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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 24 February 1956, at 4.10 p.m.

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PRESENT:

Chairman:

Mr. JAIPAL

India

Members:

Mr. HAMILTON

Australia

Mr. SCHEYVEN

Belgium

Mr. de CAMARET

France

Mr. SERAPHIN

Haiti

Mr. BENDRYSHEV

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics

Also present:

Mr. LEFEVRE

Special Representative of the
Administering Authority for
the Trust Territory of the
Camerouns under French
Administration

Secretariat:

Mr. BERENDSEN

Secretary of the Committee

EXAMINATION OF PETITIONS RELATING TO CERTAIN INCIDENTS THAT OCCURRED IN THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION IN APRIL-MAY 1955 AND THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WITH REGARD TO THEM: DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (T/C.2/L.215)

The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the previous meeting, the Soviet representative had drawn the Committee's attention to the fact that some of the Special Representative's statements had not been included in the Committee's draft report on the examination of petitions relating to certain incidents that had occurred in the Cameroons under French administration in April-May 1955 and the action taken by the local authority with regard to them (T/C.2/L.215). On the basis of the Soviet representative's observations, the Secretariat had drafted eight amendments which had been circulated to members of the Committee.

Mr. BERENDSEN (Secretary of the Committee) explained that the Special Representative had approved the text of the amendments, which simply reproduced certain passages of the summary records of meetings. He read the texts of the eight amendments^{1/} as follows:

Amendment No. 3

"In section IV, paragraph 43, add the following:

"The Special Representative confirmed the statement in the observations of the Administering Authority that the meeting suggested by the representative of the High Commissioner between himself and Mr. Moumié had not taken place because the latter had asked for a written invitation and for permission to be accompanied by a substantial delegation of his party."

Amendment No. 4

"In section IV, replace the last three sentences of paragraph 45 by the following:

"The licence numbers of vehicles given in petition T/PET.5/666 probably corresponded to the actual licence numbers of fire brigade and Administration vehicles, but the Special Representative was unable to say whether those particular cars had been near the UPC headquarters at the time in question. He could see nothing

^{1/} For the text of amendment No. 1, see T/L.634, section I, para. 27; for the text of amendment No. 2, see T/L.634, Introduction, para. 12.

(Mr. Berendsen, Secretary of the Committee)

surprising in the fact that vehicles belonging to the fire brigade should have been standing in front of a building where a fire had broken out. The fire brigade had been accompanied by a platoon of gardes camerounais, armed with rifles, as a precaution." 2/

Amendment No. 5

"In section V, add the following at the end of paragraph 16:

"The Special Representative stated further that a UPC meeting scheduled for that day had been cancelled at the request of the administrative authorities and that no other public meeting had taken place since the curfew had been imposed at 7 p.m." 3/

Amendment No. 6

"In section VI add the following after the words 'forced their way in' in the fourth line of paragraph 28:

"had spoken to the Administrator and had withdrawn with a Mr. Ndjahi, who was being interviewed by the Administrator at the time." 4/

Amendment No. 7

"In section VII, replace the third sentence of paragraph 9 by the following:

"In each case the police had arrived too late to prevent the breaking up of the meetings or the destruction of the huts. 5/ It had been unable to take preventive measures and precautions because it had been unaware that the UPC intended to hold any meetings. 6/ After an investigation twelve people had been charged at Bafoussam and five at Bafang."

Amendment No. 8

"In section IX, paragraph 2:

"(a) Add the words 'had never provoked armed demonstrations, because it' after the word 'UPC' in the second sentence;

"(b) Add after the second sentence the following: 'In particular they state that the articles of association of the UPC show that it is democratic in character and that it has never been armed and has not raised armed forces.'"

2/ See T/C.2/SR.307, p. 9.

3/ See T/C.2/SR.309, p. 6.

4/ See T/C.2/SR.310, p. 10.

5/ See T/C.2/SR.311, p. 3.

6/ See T/C.2/SR.311, p. 6.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) inquired whether the amendments had been submitted by the Soviet Union. He asked the Chairman to read them paragraph by paragraph, so that he could hear the interpretation, as he could not rapidly examine a text for which there was no French translation.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) asked that the amendments should be voted on one by one.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the amendments had been proposed by the Secretariat as a result of the observations made by the Soviet representative, who had noted a certain number of omissions in the report. Each amendment would be voted on separately.

Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) confirmed his approval of the texts which had been submitted.

Amendment No. 1

Amendment No. 1 was approved by 2 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) said that he had abstained because he saw no point in the amendment. There was no need for the Administering Authority to explain what it had not intended to do.

Amendment No. 2

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) inquired why the Secretariat referred only to the negative aspects of the attacks by Cameroonians on police stations and military depots. He thought that if it was stated that the seizure of fire-arms had not been the primary purpose of an attack by the Cameroonians, their real purpose should be stated.

Mr. BERENDSEN (Secretary of the Committee) explained that the Secretariat had confined itself to reproducing certain passages of the official records, as the Committee had requested it to do.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) pointed out that it was difficult to vote when there had been no time to ascertain how the new texts were to be incorporated in the draft report.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) said that he could not take part in the vote without having an opportunity to read the texts carefully and to amend them if necessary.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that, as the representative of the Secretariat had explained, those texts were not new; they simply condensed the statements of the Special Representative as reproduced in the summary records of the meetings.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium), supported by Mr. de CAMARET (France), proposed a brief recess.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 4.40 p.m. and resumed at 4.50 p.m.

