



TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

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OFFICIAL RECORDS

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President: Mr. Girolamo VITELLI (Italy).

Present:

The representatives of the following States: Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Burma, China, France, India, Italy, New Zealand, Paraguay, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

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

Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration (T/1526) (continued):

- (i) *Annual report of the Administering Authority for the year 1958 (T/1494, T/1499, T/1524, T/1527, T/L.956 and Add.1);*
- (ii) *Petitions and communications raising general questions (T/PET.4/L.12-83; T/PET.4 and 5/L.35-74; T/COM.4/L.33, 36-38, 40, 42-47, 49-52; T/COM.4 and 5/L.3-6);*
- (iii) *Report of the Administering Authority on the separation of the administration of the Northern Cameroons from that of Nigeria (General Assembly resolution 1473 (XIV)) (T/1530, T/1531)*

[Agenda items 3 (c), 4 and 17]

REQUEST FOR A HEARING (T/1531)

1. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should consider the request for a hearing contained in document T/1531 at a subsequent meeting in order to give members of the Council time to study it.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Field and Alhaji Ali Akilu, special representatives of the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, took places at the Council table.

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

Political advancement (continued)

2. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) said that the fact that a member of the Government party in the House of Assembly had joined the Opposition, with the result that the number of elected members on each side was now thirteen, was one of the main political events in recent months in the Southern Cameroons. There had been no change of Government as a result, though that might have been expected. Did that mean that the Opposition party and the Government were in agreement on the policies to be followed?

3. Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) said that each party had its own political programme. On questions such as economic and social advancement they were in general in agreement, but they were divided on the future of the Territory. If the fact that a member of the Government party had joined the Opposition had not resulted in a change of Government it was because the Government had not been defeated on any major issues. All the business before the House—bills, the budget and a number of financial measures—had been adopted without being put to the vote or being challenged. On certain purely political motions put down by the Opposition the Government had obtained a majority vote because one of the special members had voted for them.

4. In reply to a further question by Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic), Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) said that when the Constitution had last been reviewed all the representatives from the Southern Cameroons had agreed that the special members and the official members should continue to sit in the House. The question of the retention of the special members had not since been raised. They were appointed because of their special knowledge and to represent interests which otherwise would not be represented, such as commercial interests and the interests of women. As regards the official members, who were the Financial Secretary, the Attorney General and the Deputy Commissioner, it had been agreed at the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference that they would remain as members of the House for the time being, but there was a provision in the Constitution that they would have to retire if they were requested to do so; no such request had yet been made.

5. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) recalled that when the results of the 1959 plebiscite had become known, there had been strong opposition, both in the

United Nations and in the Territory, to the participation of the Northern Cameroons in the Nigerian Federal elections. The Administering Authority had asserted at the time that it was too late to change the plans which were already under way. He would like to know what the political qualifications and programmes of the representatives who had been elected were and whether they could affect the future of that part of the Territory or the people's decision in any way.

6. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) recalled that until 1 October the Northern Cameroons would continue to form part of the Northern Region of Nigeria. If the Northern Cameroons had not taken part in the last Federal elections it would have been deprived of representation in the Nigerian Federal House of Representatives. After 1 October the elected members in question would of course leave the Federal House of Representatives. What arrangements would be made to ensure continued representation of the people after that date would depend on the Administrator. Document T/1530 indicated that he would be assisted by an advisory committee whose members would be drawn from the newly elected Native Authorities.

7. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) pointed out that there had been no opposition whatsoever in the Northern Cameroons to participation in the Nigerian Federal elections.

8. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) recalled that a number of petitions coming from several groups had been addressed to the Fourth Committee asking that the Northern Cameroons should not take part in the elections in question.

9. In his opening statement (1085 meeting) the special representative had said, in speaking of the Public Service, that the Government of the Southern Cameroons was not alone in asking for the services of qualified Cameroonians. He would like to know why the missions tried to obtain their services and whether it was more remunerative to work for the missions, the Cameroons Development Corporation or private commercial enterprises than for the Government.

10. Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) said that the Corporation needed educated Cameroonians for supervisory and technical posts; the missions needed them for their schools and for training as ministers of religion. As regards remuneration, there was not, generally speaking, a great deal of difference.

11. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) asked whether the sum of £3 million which the Colonial Development Corporation had agreed to invest in the Cameroons Development Corporation was a loan or an investment in the real sense of the term.

12. Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) said that the Colonial Development Corporation would be an actual partner in the undertaking, in which the Government of the Southern Cameroons would be the chief shareholder.

13. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic), recalling that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development had sent a mission to the Territory in 1954, asked why it had not agreed to grant a loan to the Cameroons Development Corporation.

14. Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) explained that the mission in question had been asked to carry out an economic survey of the whole of the Federation of Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons. It had included

the Cameroons Development Corporation in its survey but there had been no negotiations for the granting of a loan to the Corporation. The mission had confined itself to making recommendations on the question, one of which was to the effect that outside capital should be sought to put the Corporation in a stronger financial position.

15. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) noted that the Administering Authority had made provision for an initial allocation of £91,000 for the construction at Mubi, in the Northern Cameroons, of offices and housing for the Administrator and his staff and the improvement of communications. In view of the fact that the Administrator would be at Mubi for a very short period, was there any justification for constructing the offices there?

16. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that even at Mubi, which was the main urban centre, there no premises suitable for a new administration with a considerable staff. The expenditure envisaged by the Administering Authority was accordingly essential.

17. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) pointed out that the Administration of the Northern Cameroons had to have headquarters and that the premises which were to be provided would certainly be useful in the future, whatever form the future administration might take. Moreover, a substantial part of the allocation would be spent on communications.

18. Answering a further question by Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic), Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that in general the administrative officers in charge of divisions, to whom reference was made in paragraph 14 of document T/1530, were expatriate officers. Some Nigerians held junior posts. After 1 October 1960, all the officials in question would be responsible to the Administrator. Their function would be to supervise the administration including the Native Authorities and the district councils.

19. In reply to a further question by Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic), Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) explained that the functions of the present Consultative Committee for the Northern Cameroons would be transferred to the advisory committee which would be set up as soon as the new Native Authorities were constituted.

20. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) asked what services were rendered by the Government of the Northern Region of Nigeria to the Northern Cameroons and whether the terms on which Nigerian staff were employed after 1 October 1960 would be different in the Southern and Northern Cameroons.

21. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) replied that the Ministry of Northern Cameroons Affairs had been responsible for the co-ordination of the different services provided by the Northern Region Government, including the building and maintenance of roads, education, and hospitals—but not including the maintenance of law and order and the provision of police, which were responsibilities of the Nigerian Federal Government. The personnel of the Northern Region Government to be seconded to the Administrator of the Northern Cameroons would work under the same conditions as those applying to the personnel transferred to the Southern Cameroons.

22. To a question from Mr. JHA (India) regarding the religious composition of the population of the Northern

Cameroons, Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that he would supply a written answer.

23. Mr. JHA (India) asked why the Commission of Enquiry set up to ascertain the wishes of the people of the Northern Cameroons in regard to their grouping under the new administrative divisions and Native Authorities had included no representative of the non-Moslem and non-Christian communities.

24. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that there were among the non-Moslem and non-Christian communities in the Northern Cameroons no people who were sufficiently well educated to serve on such a commission. But the members of those communities had been given an opportunity to express their views at open meetings of the Commission, which had seen more than 12,000 people and heard evidence from 300 persons and from the representatives of four political parties.

25. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) explained that the members of the Commission had not been appointed on account of their religion, which had been stated in document T/1530 only in order to show that the members had come from different sections of the population.

26. In reply to another question from Mr. JHA (India), Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that the two Northern Cameroonian ministers in the Northern Region Government remained in that Government. The former Minister for Northern Cameroons Affairs still retained a portfolio in the Government while the other Cameroonian was in the Government without a portfolio.

27. Mr. JHA (India) asked why the budget estimates appearing in paragraph 9 of document T/1530 referred to a period of nine months starting on 1 October 1960. Was it expected that a period of three months would be required after the plebiscite for the implementation of the latter's results and the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement?

28. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that was an estimate, because it was not known how long the processes of the plebiscites and consideration of the results by the General Assembly would take, or how much time would be required for the termination of the temporary arrangements.

29. In reply to other questions from Mr. JHA (India), Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) explained that after 1 October 1960 the members of the Federal Nigerian Police would be seconded to the Administrator of the Northern Cameroons and would be entirely under his control; but there were certain administrative matters, such as the supply of uniforms and equipment, which obviously would have to be dealt with by Nigeria at the request of the Administrator. Most members of the police force would be Nigerians, and one of the senior police officers would be a Nigerian.

30. Mr. JHA (India) asked why the United Hills Subordinate Native Authority, which would become fully independent on 1 October 1960, was to continue until that date to be a member of the Wukari Federation Native Authority.

31. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) and Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) explained that the inhabitants of that very small area did not want to be cut off from the Wukari Federation Native Authority.

But in view of possible reactions in the United Nations it had been thought that there was no alternative to adopting that measure when the separation of the Trust Territory from Nigeria took place. It was accordingly in response to the wishes of the people that the latest possible date had been chosen.

32. Mr. JHA (India) said that his delegation was satisfied with the reforms contemplated in the form of direct elections to the district councils and to the Native Authority councils. He would, however, like to know why the Dikwa Native Authority had been left as it was, and whether the executive members and the traditional title-holders of its Council were elected or nominated.

33. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) replied that the Commission of Enquiry had found that the people of Dikwa had no desire for a radical alteration of its Native Authority, which had been in existence for at least a century. But some changes, in accordance with the wishes of the population, had been made. Three members of the Council who were not natives of the Northern Cameroons had been removed. Five elected members were to be added to the Council. The executive members of the Council were persons who had experience and knowledge of the working of a Native Authority, and the three traditional title holders were members of the Council by virtue of their position as members of the former Emirate of Dikwa court.

34. Mr. JHA (India) did not understand why women should be denied the right to vote in elections to the district councils, when they were going to take part in the plebiscite.

35. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) explained that the Commission of Enquiry had found that all sections of the population were strongly opposed to suffrage for women.

36. Mr. JHA (India), referring to paragraph 20 of document T/1530, asked how many District Heads had been withdrawn and how many temporary appointments made.

37. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) replied that, in the Adamawa area of the Trust Territory, five District Heads had been removed by the Adamawa Native Authority. In their places, acting Heads had been appointed by the administrative officers.

38. Mr. JHA (India) recalling the finding by the Commission of Enquiry that the people of the Southern Trust Division preferred to have their cases tried by the Moslem "alkalis" rather than by the pagan customary courts, asked what was the reason for that preference and in what way opinions had been ascertained.

39. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that the pagan customary courts had become unpopular because the people wanted speedy justice. As those courts were constituted on the principle of clan or tribal representation, the administration of justice had become more or less a matter of protracted bargaining between heads of families.

40. Mr. JHA (India) asked whether the Administration had tried to reorganize or reform the so-called pagan courts.

41. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) explained that there was no institution for training in native or customary court laws throughout Nigeria. The system which was going to be introduced in that

area took into account the fact that the "alkali" himself might not be very well acquainted with the customary law of the people; for that reason, he would sit, whenever he was dealing with a non-Moslem case, with a number of assessors experienced in matters of custom.

42. Mr. JHA (India) wondered whether the taking over by the Office of the Premier of the Northern Region of the responsibilities formerly borne by the Ministry of Northern Cameroons Affairs, and the abolition of the Consultative Committee for the Northern Cameroons, which had been presided over by one of the ministers, did not represent a somewhat regressive step. He feared that between 1 October 1960 and the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement there might possibly be less impact by public opinion in the Northern Cameroons on the Government of the Northern Region of Nigeria. He asked why it had been considered necessary to abolish the Consultative Committee.

43. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) explained that the Ministry of Northern Cameroons Affairs had existed merely in order to co-ordinate and expedite the work of different ministries. Co-ordination would now be carried on by the Premier. The Northern Cameroons was still represented in the Northern House of Assembly, in the Federal House, and on the Northern Executive Council. A Cameroons advisory committee would be set up as soon as the new Native Authorities began to function.

