which would not be rigid but subject to evolution;

"Considering that the legislation fulfilling the standards defined in the first three paragraphs could only be the result of frank discussion between the two parties concerned;

"Considering that the text submitted to the Assembly for debate is a decree as provided in its article 45 on which decree the Territorial Assembly can only give an opinion..."

I shall now read article 45:

"The Minister of Overseas France is responsible for the implementation of the present decree which will be published in the Journal Officiel of the French Republic and in the Journal Officiel of the Cameroons."

I continue to read our motion:

"Considering that the procedure of the discussion has not made it possible to establish equality between the two parties in restraining the freedom of expressing the desires of the Cameroonians;

(Mr. Mbarza)

"Representing as we do the tradition of the Cameroons, we cannot remain indifferent to matters of such importance, while we pay tribute to the importance of the achievements of France in the Cameroons which we hope will be followed by further achievements;

"Considering the character of the vote of the Assembly as being only an expression of opinion on the Statute which has not yet been introduced;

"We take note of the reform as being a new and provisional reform;

"We ask urgently, in the interest of peace and prosperity of the Cameroons, that the discussion of the real Statute in which the equality of the two parties will be ensured be permitted."

This motion was addressed to the Minister of Overseas France as well as to the High Commissioner of France in the Cameroons and to the President of the Territorial Assembly. We wished to show the French Administration that we did not understand the meaning of the reforms and that we did not consider that the reforms introduced any change in status such as took place in Togoland and elsewhere. The Cameroons is under the control of the United Nations and therefore we are not convinced that a Statute can be imposed on us which is not even approved by this Assembly. We are not entirely satisfied to have these institutional reforms called a Statute. In reality, the Statute of the Cameroons has not yet been discussed.

I wish to ask the representative of France whether he can confirm that at this time these are merely constitutional reforms which implement the loi-cadre the benefits of which France has extended to us. We would be very grateful if this meant that the time during which we can discuss the merits of the Statute has been extended.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I have no explanation to give to the petitioner who can address himself to the public authorities. I simply speak here as a member of the Trusteeship Council and I only give explanations to the Council. I will simply recall that Article 76 of the Charter states that:

(Mr. Bargues, France)

"The basic objectives of the trusteeship system are... to promote the political... advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples..."

Article 2 of the Statute says that the present system in the Cameroons will be in force until the Cameroonians, in conformity with the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement, are called upon to take a decision with regard to their definitive regime. I believe I have given the exact scope of the new Statute.

I have no further questions.

Mr. MBARGA (interpretation from French): I think that the explanations given by the representative of France are very good but this does mean that we are wasting our time by being here. He has simply confirmed what we wish to hear.

We are told that in the Cameroons we have been given a new Statute and that in a few months we will have a Council of Ministers. What will these Ministers be? What will the status of the Cameroons be when it has Ministers? That is the question that we ask, for we see that the implementation of this law runs counter to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Trusteeship Agreement. I said a moment ago and I emphasize again that we would be very glad if France told us that today it is introducing this decree in order to give us the benefit of it but that we must wait until the Statute of the Cameroons is discussed on a certain date. That is why I say that the representative of France did not complete his reply. He did not tell us at what time we will have a decree which will provide that the Ministers of the Cameroons will be real Ministers. Since the Cameroons does not have independence and self-government, what are these Ministers that are to be put into office in the Cameroons?

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): It is not the first time we have lost time in the Council. This problem concerns the Council as well as us. Two questions arise, the first concerning the application of Article 76 of the Charter, which we have already quoted, and which seems to be the only article of the Charter which is of interest to the representative of France. I shall repeat -- and I apologize for doing so -- that this article says in paragraph (b):

"to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence..."

The only question we wish to ask our friends in the Council is whether our political, economic and social advancement is insufficient, thus making it impossible to grant us one of the essential objectives of the Trusteeship System.

On referring to various documents emanating from this very Council, I note that the French representatives have invariably spoken of "the evolution of the people of the Cameroons". Therefore it would seem that the essential objective of the Trusteeship System has been achieved and I maintain that it is therefore time for the implementation of the requirements of this article -- self-government or independence.

I might speak of the developments in Italian Somaliland -- the representative of Italy is here. A time limit was laid down for Italian Somaliland.

