



CONTENTS

	Page
Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration ( <i>continued</i> ):	
(i) Annual report of the Administering Authority for 1956;	
(ii) Petitions raising general questions	
Questions concerning the Trust Territory and replies of the representative and special representative of the Administering Authority ( <i>concluded</i> ).....	151
Hearing of Prince Douala Manga Bell.....	152

*President:* Mr. Emilio ARENALES CATALAN  
(Guatemala).

*Present:*

The representatives of the following States: Australia, Belgium, Burma, China, France, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Italy, 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: International Labour Organisation; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization.

**Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration (*continued*):**

- (i) **Annual report of the Administering Authority for 1956 (T/1351, T/1354, T/1363, T/L.813);**
- (ii) **Petitions raising general questions (T/L.813, annex; T/PET.5/L.449-451)**

[Agenda items 4 (d) and 5]

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

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

*Social and educational advancement (concluded)*

1. U KYAW MIN (Burma) asked the special representative several questions regarding loans granted by the Crédit du Cameroun.

2. Mr. DENIAU (Special Representative) said that the loans, the total amount of which had substantially increased in 1957, were granted on the advice of the Board of the Crédit du Cameroun, a State organization. The ten Board members, half of whom were Cameroonian and the others officials with special knowledge of credit matters, took into account the documents submitted by the applicants stating the purpose of the loan, such as the building of a house, or economic

improvements. The loans were usually accompanied by guarantees provided by the applicants, and in order to ensure that the available funds were not distributed among a small minority, there was a ceiling figure. Interest rates had been reduced in 1955 to 3.25 per cent for short-term loans, and amounted to 4.5 per cent for medium and long-term loans. Depending on the term of the loans, they were repayable either in their entirety when they fell due or, most often, in the form of instalments payable at intervals after a certain period of time. However, in practice, the procedure for recovery of the loans varied according to the type of loan, its purpose and the kind of guarantess offered by the borrower.

3. U KYAW MIN (Burma) observed that the special representative attributed the fact that there had been fewer strikes to the establishment of arbitration and conciliation machinery. He wondered, however, whether the fact that collective labour disputes had also fallen off sharply (fifty in 1954, twenty-five in 1955, six in 1956) could be explained by an increase in wage levels and an improvement in the working and living conditions of workers.

4. Mr. DENIAU (Special Representative) emphasized that the progress noted in the Secretariat working paper on conditions in the Territory (T/L.813) had continued in 1957, when there had been only two strikes, affecting fewer than 200 workers. The decrease was due, on the one hand, to the conclusion of collective agreements and to the fact that the arbitration procedure established by the Decree of 20 May 1955 had made it possible to settle nearly all labour disputes before they reached the strike stage. But it was also due to periodic wage increases, which were another reason for the decrease in collective labour disputes not involving work stoppage. Only four such disputes had occurred in 1957, and they had affected only 155 workers. That indicated a general improvement in the labour situation.

5. U KYAW MIN (Burma) recalled that his delegation had felt some concern at the information given at the nineteenth session (760th meeting) to the effect that the reception centre for juvenile delinquents at Bétamba was being expanded. He asked whether that indicated an increase in juvenile delinquency in the Territory and what steps were being taken by the competent authorities to deal with that problem.

6. Mr. DENIAU (Special Representative) said that the problem arose mainly in the towns, and particularly among the detribalized population of Douala. The majority of cases involving minors were dealt with by the Douala judges.

7. A rather complete system had been set up in recent years in Douala to discover the causes of juvenile delinquency, deal with specific cases and keep minors under observation until they left prison or rehabilitation centres. Social workers, in particular, were very useful in those matters. Minors caught *in flagrante delicto* were cared for by French Canadian friars at the reception centre of Bonakouamouang-Douala, where they took courses and underwent close observation, as a result

of which a very complete report on them was drawn up and transmitted to the judge. Some juvenile delinquents were placed in the Bétamba special school where they received a technical and general education. They remained there until the judge decided either to release them or return them to their families. The school was being expanded in order more fully to utilize available staff and facilities and to make room for most of the minors who had already been convicted.

