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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: COMMENTS ON
PROVISIONAL QUESTIONNAIREItem 6 of the Provisional Agenda for the Second Session
of the Trusteeship CouncilMemorandum Prepared by the Secretariat

1. At the twenty-sixth meeting of its First Session, on 28 April 1947, the Trusteeship Council resolved that, "in accordance with Article 91 of the Charter and Rule 70 of the Rules of Procedure, the President of the Trusteeship Council shall transmit the Provisional Questionnaire through the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council" for its "advice and comments on those sections which deal with subjects of special concern" to it.
2. During its Fifth Session, on 16 August 1947, the Economic and Social Council decided that "the appropriate parts of the Provisional Questionnaire under Article 88 of the Charter, transmitted by the Trusteeship Council to the Council for advice and comments, should be referred to the various commissions of the Council" and requested "the Secretary-General to place them on the agenda of these commissions for report to the Council".
3. Pursuant to this resolution of the Economic and Social Council, the item "Provisional Questionnaire on Trust Territories" can be found on the provisional agenda of:
 - (a) the Second Session of the Commission on Human Rights, which is to meet on 1 December 1947; a note by the Secretary-General (document E/CN.4/24) brings to the attention of the Commission the relevant chapters of the Provisional Questionnaire;
 - (b) the Second Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which is to meet on 5 January 1948 (documents E/CN.6/21 and E/CN.6/22);
 - (c) the Second Session of the Transport and Communications Commission, which was to be held on 8 December 1947. A recent decision of the Interim Committee on Programme of Meetings of the Economic and Social Council, its Committees and Commissions, canceled this session and reported all agenda items formulated in document E/CN.2/18 to the subsequent session of this Commission, to be held on 5 April 1948.

4. The Social, Population and Statistical Commissions held their second sessions immediately following the Fifth Session of the Economic and Social Council, and did not find it possible on such brief notice to give appropriate consideration to the Provisional Questionnaire on Trust Territories. The question, however, had been placed on their respective agendas, and it was disposed of in the following manner:

(a) The Social Commission decided that "since the Trusteeship Council Questionnaire had been received from the Economic and Social Council at such a late date there was no alternative but to defer consideration of it until the next session of the Commission" (document E/578, paragraph 65). The next session of the Social Commission is to be held on 30 March 1948.

(b) the Statistical Commission made a preliminary examination of the Provisional Questionnaire. In its report to the Economic and Social Council it made, subject to the Economic and Social Council's approval, the following recommendation:

"... The general view was expressed that the statistical development of the Trust Territories is so slight that the amount and types of statistical data obtainable from them is probably extremely limited. The Commission agreed that it would be necessary to study the reports submitted by the administering authorities on the basis of the Provisional Questionnaire before an adequately definitive questionnaire could be formulated. It therefore recommends that the Secretariat examine the replies to the Provisional Questionnaire and formulate a revised plan for the collection of information which may possibly include a minimum list of statistical items. A report on this matter should be made at a later session of the Commission."

(document E/577, paragraph 48).

If the Economic and Social Council approves this procedure, the question will again be placed on the agenda of the next session of the Statistical Commission, which is scheduled to meet on 26 April 1948.

(c) The Population Commission also examined the Provisional Questionnaire and its report contains the following paragraph:

"...In accordance with the decision of the Economic and Social Council taken 16 August 1947 in relation to the Provisional Questionnaire of the Trusteeship Council (document T/44), the Commission examined the items in the questionnaire relating to population. The Commission realizes the immediate urgency of implementing the Provisional Questionnaire but expresses the hope that opportunity will subsequently be given for revising

/the questions

the questions relating to population. In this connection the Commission wishes to point out that the questions specified need clarification and elaboration, since in their present form they constitute broad heads of inquiry and not specific descriptions of information required. The Population Commission therefore requests the Secretary-General to prepare for consideration in due course a statement on the specific types of demographic data which it would be desirable to have for the Trust Territories, as well as a corresponding list of questions which might be incorporated in any revised version of the questionnaire, and that the statement and questions take into account the varying situations in individual Trust Territories (document E/571, paragraph 2).

It is presumed that, subject to the approval of the Economic and Social Council, this question will therefore remain on the agenda of this Commission. Its next meeting is scheduled for 10 May 1948.

5. The Economic and Employment Commission is scheduled to meet on 10 May 1948 and measures have been taken to ensure that this item be placed on its agenda.

This will also be done with regard to the Narcotics Commission, which is to meet on 3 May 1948.

6. The Fiscal Commission has no meeting scheduled for 1948. Any views intended for the consideration of the Trusteeship Council which might be forthcoming from its members, who have been informed of the resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council in this respect, would be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for approval.

7. From this schedule of meetings of the various commissions, it may be seen that some of them will consider the Provisional Questionnaire for the first time in 1948, and at least one commission will not consider it until 1949. These commissions must report the results of their considerations to the Economic and Social Council for approval before transmission to the Trusteeship Council. Since some of the commissions may not complete their consideration in one session, it appears likely that, although the Trusteeship Council may have occasion to examine the advice and comments of some of the Commissions in 1948, it may not receive the views of other Commissions until 1949 or perhaps 1950.