Amendment No. 2

There were 3 votes in favour and 3 against.

After a brief recess in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council, a second vote was taken.

There were 3 votes in favour and 3 against. Amendment No. 2 was not adopted.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that the text of the paragraph which the Committee had not adopted should be recorded in the draft report together with the result of the vote.

Mr. SERAPHIN (Haiti) explained that he had abstained in the vote on the first amendment because he did not know the facts of the situation. During the recess, he had learned what they were from the Haitian representative who had been present at the previous meeting, so that he had been in a position to vote for the second amendment.

The CHAIRMAN explained that he had voted for the second amendment because the Special Representative had not objected to it.

Amendment No. 3

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) requested that amendment No. 3 should be put to the vote. He saw no need for the Special Representative to confirm the observations of the Administering Authority.

Amendment No. 3 was rejected by 3 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN explained that he had abstained because the passage was merely a repetition.

Amendment No. 4

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) requested that amendment No. 4 should be put to the vote. He would vote against it because it added nothing to the draft report as it stood.

Amendment No. 4 was rejected by 3 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN explained that he had abstained because the contents of that amendment were purely speculative.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he had voted in favour of the amendment as he had hoped that it would help shed some light on the incidents. It should be noted that, according to the Special Representative's own statements, the Administration had not investigated to find out where the vehicles with the numbers given in the petition had been located at the time of the burning of the UPC offices.

Amendment No. 5

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) asked the Special Representative the meaning of the text: had the meeting been cancelled because of the curfew, or had the UPC cancelled it in response to the request of the authorities?

Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) replied that the meeting had been cancelled voluntarily by the UPC leaders.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) called for a vote on the new text.

Amendment No. 5 was adopted by 3 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

Amendment No. 6

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) asked the Special Representative whether the excerpts from the summary records given in amendment No. 6 accurately reflected the facts he had wished to give the Committee or whether they were quotations out of context.

Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) explained that he had accepted the text because the facts ~~were~~ accurate, but he wished to point out that all the facts were not given.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) called for a vote on the amendment.

There were 2 votes in favour, 2 against and 2 abstentions.

After a brief recess in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council, a second vote was taken.

Amendment No. 6 was adopted by 3 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

Amendment No. 7

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) called for a separate vote on the new text suggested by the Secretariat to replace the following passage of paragraph 9: "the police had arrived too late to prevent the destruction".

Mr. de CAMARET (France) requested a separate vote on the two sentences of the new text: he would vote against the second.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the first sentence of the text suggested by the Secretariat.

The first sentence was adopted by 3 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN called for a vote on the second sentence of the text suggested by the Secretariat.

The second sentence was rejected by 3 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

Amendment No. 8

Mr. BERENDSEN (Secretary of the Committee) pointed out that the addition suggested by the Secretariat to paragraph 2 reproduced the statements of the petitioners.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) requested a separate vote on that addition.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) was surprised that a text summarizing a petition should be put to the vote.

Amendment No. 8 was adopted by 3 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said, in explanation of his vote on the amendments, that his affirmative votes could not be considered as supporting the substance of the statements made by the Special Representative.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) considered that it was a case of anonymous amendments rather than amendments proposed by the Secretariat. That was why, in principle, he had voted against them. Furthermore, some of the texts tended to distort facts rather than show them in their true perspective.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that section IX, paragraph 14 should be put to a separate vote since it only restated what had already been stated in the written observations of the Administering Authority.

Section IX, paragraph 14 was adopted by 5 votes to 1.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Secretariat had been asked to modify paragraph 8 in the introduction to the report so as to include the amendments presented by the USSR representative and rejected by the Committee.

Mr. BERENDSEN (Secretary of the Committee) pointed out that the text of the new paragraph 8 would state that at its 329th, 330th and 331st meetings the Committee had studied a certain number of draft resolutions, the first of which covered all the petitions examined in the report, while the amendment that followed, proposed by the USSR representative, had not been adopted. The Secretariat would then give a list of the votes that had been taken on each of the other draft resolutions, the text of which would be annexed to the report.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that paragraph 8 of the report should show how the Committee had voted in the case of the draft resolution and should state that specific paragraphs of that draft had been adopted while other paragraphs had been rejected; the text of those rejected paragraphs to which he had previously referred should then be quoted.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) suggested that paragraph 8 should state that at the request of the USSR representative, certain paragraphs which had not been adopted had been included in the report.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat would take note of the various suggestions. He asked the Committee members if they were in agreement with the text of paragraph 9 in the introduction to the report.

Mr. BENDRYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that the paragraph be put to a separate vote.

Paragraph 9 was adopted by 3 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN asked the members of the Committee to state their views on the whole of the report to be transmitted to the Trusteeship Council.

Mr. de CAMARET (France) said that he would vote for the report, but recalled that he had reserved the right to explain to the Council the position of his country in regard to the petitions received from the political groups that had been disbanded.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia) hoped the report would make it clear that the Committee, not wishing to come to a decision in the matter, had left it to the Council to decide on the procedure to be followed in regard to the petitioners in question. The delegation of Australia also had certain reservations and would explain them before the Council.

The draft report (T/C.2/L.215) was adopted, with the amendments made by the Secretariat, by 4 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.