44. Mr. JHA (India) asked whether the new advisory committee would advise the Administrator of the Northern Cameroons or the Premier of the Government of the Northern Region of Nigeria, and when it would come into being.

45. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) replied that the advisory committee would advise the Administrator after 1 October 1960; in the meantime, it would advise the Northern Region Government on any matters which it felt affected the interests of the Cameroonian people. It would be set up within one or two months, after the elections to the district councils (which were taking place at that moment) and the elections to the Native Authority councils.

46. Mr. JHA (India) asked whether, if the Northern Cameroons decided to become independent as part of Nigeria, it would be able to join the Nigerian Federation on a basis of equality with the Southern Cameroons.

47. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) pointed out that, by the time of the plebiscite, Nigeria would be an independent country and that the matter would be one for the Nigerian Federation, not the United Kingdom, to decide. There had so far been no formal approach from the Northern Cameroons with regard to its future status. It appeared to be the understanding of the Nigerian Government that, should the population of the Northern Cameroons wish to become part of the Federation of Nigeria, the Northern Territory would form part of the Northern Region, with the separate local administrations which had been established in accordance with the wishes of the people.

48. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the Administering Authority had tried to determine what the attitude of the Government of Republic of Cameroun would be in the event of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons deciding to join that State.

49. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that the Government of the United Kingdom had formally asked

the Government of the Republic of Cameroun to enter into consultations with it on the matter. The Cameroonian Government also regarded such consultations as necessary, but they had not yet taken place.

50. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the special representative could provide the Council with the full text of the legal Act under which the separation of the administration of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration from that of Nigeria was being carried out.

51. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) explained that the documents in question were Orders in Council which had not yet been promulgated but would be promulgated before 1 October 1960. The separation of the local administration of the Northern Cameroons had been provided for under a law of the Northern Region of Nigeria; a copy of the text could be furnished to the Soviet representative.

52. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished to know the part played by the United Kingdom Government and its various departments in the taking of the necessary measures. Had the Administering Authority prepared a definite plan for the implementation of the General Assembly's resolutions?

53. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) replied that the separation of the administrations and districts was being carried out under legislative provisions enacted, within the framework of its authority, by the Northern Region Government of Nigeria. The separation of the territories would take place under an Order in Council promulgated before 1 October.

54. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked what the position was with regard to preparations for the plebiscites.

55. Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) said that much of the preparatory work for the plebiscite in the Southern Cameroons had already been completed. Because of the activity of the political parties, most of the population knew the choices which were to be presented to it; a public enlightenment campaign would be undertaken around 1 October, after the end of the rainy season, and the plebiscite staff would visit all the villages in order to explain the questions which were being asked, as well as the registration and voting procedure.

56. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that in the Northern Cameroons an officer had already been designated to direct the plebiscite operations, and would start the preparatory work early in June. Registration would begin in October, and a public enlightenment programme would be carried out.

57. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked for further information on the officer designated to direct the plebiscite operations in the Northern Cameroons, and wished to know who would appoint the staff.

58. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that all the staff would be appointed by the Administering Authority. The Administrator would, by virtue of his office, be the chief plebiscite officer, but in actual fact it would be his deputy who would conduct the registration and the plebiscite.

59. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the Government of the Southern

