



TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Twenty-fourth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

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at 2.35 p.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Max H. DORSINVILLE (Haiti).

Present:

The representatives of the following States: Australia, Belgium, Burma, China, France, Haiti, 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.

Dissemination of information on the United Nations and on the International Trusteeship System in the Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General [General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII)] (T/1463, T/1467) (concluded)*

[Agenda item 13]

1. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said that it was clear from the Secretary-General's report in document T/1463 that in most of the Trust Territories there had been no real progress in the distribution of official records of the United Nations or the dissemination of information concerning the Organization. The number of addresses to which official records were sent and the number of documents distributed in the Trust Territories had scarcely changed. The figures for distribution in the Trust Territories were still highly inadequate in relation to the total population.

2. The Trust Territories of Somaliland, the Cameroons and Togoland were to attain independence in 1960 and the Governments of those Territories would no doubt do what they considered necessary to promote the dissemination of information about the United Nations after independence. There was therefore little reason for the Council to concern itself to any great extent with those Territories. It seemed that in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and in Western Samoa the dissemination of information about the United Nations was proceeding satisfactorily. In Tanganyika, Ruanda-Urundi, New Guinea and Nauru, however, much remained to be done in the matter.

3. There were admittedly difficulties with regard to the media for the dissemination of information. Films

and broadcasts could help to overcome some of those difficulties, but it did not seem that sufficient use was being made of those media in the majority of the Trust Territories. His delegation would therefore recommend that the Administering Authorities should make a more effective use of those media, and particularly of films, for spreading information about the United Nations.

4. Much greater use could be made, too, of non-official organizations for the better dissemination of information concerning the United Nations. It would be useful if in future reports on the subject the Secretary-General could include a detailed section giving precise information on the extent to which the services of non-official organizations were being used.

5. Turning to the Secretary-General's report on the establishment of United Nations information centres in or near Trust Territories (T/1467), he stressed that the United Nations, and in particular its Office of Public Information, had a special responsibility for ensuring that information regarding the Organization was disseminated in the Trust Territories. It was with that in mind that the General Assembly had adopted resolution 1276 (XIII), concerning the establishment of United Nations information centres.

6. Despite the efforts made by the Administering Authorities in Tanganyika, Ruanda-Urundi, New Guinea and Nauru to disseminate information on the United Nations, it seemed that the visiting missions to those Territories had been struck by the scanty knowledge of the United Nations displayed by the inhabitants of the Territories. As it seemed obvious that the means adopted by the Administering Authorities for the dissemination of information had failed to fulfil their purpose, active consideration should now be given to the establishment of United Nations information centres in at least the larger Trust Territories. The Committee of Experts on United Nations Public Information had recognized in its report (A/3928) that such centres were the best means of disseminating information about the United Nations. Unfortunately, none of the existing information centres were situated near any of the Trust Territories, nor were the lines of communication between the centres and the Trust Territories nearest to them direct or easy. Furthermore, the facilities available to the centres were not such as would enable them to extend their activities to areas at any great distance from them. For instance, the Information Centre at Sydney was apparently too far from New Guinea to lend much assistance in disseminating information concerning the United Nations in that Territory, while the Information Centre in Accra would encounter considerable linguistic difficulties if it were called upon to provide information to the Cameroons and Togoland under French administration. The establishment of information centres was probably the only reliable means of disseminating information in the Trust Territories and his delegation was confident that the results would justify the expense and effort entailed.

*Resumed from the 979th meeting.

7. In view of resolution 1276 (XIII) there was little doubt that the General Assembly would find means of providing the funds necessary for the establishment of such centres. Although none of the Administering Authorities had invited the Secretary-General to establish information centres in any of the Trust Territories, his delegation felt that it would be appropriate for the Secretary-General to initiate correspondence with the Administering Authorities with a view to the application of the General Assembly resolution and it was confident that the Administering Authorities would agree. It hoped, therefore, that a fuller report on the subject would be submitted to the General Assembly at its next session.

8. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic), referring to the Indian representative's statement that the Information Centre at Accra would experience linguistic difficulties if it were called upon to undertake information work in the Cameroons and Togoland, under French administration, asked whether the Secretariat had the necessary means to overcome those difficulties.

9. The impression which he had gained from the Secretary-General's report was that there should be two phases: in the first, the activities of existing centres could be increased, in so far as that was feasible; in the second, the possibility of setting up new centres could be considered.

10. The PRESIDENT said that, for the time being, the Secretariat was not in a position to make any comments.

11. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the Secretariat had taken any steps to implement General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII); whether any letters had been addressed to Administering Authorities drawing their attention to that resolution; whether they had been invited to comment on the possibility of opening information centres in Trust Territories and whether any replies had been received.

12. Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) observed that, although his Government had not received a letter in those terms from the Secretariat, it was fully aware of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and it gave them the most careful attention. There was certainly no need for the Secretariat to draw the attention of Governments to the resolution.

13. Mr. WIESCHHOFF (Secretary of the Council) explained that, as General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) was in very general terms and applied to all Trust Territories, it had not been brought to the special attention of the Administering Authorities. The practice of the Secretariat was to draw the attention of Governments to such resolutions only when they referred to specific matters which concerned a few Governments only. Moreover, the phrase "in or near the Trust Territories" used in the resolution made a direct approach to Governments difficult, since it was hard to determine the geographical scope of such an expression.

14. Miss TENZER (Belgium) agreed with the United Kingdom representative that there was no need for the Secretariat to draw the attention of the Administering Authorities to General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII). Her Government was familiar with that resolution and had studied it with care; it was as anxious as any other Government to ensure that the United Nations was well known in Ruanda-Urundi. Indeed, the

special representative for that Territory, when in New York, had taken the opportunity of discussing the matter with the Office of Public Information, with a view to ascertaining how the information made available could be improved in quantity or quality. What was necessary was to develop the means that were at present available.

15. In his report on the public information activities of the United Nations (A/4122) the Secretary-General had stated that programmes were being adjusted to give a greater emphasis to regional needs; fewer and shorter pamphlets would be produced, and funds made available by the contraction in the number of pamphlets would be devoted to the adaptation of materials in more language editions. The report further stated that teams of radio and visual reporters would visit certain areas to cover regional activities and to collect material and produce programmes designed primarily to be accepted in the areas concerned; such regional coverage would also replenish the rather depleted resources of the radio and visual libraries at Headquarters. As the report said, there must be a rational basis for planning a public information programme designed to give the maximum effectiveness at the minimum possible cost, thus reflecting the concern of Member States that particular care should be exercised in respect of public information expenditures.

16. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) said that, in his delegation's view, sufficient material was in fact available. The Secretary-General, in document T/1467, had suggested that it might be possible for further assistance to be given to Trust Territories in Africa by the United Nations Information Centre now operating from Accra and by the information office to be attached to the Economic Commission for Africa at Addis Ababa. His delegation considered that that proposal should be further examined by the Council.

17. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was clear that the position with regard to dissemination of information in the Trust Territories was unsatisfactory. The General Assembly had adopted a precisely worded resolution on the subject and had requested the Trusteeship Council to submit a report at the fourteenth session. All that the Council would be able to report, however, was that not a single step had been taken to carry out those recommendations and that no requests for the establishment of information centres in Trust Territories had been received from the Administering Authorities. His delegation felt that the most effective method of ensuring the dissemination of such information in the Trust Territories would be to establish information centres within the Territories themselves, and that point of view had been shared by the great majority of the Members of the General Assembly. It was regrettable that the Administering Authorities had failed to comply with the terms of the resolution. The Trusteeship Council should take steps to ensure the implementation of the resolution.

18. Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) said that there was no question of General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) not having been implemented by the Administering Authorities. His Government shared the legitimate concern of the General Assembly that information about the activities of the United Nations should be spread as widely as possible among the people of the Trust Territories, and it had been in that context that

his delegation had considered the suggestion that new information centres should be established in or near the Trust Territories.

19. In his delegation's opinion, the Secretary-General's report (T/1463) on what had been achieved in the individual Trust Territories revealed a not unsatisfactory situation: indeed, the catalogue of achievements which it contained was quite an impressive one and suggested that the peoples of the Trust Territories were fortunate in the efforts made by their Governments to keep them informed about the United Nations. In his view, that report should be embodied in the Council's report, and developments in individual Territories should be considered when the affairs of those Territories came to be discussed in the Council, as they had been at the present session.

20. The question of establishing information centres in or near the Trust Territories could only be considered in the context of the general policy of the United Nations concerning public information. In reaching an opinion, his Government naturally had to take into account the views which it held as a member of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly.

21. The Belgian representative had drawn attention to the Secretary-General's statement concerning the need for a rational basis for planning a public information programme designed to give the maximum effectiveness at the minimum possible cost. In the same report (A/4122) the Secretary-General had emphasized that the pattern of development must provide for a balanced geographical distribution and must take into account those places where existing offices were still trying to service areas too large for their resources. It was against that background that his Government, like other Governments, had had to decide whether to seek the establishment of an information centre in any Trust Territory under its administration or whether the needs of those Territories could be met satisfactorily from existing centres in neighbouring countries or in the metropolitan country itself.