We, in the Cameroons, want to know exactly where France is taking us. We are concerned to know where the road France has chosen will end. I have said that we believe we have attained certain of the principal goals established by the Trusteeship System. France has recognized this fact, in statements made here, and in the annual report. Now why cannot France state to the Trusteeship Council, and then to the General Assembly, that it recognizes that the Cameroons has achieved a degree of political, economic and social advancement and it has therefore decided to grant a certain statute to the Cameroons? If I understood correctly, the representative of France said just now that he would be glad to learn from us just what the statute of the Cameroons actually is, whether it is composed of a group of amendments or is actually a statute. I should like to turn that question back to him,

I wish to point out that we have two questions which require answers, and to which the replies seem nebulous. Because of these questions we shall be returning here to ask you, where are we being taken, and where does the Council wish France to take us? Surely the essential objectives are stated in Article 76 of the Charter; and in view of the fact that France itself recognizes that the Cameroons has achieved the goals established in the Charter, why cannot France say: The Cameroons is ready for independence. That would solve the problem, for the benefit of everyone.

Mr. BARGUES (France)(interpretation from French): I have nothing further to say. I thank the petitioners for their replies.

Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): In replying to a question from the representative of France, Mr. Kingué Jong gave the necessary clarification regarding the repression which is threatened by certain ministers. This threat is directed against those who struggle for the independence of the Cameroons. This threat applies to the future. I wonder whether the distinguished petitioner could give us more extensive information concerning the repression which has been exercised in the past, particularly during the December elections.

Mr. KINGUE JONG(interpretation from French): It is difficult to answer some of the questions addressed to us because we come here, it is true, equipped with the necessary passport and visa, but we have no money apart from the funds provided by our own people. However, I shall reply to the question of the Soviet representative that I have already related what is happening in the Cameroons. I should have welcomed such a question from the representative of France himself.

Quite frankly, and with great respect, I must point out that I described in my statement the forms of repression that have been exercised in the Cameroons, in certain regions.

This will indicate to you that there is indeed repression in certain regions of the Cameroons. I do not wish to enter into details because you yourselves know very well -- and I stated this at our last hearing here, in June 1956 -- that these are questions which are known only to a certain authority, and that authority is, of course, France. When you sent a Visiting Mission in 1955 to the Cameroons, the Visiting Mission submitted a report upon its return. It was an incomplete report because, under its terms of reference, it was to conduct a complete inquiry into the events of May 1955; but, thus far, it has been unable to do so, and it will never be able to do so.

Everyone knows that, at the present time, very grave events are taking place in Sanaga Maritime. If I had a local newspaper with me, I could show you that we have been taking up a collection for the persons who have suffered there. I do not quite see why this term was used -- there has been no flood in Sanaga Maritime, there has been no great fire there. There was an official, national collection taken up for the sufferers from the disaster. What disaster was it? I would ask the Council to put the question to the representative of France: why was there a collection taken up in Sanaga Maritime for the purpose of aiding the sufferers from a certain disaster? Perhaps he will reply, but I regret that I cannot.

The same thing is happening in the most traditionally peaceful region of our country, the Bamiléké region. These matters are well known. When there are deaths the newspapers report this; perhaps there are ten deaths, but the newspapers at least report the fact that there were deaths.

I apologize to the representative of the Soviet Union for not being able to give more precise information. I would ask him to put that question to the representative of France, if and when that is possible. He will reply that everything is peaceful in the Cameroons; but I say that the opposite is the case, and that we are all living in an atmosphere of hatred and suspicion; we are under suspicion because we are said to be nationalists; the others hate us and do not even want to hear any mention of us; others are living in peace, and are protected day and night -- that is well known, because they are people who are under police protection, day and night, and they cannot step outside their own homes. When a country is obliged to protect certain persons, it indicates that something is happening; there is no security there.

Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am most grateful to the petitioner for his exhaustive clarification. The Soviet Union delegation is fully satisfied with the statement he made in reply to our question.

I have another question. The petitioner told the Council that a certain category of voters is ordered to vote. I should like to ask whether we could not be informed more specifically about such violations of the voting rights. Precisely who issues the order, in such a case?