- Cameroons already had a police force under its authority.
60. Mr. FIELD (Special Representative) said that responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in the Southern Cameroons was currently exercised by the Governor-General of Nigeria and, subject to his orders, by the Commissioner of the Cameroons. The ministers of the Southern Cameroons had no authority in that regard and could not issue orders to the police.
61. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the Administering Authority planned to transfer any of its authority in that sphere to the Government of the Southern Cameroons after 1 October.
62. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that after that date the position with regard to the maintenance of law and order would be essentially the same in the two parts of the Territory. In the Southern Cameroons, the Commissioner would be directly responsible to the Administering Authority for the maintenance of law and order, and control of the police would be vested in him under the Constitution. The Commissioner of Police in the Southern Cameroons would be responsible to the Commissioner of the Cameroons for the operation and use of the police force and would not be answerable to the Nigerian Inspector-General of Police. However, certain technical and supply arrangements would be provided by the Federal police on an agency basis. In the Northern Cameroons, the Administrator would, similarly, be directly responsible to the Administering Authority for the maintenance of law and order, but the police force would be much smaller.
63. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that the terms of reference of the Commission of Enquiry for the Northern Cameroons (T/1530, para. 11) did not call for it to make any recommendations on the democratization of local government, urged by General Assembly resolution 1473 (XIV). He would like to know whether such recommendations had been formulated by the Commission.
64. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that the establishment of new Native Authorities was a response to the concern expressed in the resolution regarding democratization of the system of local government.
65. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished to know whether the Commission of Enquiry had considered the question of introducing universal suffrage, namely the right of both men and women to vote; which representatives of the people it had consulted; what opinion had been expressed by the Commission; and what the special representative's views on the matter were.
66. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that the Commission of Enquiry, which had been set up in order to ascertain the wishes of the population, had been in touch with some 12,000 people and that many of the inhabitants had declared themselves opposed to women's suffrage. In his view, it was a matter of education and progress, and a reform of that kind could not be imposed on a people which was not ready for it.
67. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether any members of the Commission, to which Alhaji Ali Akilu himself had belonged, had advocated granting the suffrage to women, and whether the Commission had consulted the female population.
68. Alhaji Ali AKILU (Special Representative) said that, in view of the unanimously expressed desire of the persons consulted, the members of the Commission of Enquiry had felt that they had no alternative but to recommend the only practicable solution. Women had attended the Commission's meetings, and they had been at liberty to express their views.
69. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) explained that it was not only the chiefs, but the male population as a whole, who wished to restrict the suffrage to men. The women had not yet expressed a clear opinion on the matter. It could be counted as a success on the part of the United Nations that it had persuaded the Administering Authority to employ universal suffrage in the plebiscite.
70. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) found it difficult to believe that the population was unanimously opposed to the introduction of universal suffrage. The Administering Authority should play a more active part and not confine itself to recording the state of mind of some conservative elements.
71. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) emphasized that the Administering Authority had agreed that General Assembly resolution 1473 (XIV) should provide for conducting the new plebiscite on the basis of universal suffrage, but that it was unwilling to try to impose the use of universal suffrage in elections against the will of the people. It was at the urging of the Administering Authority that the Northern Region Government had agreed that the plebiscite should be held on that basis. In due time the people would unquestionably agree to the use of universal suffrage in local elections as well. It would be unfair to accuse the Administering Authority of playing a purely passive role.
72. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the Administering Authority had recommended the introduction of universal suffrage in the elections at present under way in the Northern Cameroons, and whether it had explained that such a reform was essential to progress. It did not appear from the documents presented to the Council that the Administering Authority had made any recommendations to that effect.
73. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that, in connexion with the plebiscite, the Administering Authority had explained to the population that it was necessary to comply with the wishes of the United Nations, even though they did not correspond to those of the people. The Commission of Enquiry had been made responsible for determining the wishes of the people, and the latter had already made a major concession in agreeing that the plebiscite should be held on the basis of universal suffrage. It would be inadvisable at the present time to try to impose that system on them in the case of elections. It was preferable to let the people draw their conclusions from the results of the plebiscite—in which women would take part—rather than attempt to impose such a reform on them. The Administering Authority had, in his opinion, adopted the best possible approach.
74. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation favoured the introduction of universal suffrage in the Northern Cameroons. That

would be the best means of ascertaining the wishes of the people, and, if the democratization urged by the General Assembly resolution was being given serious consideration, it was proper to ask what steps the Administering Authority had taken and what its views on the matter were.

75. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) recalled that General Assembly resolution 1473 (XIV) provided

for the use of universal suffrage only in the case of the plebiscite. As for the democratization of the system of local government in the Northern Cameroons, the special representative would describe the measures which the Administering Authority had taken for that purpose as a result of the recommendations presented by the Commission of Enquiry.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.