22. Information material for the Cameroons under British administration was sent direct from United Nations Headquarters and from the Information Centre in London, which had good communications with the Cameroons. When for any particular purpose it seemed appropriate information was supplied also from the Information Centre in Ghana. In the case of Tanganyika, too, information was sent from both New York and London; his delegation would be glad if the information office to be established in Addis Ababa could help in meeting the needs of that Trust Territory, although, for practical purposes London would still be nearer to Dar es Salaam than Addis Ababa was.

23. The representative of the United Arab Republic had rightly pointed out that the first question to be considered was how the supply of information to Trust Territories from existing information centres could be improved. The most obvious method was by means of personal contact between the staff of those information centres and the authorities in the Trust Territories. In view of the many practical and budgetary difficulties in the way of opening new information centres, and of the existing advantageous arrangements for the supply of material direct from New York to the Trust Territories, his delegation did not feel that the most efficient way to promote the objectives of the public information programme would be to open centres in the Trust

Territories. Moreover, the fact that information centres already existed or were soon to be opened near the Trust Territories in Africa with which his delegation was concerned meant that the intentions of General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) were to a large extent already satisfied.

24. In Tanganyika, information about the United Nations was made available through the Government Information Service, at the expense of the Tanganyika Government. That was part of the special responsibility of the Government of a Trust Territory; indeed, his Government would be prepared to consider making arrangements for the designation of an officer who, within the Tanganyika Government Information Service, would have the special task of distributing information about the United Nations and would correspond direct with the Office of Public Information in New York regarding material for distribution. Such an arrangement would not entail any additional cost to the United Nations, the limited budgetary resources of which would thus be available for the effective promotion of public information programmes elsewhere. The Government of Tanganyika was mindful of the provisions of the sixth paragraph of the preamble of General Assembly resolution 1335 (XIII) and was fully prepared to co-operate with the Secretary-General. The decision of his Government whether or not to ask for the establishment of information centres in either of the Trust Territories under its administration would be determined in the light of all those considerations; for the present, it seemed unnecessary.

25. U TIN MAUNG (Burma) said that his delegation, which attached great importance to the matter, was far from satisfied with the information activities undertaken by the United Nations; there were still no information centres in certain Member States. He hoped that some specific proposals would be made in the Council concerning the establishment of information centres in the Trust Territories.

26. Mr. VITELLI (Italy) associated himself with the observations made by the representatives of Belgium and the United Kingdom. The Soviet Union representative had said that no Administering Authority had asked for the establishment of new information centres. So far as Somaliland was concerned, the Secretary-General's report (T/1463) stated that, according to the United Nations Advisory Council for the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration, information material about the United Nations was widely distributed in the Territory and that the knowledge of United Nations affairs so acquired had created in the population of the Territory a close and genuine feeling of faith and confidence in the United Nations. Somaliland was at present engaged in solving more urgent problems; once the Territory had become independent, the matter would be one for its Government to take up.

27. Mr. YANG (China) said that his delegation did not propose to comment on the information in document T/1463; in its view, it would be difficult for the Council to discuss that document without repeating what had already been said on the subject at the time when the annual reports on conditions in the various Trust Territories had been examined.

28. His delegation had been glad to note from document T/1467 the arrangements for the supply of information to the Trust Territories and to learn of the

possibility that further assistance might be given through the existing Information Centre at Accra and the information office to be established at Addis Ababa.

29. Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) moved that the Council should take note of the reports before it.

30. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) introduced two draft resolutions. The first read:

"The Trusteeship Council,

"Having taken note of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the establishment of United Nations information centres prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) of 5 December 1958 (T/1467),

"Invites the Secretary-General and the Administering Authorities to consider together the possibility of requesting the United Nations Information Centre now operating from Accra and the United Nations Information Office to be attached to the Economic Commission for Africa at Addis Ababa, in the latter part of 1959 or at the beginning of 1960, to give further assistance to Trust Territories in Africa."

31. The second draft resolution read:

"The Trusteeship Council,

"Having taken note of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the establishment of United Nations information centres prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) of 5 December 1958 (T/1467),

"Having noted that the Secretary-General has as yet received no request from the Administering Authorities for the establishment of information centres in the Trust Territories,

"Invites the Administering Authorities to put into effect General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) by making concrete proposals concerning the establishment of such information centres in the Trust Territories for which they are responsible."

32. Mr. KELLY (Australia) wondered whether in the operative paragraph of the first draft resolution the invitation was to be extended only to the Administering Authorities of Trust Territories in Africa, since that draft resolution seemed to be concerned primarily with the better use of information services in Africa.

33. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) said that, in order to meet the wise observation of the Australian representative, he would add the word "concerned" after the words "Administering Authorities" in that paragraph.

The meeting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 4.25 p.m.

34. The PRESIDENT asked the representative of the United Kingdom whether in view of the draft resolutions proposed by the representative of the United Arab Republic he would be prepared to withdraw his proposal that the Council should take note of the two reports before it.

35. Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) said that, although his proposal had now been incorporated into both of the draft resolutions put forward by the representative of the United Arab Republic, he would be reluctant to support either of those draft resolutions.

36. In the first draft resolution the Administering Authorities were invited to do something which the United Kingdom, for its part, was already doing. The operative paragraph was thus an unnecessary expression of opinion by the Council and might give rise to misunderstandings about the way in which the representative of the United Arab Republic interpreted the United Kingdom statement with regard to its information activities in the Trust Territories.

37. He had stronger misgivings regarding the second draft resolution, for it seemed to his delegation that it invited the Administering Authorities to put into effect resolution 1276 (XIII) in a manner which was not contemplated by the terms of that resolution. Resolution 1276 (XIII) did not invite the Administering Authorities to do anything and there was therefore nothing for the Administering Authorities to do to put it into effect.

38. His delegation would therefore oppose the second of the draft resolutions put forward by the representative of the United Arab Republic. It might, however, be prepared to vote in favour of the first, provided the representative of the United Arab Republic did not sustain the implications which seemed inherent in the second.

39. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) said that the two draft resolutions were meant to be considered entirely separately from each other.

40. He made a slight amendment to the operative paragraph of his first draft resolution, which now began: "Invites the Secretary-General and each of the Administering Authorities concerned to consider together the possibility..."

41. The PRESIDENT put the first draft resolution by the representative of the United Arab Republic, as thus revised, to the vote.

The draft resolution was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

42. Mr. KELLY (Australia) asked that separate votes might be taken on each of the two preambular paragraphs and on the operative paragraph of the second draft resolution.

43. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that the second preambular paragraph should be amended to read: "Notes that thus far no requests have been received by the Secretary-General from the Administering Authorities for the establishment of information centres in the Trust Territories"; it would thus become operative paragraph 1.

44. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) accepted that proposal.

45. He seconded the request of the Australian representative that each paragraph of the draft resolution should be voted on separately.

46. Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) said that his delegation would vote against both operative paragraphs. Paragraph 1 singled out one, and not the most important, of a number of facts set out in document T/1467, which the Council had already noted in the resolution that had just been adopted.

47. Paragraph 2 seemed to him to be not fully in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII); moreover it invited the Administering Authori-

ties to do something which his delegation considered would be unwise at the present time.

The preamble of the draft resolution as amended was adopted by 7 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.

A vote was taken on operative paragraph 1.

There were 7 votes in favour and 7 against.

A brief recess was taken in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council.

48. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) appealed to those delegations which had voted against paragraph 1 to change their vote. He had been under the impression that certain delegations would be in a position to support it after he had amended his draft resolution.

A second vote was taken.

There were 7 votes in favour and 7 against. Operative paragraph 1 was not adopted.

49. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic) said that he would not press for a vote on operative paragraph 2, since the voting in the Council was obviously mechanical.

50. The PRESIDENT pointed out that since nothing had been adopted except a preambular paragraph which could not stand by itself, the whole draft resolution was in effect withdrawn.

51. Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) regretted the suggestion that had been made that the voting of his delegation on the matter, to which he had given earnest consideration and on which he had made a long and reasoned statement, was in any way mechanical.

52. Miss TENZER (Belgium) said that she had been somewhat surprised by the terms in which the representative of the United Arab Republic had spoken. That representative had himself stated that the two operative paragraphs of his draft resolution were closely linked. She had accordingly voted against operative paragraph 1, although it was nothing but a statement of fact, because she had intended to vote against operative paragraph 2. Her vote had in no way been mechanical but had been carefully weighed.

53. Mr. VITELLI (Italy) regretted the expression used by the representative of the United Arab Republic. He was at a loss to understand how the voting could be described as mechanical, since the Council had spent a considerable time discussing the item, and he thought his delegation had made its position clear.

54. Mr. EDMONDS (New Zealand) said that he had voted in favour of the first draft resolution submitted by the representative of the United Arab Republic because it had seemed to him to be consistent with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1335 (XIII), which was the basic resolution on United Nations public information activities, and with the general trend of the report of the Secretary-General (A/4122). He had voted against the second draft resolution because it had seemed to him inconsistent with resolution 1335 (XIII), which stressed the need for a balanced, effective and economical programme of public information. He had voted against operative paragraph 1 because it mentioned one selected fact and would have presented an unbalanced view of the position.

55. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) was unable to understand how delegations could

have voted against paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, since it was a mere statement of fact. It would seem that the representatives of the Administering Authorities wished to challenge the accuracy of a fact which was stated in the Secretary-General's report. One of the reasons given for voting against the paragraph had been that it mentioned one fact in isolation. Other facts mentioned in the Secretary-General's report could perhaps have been added, but no amendment to that effect had been proposed. The representative of the United Arab Republic had therefore been correct in describing the voting as mechanical.

56. Mr. KELLY (Australia) said he was convinced that none of the delegations on the Trusteeship Council had voted in a mechanical manner. He considered that it would have been unwise for the Council to single out one fact, and that not the most important one, from the report of the Secretary-General. He had voted against operative paragraph 1 for that reason, as also because that fact had already been noted incidentally, in the preamble of the first draft resolution proposed by the representative of the United Arab Republic, which had been adopted.

57. Operative paragraph 2 of the second draft resolution, which had not been put to the vote, appeared to depart from General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII), since it implied that that resolution had requested the Administering Authorities to take some specific action, which was not the case. The resolution had expressed an opinion and called upon the Secretary-General to present a report, and that had been done.

58. As the Australian delegation had previously informed the Council, the Administering Authority of the Trust Territories of New Guinea and Nauru would to the full extent of its power disseminate information concerning the United Nations.

59. Mr. DOISE (France) recalled that his delegation had been one of two which had voted against General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII). It had said at the time that it considered the problem of the dissemination of information on the United Nations to be a general question affecting all States, which should not, therefore, be limited to the Trust Territories. He had therefore had no option but to vote against the draft resolution submitted by the United Arab Republic. As the Australian representative had rightly pointed out, General Assembly resolution 1276 (XIII) was essentially of an exploratory nature and did not call for any specific action.

60. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed the view that the Council should take note of the report of the Secretary-General as a whole.

61. The PRESIDENT pointed out that the Secretary-General's report was submitted for information and that it was unnecessary for the Council to come to any decision with regard to its contents.

62. In reply to a question from Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic), Mr. WIESCHHOFF (Secretary of the Council) stated that the report of the Trusteeship Council to the General Assembly would include the following paragraph:

"Thus far no requests have been received by the Secretary-General from the Administering Authorities for the establishment of information centres in any of the Trust Territories."

Adoption of the report of the Trusteeship Council to the Security Council (T/L.912 and Add.1, T/L.923, T/L.933, T/L.937)

[Agenda item 16]

63. The PRESIDENT drew attention to document T/L.933 containing a summary of observations made by members of the Council during the general discussion on conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. He asked the Council to take a decision on the inclusion of those observations in its report to the Security Council.

64. Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked for some drafting changes to be made in the summaries of the observations made by his delegation. He asked that in the first sentence of the first paragraph of observations made by the representative of the USSR in the sub-section entitled "Displacement of population due to nuclear experiments", the words "had so many and such powerful atomic and hydrogen bombs been exploded as in the Pacific Islands" should be replaced by "had so many major nuclear tests been carried out as in the Pacific Islands". In the fifth sentence of the same paragraph the word "recommended" should be replaced by "suggested". Lastly, he asked that paragraphs 14 and 18, in the sub-section entitled "Development of representative, executive and legislative organs and extension of their powers" should be put together so as not to split up the observations of his delegation on the same subject.

65. The PRESIDENT said that if there were no objections the amendments proposed by the USSR representative would be incorporated in the text.

It was so decided.

66. Mr. YANG (China) considered that paragraphs 61 and 62 should not have been placed under the heading "Agriculture"; he suggested that they should be given some such heading as "War claims".

67. The PRESIDENT said that that would be done.

68. He announced that in the absence of any objection the summary of observations made by individual members of the Council (T/L.933) would be included in the chapter on conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

It was so decided.

69. The PRESIDENT said he would put to the vote the chapter as a whole, consisting of the outline of conditions in document T/L.912 and Add.1, as adopted by the Council at its 1026th meeting; the conclusions and recommendations submitted by the Drafting Committee on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (T/L.923, annexes I and II) as amended by the Council at its 1026th and 1027th meetings; and the observations just adopted (T/L.933).

The chapter as a whole was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

The draft report of the Trusteeship Council to the Security Council (T/L.937) was adopted by 12 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.