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): This, again, is a question which is a little embarrassing, because everywhere we hear talk of the law; but a person who gets somewhat outside the law has his freedom and security jeopardized. I do not think that this is the first time that you have heard mention made of the elections; you have heard of dishonest elections, of ballot boxes being stuffed, you have heard references to deaths -- as the Bible says, even stones have a voice. These are things that are well known, and I do not want to go into them at length because we will be asked to repeat exactly what I have said here. In any case, my frankness is well known.

I have said that, except for the Wouri region, every vote in the nineteen regions was made as a result of an order. Now, with regard to Wouri -- this is no reflection on my compatriots who are here; their own village brothers live in the Wouri region, better known as the Douala region -- they can state that there is no possibility of falsifying the election, because they know exactly for whom they are going to vote and for what they are going to vote. But, in other regions, polling booths are set up in the brush, where people have to come ten, twenty or forty kilometres to vote, and I think you will agree with me that not all those people come to vote in the elections. But it is claimed that even in those regions 80 or 100 per cent of the voters actually vote. That is indeed surprising.

That is the reply that I can give to the representative of the Soviet Union.

I would add that, since the elections took place, there were two elections which were invalidated, although there were seventeen complaints. Two local elections were invalidated. That is very significant.

Mr. BARGUES (France)(interpretation from French): I apologize for intervening, but I think the question raised by the representative of the Soviet Union should be clarified. We were told by the petitioner that the election was free in only the Wouri region. Does this mean that elections were not free in the Mungo and Ntem regions?

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): In all those regions there were complaints. I believe that, if there are free elections, then there are no complaints such as there were in Douala. In one region of which I spoke, the people there know what they are doing, for whom they are voting and so forth, and there free elections are held; but in almost all the other regions there were complaints against the way in which elections were conducted. There were requests for the invalidation of the results of the elections. It is not always easy to make such complaints, to contest the elections, because that requires money.

Mr. PARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): Of course there are complaints of irregularities in the elections. It happens in every country, constantly. This is quite acceptable because democratic countries have administrative courts which supervise the holding of elections.

I return now to my previous question, namely, whether elections were free in the regions of Mungo, and Ntem, since the petitioner stated that the elections were free only in the region of Wouri. I have noticed that the list of the indigenous voters of Mungo and the list of the Union Nationale, which is headed by a friend of the petitioner, was victorious in the election. I might even say that the Union Nationale was elected by more than 80 per cent of the voters which shows that in other areas, perhaps, elections were also free, unless the petitioner feels that his friends were elected irregularly.

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): If we start talking about elections, it might be all we would have time to discuss today. I would have asked the Council, with the agreement of my friends, to speak of other things, namely, the main question which interests the Cameroonians -- the question of the Statute -- in the past, the present and the future. I repeat, since I have already said it before, that in the region of Mungo it was not possible to hold dishonest elections. I apologize, I should have said in the region of Wouri it was not possible to hold dishonest elections because the voters know exactly for which candidates they will vote and the Administration knows what risk it would take if it should try to tell the people for whom to vote and for whom not to vote. The reason for this is that this is a region which is, I might say, very advanced -- although the representative of France might disagree about this -- so I will say it is an area which is quite advanced. Although it is small, it is a town which has about 40,000 inhabitants, as the Administering Authority will confirm. Therefore I do not think that we can judge the freedom of elections by the experience of one town.

I merely wish to say that the Cameroons consists of nineteen regions. Of these nineteen regions, seventeen district leaders contested the results of the vote. I do not believe that in France it has ever happened that 80 per cent of the electoral districts have contested the results of an election.

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I repeat, and I do so humbly, we have come here to find out about the Statute which the Trusteeship Council proposed to us. If it is a Statute of integration, tell us quite frankly. Those who desire it will accept it; those who do not want it will say that they do not want a Statute of integration. They will say that there are two Cameroons and in one of the Cameroons we are free to live and that is the only country for us. There is only one Cameroons and whether it is British or French, we have the right to live there.

We, as representatives of the nationalists, say that we wish to have constructive relations with France but we do not wish to be integrated with France. We have a system which has been established by the Council, and if that system is to be integration with France, well, tell us so and we will tell our compatriots and then we will settle our affairs.

We merely ask for the implementation of the Charter and of the Trusteeship Agreement approved by the United Nations.

Mr. President, I apologize for being somewhat voluble but this is a question which has been dragging on now since 1946. It has been dragging on not only in the Cameroons but also here in the United Nations and in 1952 the General Assembly adopted a decision.

Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The representative of France asked many questions and nobody interfered with him as he took advantage of his rights. I do not object to the representative of France asking for the floor to give clarifications in response to my questions but I should not like to have him interrupt me in order to ask questions of the petitioners. If you feel that I am violating proper procedure, then please stop me, but it seemed to me that our order was such that we do not interrupt the members of the Council to ask questions.

If I may, I shall once again thank the petitioners for the clarifications which I have received from them and shall take the liberty of asking one more question.

Having in mind the fact that the Territorial Assembly is not a representative organ, since it was elected under circumstances which involved the boycott of a large portion of the electorate and there were disturbances and irregularities, I should like to know whether the Administering Authority was advised in any way by anyone else, or, rather, did the Administering Authority consult with anyone in the Territory other than the Territorial Assembly about the Statute? And may I add, do the petitioners have any desires in connexion with this question of consulting with the population?

Mr. KINGUE JONG (interpretation from French): This is a very specific question and I shall reply quite briefly and to the point.

During the elections which were held on 23 December last the people did not express their choice in the manner in which we Cameroonians would have liked. It will immediately be said that we are only one group of Cameroonians.

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However, we would say that those Cameroonians, who hold those views, are not the only Cameroonians; we would tell them: but just look at the statements of the representative of France himself. In these statements, certain conditions were laid down for the holding of the elections; there were two such conditions, and we asked for them: first, if we had to vote for the Statute, then, in view of the fact that the present Assembly was elected by virtue of a law which dates from 1946 and has no political powers, that Assembly must first be dissolved; and, secondly, to issue an amnesty for the events of May 1955 -- the Council is not aware that there are Cameroonians who have not been back in their country for two years or more and who are awaiting the opportunity to return. They are being persecuted for the events of May 1955 and they are not all responsible for these events -- at least, they are not the only ones responsible for those events. Speaking as a journalist, I believe that there should be an investigation; such an investigation will prove that they were not the only ones responsible in regard to those events. France has recognized this; the representative of France is here and he can tell you so. That is why France has not issued an amnesty for the May 1955 events which would free Cameroonians who should come back home and vote in the elections, as do all other Cameroonians.

Now, what has happened? Only a few days from now the elections will take place, but the amnesty has not yet been issued; none has been issued up to the present time. When a country is about to vote upon its constitution, then I believe that the mass of the population should vote in such an election; however a portion of the population is not at home when the elections are taking place, because they are off in the maquis, where they remain.

When the municipal elections took place, we had wanted them to be held; in a city such as Douala with a population of 140,000, only about 11 per cent voted -- that is not really an election, with only 11 per cent of the population voting.

Several representatives of our Union refused to participate in the elections at the last moment. That is what is taking place in the present elections, and I simply cannot say that those elections -- as other people claim have not elected anyone; they did elect the candidates who were running for election, but the Cameroonians elected them under the conditions which I have already described -- that is, under bad conditions and under irregular conditions. We feel that this is an Assembly which does not represent the majority of the

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Cameroonians and it cannot proceed to pass decisions or judgement on this important Statute; that is why we are opposed. If we knew that the majority of the Cameroonians had voted for this Statute, then the situation would be entirely different; we would have accepted the will of the majority. However, we do not believe that there was any such majority expression of opinion; duplicity and trickery has come into play and it is for you -- the Council -- to realize this. That is the reason why we went to great lengths to come here and appear before the Council, using the funds which have been provided for us by our party. We came here immediately after receiving our visas and passports.

Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In thanking the petitioners for their statements, I should like -- with the permission of the President -- to refer to the question which they asked: I wish to refer to the question referring to the opinion on the Statute which so greatly disturbs -- and quite naturally -- the peoples of the Cameroons.

I should like to tell the petitioners that many delegations have expressed their opinions on the Statute; they have done so in the Trusteeship Council, and their opinions do not differ from the opinions of the petitioners on this question.

Once again, I wish to thank the petitioners for their clarifications.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I have not asked for the floor, Mr. President.

I thought that, as always, I might be permitted from time to time to make clarifications which might be useful to the Council. However, the representative of the Soviet Union, in departing from the rules of courtesy usually followed in this Council, protested when the President gave me the floor. Therefore, I shall refrain from intervening.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.