8. Thus the practical measures taken were very comprehensive. However, the evil was created by the presence in Douala of a large uprooted population and the measures taken to combat juvenile delinquency were not, in themselves, sufficient to solve the problem.

9. In reply to questions put by U KYAW MIN (Burma), Mr. DENIAU (Special Representative) said that the reason why school attendance was higher in private than in public schools was that there were more private schools. Moreover, in the south many parents wished their children to receive a denominational education. But all existing schools were put to the fullest use by the population.

10. With regard to the inspection system in private schools, only authorized and recognized schools were inspected. Authorization to open a school was granted in the light of the condition of the premises and the qualifications of the teaching staff. If, one year after it had been opened, the school was found on inspection to be operating satisfactorily, it could receive a subsidy and acquire the status of a recognized school.

11. Other institutions such as the catechism schools in the south and the Koranic schools in the north provided the rudiments of education, often in the vernacular language. They were not subject to inspection by the public authorities.

12. U KYAW MIN (Burma) asked how many students from public and private schools respectively were being sent abroad on scholarships.

13. Mr. DENIAU (Special Representative) said he could not answer the question as the scholarships were not granted on the basis of the school which the student had been attending.

14. Replying to a question put to him at the previous meeting, he said that in 1956, 474 cases of alcoholism had been treated in the Territory.

#### HEARING OF PRINCE DOUALA MANGA BELL

*At the invitation of the President, Prince Douala Manga Bell took a place at the Council table.*

15. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL said that he was a Deputy for the Cameroons to the French National Assembly, but that he would speak only on his own behalf and on his own responsibility. He advocated the unification of the Cameroons and in support of his views he quoted article 6 of the Trusteeship Agreement for the Cameroons under British administration, article 5 of the Trusteeship Agreement for the Cameroons under French administration and Article 76 of the United Nations Charter. He had had to come before the United Nations, that being the only place where he could meet representatives of both France and the United Kingdom at the same time.

16. The Cameroons had never been a nation: it had come into being by the accident of treaties. But there were many linguistic, ethnic and other ties between the inhabitants of the two Cameroons. The Sao and the Bakweri, in that part of the territory administered by the United Kingdom, read the Bible in the same

language as the Cameroonians of Douala; in the Bami-léké country, the inhabitants of both Cameroons spoke the same dialect, with minor differences; and, in the north there were Fulani of the same stock living on both sides of the frontier.

17. The representative of the United Kingdom seemed to see no other solution for the Cameroons under British administration than integration with the Federation of Nigeria or continuation of the Trusteeship System, but the Cameroonian people might perhaps choose another course. By virtue of the right to self-determination, it was for them to decide in the last resort. A referendum should be organized on democratic lines when the next visiting mission went to the Territory.

18. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) pointed out that the discussion did not concern the Cameroons under British administration. He did not think that the petitioner had interpreted his meaning correctly and suggested that he should read the relevant records of the Council's meetings.

19. The PRESIDENT recalled General Assembly resolution 1211 (XII) under which the Council, when dealing with the unification of the two Territories, would be authorized to refer to the problems of the Cameroons under British administration.

20. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL was of the opinion that there were no longer any independent peoples. All peoples were interdependent. When the Cameroons, through its representatives, expressed the wish for sovereignty, France would put no obstacles in its way. That would be the last stage of a journey already three quarters completed. When France and the Cameroons had reached an understanding, the problem would be placed before the United Nations; it would then be easy to settle.

21. Mr. ROLZ BENNETT (Guatemala) asked the petitioner whether, in his view, it was feasible to hold popular consultations simultaneously in both Cameroons.

22. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL said he had already outlined the circumstances in which such a consultation should take place.

23. In reply to the representative of the United Kingdom, he pointed out that he had studied the United Kingdom statements with great care. The United Kingdom view was as follows: either the Cameroons under British administration would decide to join the Federation of Nigeria, or it would remain under the Trusteeship System. But in the latter case the question was how long it would so remain.

24. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said he had stated that in due time his delegation would make proposals to the United Nations about the future of the Territory. He had never said what form any consultation would take.

25. Mr. ROLZ BENNETT (Guatemala) inquired whether the petitioner, or certain sections of public opinion, had given any thought to the measures necessary to organize such a consultation in the two Territories, which could not be done without the close cooperation of the United Nations.

26. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL referred to a precedent in the history of overseas territories, namely, the Ewe problem. A referendum had been held in the two Togolands, and the result was well known. If the United Kingdom and France could come to an understanding, there need certainly be no fear about consult-

ing the people. It would be enough to take the necessary measures at the political level and there was nothing to prevent that.

27. Mr. ROLZ BENNETT (Guatemala) asked the petitioner whether public opinion in the two Cameroons, as manifested in the representative bodies in particular, considered unification as being more urgent than it had previously been.

28. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL said he was familiar with opinion in the Territory under French administration. Moreover, the Douala were very close neighbours of the Cameroons under British administration, where some of them had large plantations. The problem of the referendum seemed to him of the greatest urgency.

29. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) recalled that in connexion with the question of the unification of the Cameroons raised during the discussion of the Cameroons under British administration, the United Kingdom representative had presented arguments against unification on the basis of different dialects and different tribes. The petitioner now said that there was a feeling of unity among the Cameroonians. It would be interesting to know what was the basis of that feeling of unity, how strong it was and whether the Cameroonians thought that independence was a necessary and sufficient condition for the realization of union.

30. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL emphasized the fact the relations between the Cameroonians living in the Territory under British administration and those living in the Territory under French administration were excellent. There could be no doubt as to the racial ties. On both sides of the frontier the dances, the social structure and the methods of building were exactly the same, and there were the same differences between the people of the north, the people of the Bamiléké and Bamoun regions, and the inhabitants of the forest region. As for the relation between independence and unity, the one was dependent on the other.

31. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) was anxious to know if the people in the Cameroons felt that they were being given proper opportunities for independence and self-rule.

32. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL replied that the Cameroons had its own institutions, Government and Statute, and they could be modified as the need arose. The Cameroons would in due time become independent, in other words, the country would acquire full sovereignty. At the present time the Cameroons was not a sovereign State in that it had no head of State. The High Commissioner acted as President of the Republic. At some time in the future there would, however, be a head of State.

33. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) urged the representative of Syria to study with the greatest care the statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the 865th meeting. When it was made, the argument had been put forward that the United Kingdom was dismembering the unity of the Territory and that the boundaries had been drawn without regard to the interests of the population. He had attempted to explain what obligations the Trusteeship Agreement imposed and to show how the boundaries had been drawn in or about 1919. Nothing in what he had said could be interpreted as a final judgement one way or the other. He had explained that there were different views and that the people would be free to choose the future they preferred.

34. Mr. MITRA (India) was interested to know whether the petitioner himself felt that the Statute now in force in the Cameroons under French administration was a satisfactory step towards sovereignty.

35. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL pointed out that, whatever happened, the Statute had been adopted, and it constituted a great step towards independence and sovereignty. It was the responsibility of the Cameroonian electors to choose the leaders who could lead them to that goal.

36. Mr. MITRA (India) asked the petitioner what further steps he believed should be taken before the Government and the people of the Cameroons could enjoy independence and sovereignty.

37. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL believed that it was the responsibility of the members of the Cameroonian Legislative Assembly to make the aspirations of their electors known to France and to ask France to grant independence and sovereignty at a given time.

38. Mr. MITRA (India) asked the petitioner to give some further explanation of the distinction he was making between "independence" and "sovereignty".

39. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL gave India as an example of a State which was not only sovereign but also independent within the Commonwealth of Nations.

40. Mr. MITRA (India) asked the petitioner whether he envisaged a relationship between France and the Cameroons on the same basis as between the members of the Commonwealth, i.e., through consultations on the basis of equal sovereignty.

41. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL said that he hoped for just such a situation, but he repeated that the people themselves must come to a decision in that matter.

42. Mr. SEARS (United States of America) asked whether the people of the northern part of the Cameroons under British administration were ethnically more closely identified with the people of Nigeria or with the people of the Cameroons under French administration.

43. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL said that in the Cameroons under French administration, as in the Cameroons under British administration, the people in the north consisted mostly of Fulani, all of whom spoke the same language and belonged to the same ethnic group.

44. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that what really mattered was the opinion which the people expressed when they were consulted.

45. Mr. SEARS (United States of America) asked what would happen if the consultations held at the same time in both Cameroons led to conflicting results.

46. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL replied that in a democratic spirit the opinion of the majority would have to be respected.

47. Mr. SEARS (United States of America) asked the petitioner if the population could be asked to come to a decision simultaneously on the three questions—whether they wanted to continue under trusteeship, to become independent, or to join the Cameroons under British administration. He pointed out in that connexion that when the people of Togoland under British administration had been asked whether they wanted to remain under trusteeship or to join the Gold Coast, they had never been asked if they wished to remain under trusteeship with a view to joining Togoland

under French administration at a later date. In the United States it was very rare for a choice between more than two alternatives to be put before the electors as such a situation might raise difficulties with regard to the vote and the study of the results.

48. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL saw no possible reason why those questions should not be put before the inhabitants of the Cameroons under British administration.

49. Mr. CLAEYS BOUUAERT (Belgium) said that in view of the difference in population figures, even an overwhelming majority in favour of unification in the two Territories as a whole would be of little value. The important thing was to know the number of electors in the Cameroons under British administration who were favourable to unification. He recalled that the two Territories of the Cameroons, which had been governed for some thirty years by separate Administering Authorities, had developed differently and that the United Kingdom authorities had announced that there was no question of forcibly integrating the people of the Cameroons under British administration into an independent State of Nigeria. The petitioner would perhaps agree that the consultation envisaged by the Administering Authority in the Cameroons under British administration might in fact constitute the popular referendum he was seeking.

50. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL was well aware that the Cameroons under British administration had a population of only about 1,200,000 inhabitants as against 3,500,000 inhabitants in the Cameroons under French administration. He saw no reason, however, why the question of integration should not be put before the inhabitants of the Cameroons under British administration.

51. U KYAW MIN (Burma) said he would like to know what effect the petitioner considered that the association of the Cameroons under French administration with the French Union would have on the future of the Territory. Were the political and economic measures adopted by France in the Territory likely to imperil and influence the future of the Territory? Would the Territory have to face great hardships if it should decide to withdraw from the French Union on completion of the trusteeship régime?

52. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL drew the Burmese representative's attention to the investments made in the Cameroons by the Fonds d'investissement pour le développement économique et social des territoires d'outre-mer (FIDES). He felt that the Territory had gained considerable advantages from its association with the French Union.

53. Mr. KELLY (Australia) said he wished to go back to the word "sovereignty" used a number of times by the petitioner. Article 76 of the Charter merely mentioned "self-government or independence". Did the petitioner think that complete self-government would be an expression of sovereignty?

54. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL thought that a distinction should be made between a government having at its head a prime minister and one having a head of State. The petitioner felt that independence and sovereignty automatically followed the "self-government" mentioned in the Charter. The Cameroons had been promised independence; it was not surprising that that word had aroused such hopes for it was an idea dear to the United Nations, to the Trusteeship Council and to France.

55. Mr. KELLY (Australia) asked on what grounds the petitioner advocated the unification of the two Cameroons.

56. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL considered that such unification was desirable chiefly for economic reasons. There was constant movement between the two Cameroons and there was also a definite ethnic unity between the two Territories.

57. Mr. KELLY (Australia) asked if part of the population of the Cameroons under French administration desired association with Nigeria.

58. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL thought that that would be too sudden a change and one which would not take into account the incomparably greater progress which had been made in the Cameroons.

59. Mr. KIANG (China) asked the petitioner if, in his opinion, it would be unfair to consult the people of the Cameroons under British administration merely on whether they wished to join with Nigeria or to stay under the Trusteeship System without asking them if they wished to join the Cameroons under French administration.

60. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL considered that that was a matter which could be left to the wisdom of the members of the Trusteeship Council.

61. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) wished to repeat that the United Kingdom Government seriously intended to give the population of the Cameroons under British administration an opportunity to express itself freely on its future, but that it was impossible for him to say at the moment how that could best be done.

62. Prince DOUALA MANGA BELL said he was convinced that the United Kingdom Government would give the people full opportunity for free expression.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.