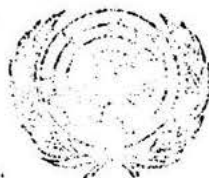


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Fifteenth Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 28 January 1955, at 2 p.m.

President:

Mr. URQUIA

(El Salvador)

1. Examination of conditions in the Cameroons under French administration [Agenda item 3 d] (continued)

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e., the summary record, will appear in provisional mimeographed form under the symbol T/SR.566 and will be subject to representatives' corrections. It will appear in final form in a printed volume.

EXAMINATION OF CONDITIONS IN THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION:

- (a) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY (T/1137, 1150, 1154, 1155)
[Agenda item 3 d]
- (b) PETITIONS CIRCULATED UNDER RULE 85, PARAGRAPH 2, OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL (T/COM.5/L.33; T/PET.5/L.16 and Add.1, L.18, L.21 to L.31; T/PET.5/225) [Agenda item 4] (continued)

Economic Advancement

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Becquey, special representative for the Cameroons under French administration, took a place at the Trusteeship Council table.

Mr. LOOMES (Australia): I have two questions with regard to statistics. I note on page 364 of the annual report that 1,278 tons of cotton textiles were produced in the Territory in 1953. I wonder whether the special representative could indicate to us whether this is an entirely new field of production or, if not, what was the comparable figure for the previous year, 1952?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): The production of cotton in the Cameroons is indeed a new type of production. Of course, before 1939 there had been attempts to grow cotton, but these attempts were abandoned when the market fell. In the past two or three years we have again started to grow cotton in the Cameroons. At this stage there is a relatively important production of this agricultural product in the north of the country and it is growing. I think that I can give some specific figures. I see that the production of raw cotton amounted to 7,000 tons for 1954 as compared to 4,500 tons last year. You may note that the 1,278 tons that are in the report is the figure that applies to the cotton that has already been processed into fibre. It is the intention of the Administration to set up a cottonseed oil mill in order to fully utilize the cotton produced.

Mr. LOOMES (Australia): I think that it is very gratifying to hear of this new development in the economic field.

My next question relates to the statistics which appear in table 1 on page 384 of the Annual Report. These figures reveal that there has been an increase of some 19,000 tons in goods loaded at ports in the Territory in 1953 compared with 1952. The figures for the tonnage of goods unloaded -- that is presumably imports -- appear to reflect a decline of some 100,000 tons. Could the special representative give us some indication of the causes of this decline?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): It is clear that in 1953 imports for the Cameroons declined sharply. This is mainly due to two reasons. The most important reason, which in fact may be a permanent one, is the fact that the major investments for carrying out the main projects of the plan have reached an end. If there was a considerable increase in imports in 1951 and 1952, the figure for imports now tends to become stabilized at a somewhat lower level. The second reason is that in 1952 the various trading companies had accumulated rather large stocks. During 1953, and particularly during the first part of 1953, orders decreased and, as a result, imports dropped. At first glance this might be considered to be a slackening of activity. Yet, a further change took place in 1954 with an increase in imports. However, these figures would hardly catch up with the figures for 1952, which can be regarded as rather abnormal figures, owing to a period of activity which was really out of the ordinary.

Mr. LOOMES (Australia): My last question relates to the matter of forests. I observe from pages 125 and 126 of the Annual Report, the situation with regard to the classification of forests. I should be grateful if the special representative could indicate what progress has been made in the last twelve months in breaking down the opposition of the indigenous inhabitants to the programme for the classification of forests.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): In connexion with the classification of forests, I must admit that little progress has been made. We are witnessing a fact which is undeniable. The objections of the indigenous inhabitants to the classification of forests is further accentuated by

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purely political reasons. I think that with due patience the Administering Authority, in adopting the recommendations of the Trusteeship Council as a basis, will be able to convince the natives that it is in their interests to preserve the forest domain of the Territory. I hope that in the future the political parties will change their platforms accordingly.

Sir Alan BURNS (United Kingdom): I have read with interest the account of the construction of the dam and power station at Edéa. I wonder whether the special representative can tell us whether the power available from this dam has already been fully exploited. Secondly, can he tell us whether the Administration has contemplated any further hydroelectric schemes/

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): The hydroelectric station at Edéa has a potential production capacity of 80,000 kilowatts during every season of the year. This figure is of course higher than the present consumption for the area. There is a transportation network between Edéa and Douala, and the power is used almost exclusively in the two open centres of these towns. At present there are only two power groups of 10,000 kilowatts each

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representative)

As I said, they go far beyond the consumption needs of the area and, therefore, only one power group is operating at one time. At the present stage a third group is being planned and it is only necessary to buy the equipment in order to instal this group. The dams are built in such a way that, without changing the plant, one can increase the number of power posts from three to eight and can extend the present plant in area; it is only necessary, as I said, to instal the equipment. During the past year further conversations have been held between the Administration of the Territory and a group of French businessmen for the purpose of studying the possibility of building in Edéa, in order to utilize the power, an aluminium processing plant. I think that the negotiations have been successful and that, early this year, equipment will be installed so that the building may be begun.

We have not yet any known deposits of bauxite in the Cameroons. The plan is to bring aluminium from France and to process it on the spot in the Cameroons. Other projects are in mind, but I do not think that they are sufficiently advanced for me to speak of them here. A paper plant and a fertilizer plant were envisaged, but these ideas are still too vague for me to describe them clearly to the Council at the moment.

Sir Alan BURNS (United Kingdom): Turning to the chapter dealing with forests, on page 124 of the annual report we read of the difficulties which confront the Administration in classifying forests by virtue of the objections raised by the local inhabitants, and I fully realize how difficult a task it is to persuade these people that some such measures are necessary, and indeed essential, in a territory which is largely agricultural. Would the special representative explain more fully the present intentions of the Administration in this respect? I realize that reference is made to a search for a solution to this problem on page 126 of the annual report.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): The main effort now is one of persuasion among the indigenous inhabitants and the members of the Territorial Assembly. They are elected and, of course, we realize that they must bear in mind the opinions of their constituents.

(Mr. Becquey. Special
representative)

But it is proposed to amend the forestry regulations. In practice, they cannot be changed to such a degree as to enable the natives to destroy the forests which are needed, but the changes envisaged in these regulations have been designed primarily to change their wording. Instead of saying that the forests belong to the Territory, we would say that they belong to the communities. But so long as the local communities have not become active democratic institutions, it is very difficult to entrust to them the protection of these forests and, therefore, so long as there are not in existence firmly established rural communities, it will not be possible to entrust to their care the preservation of their forests; it would be much too dangerous, I think.

Sir Alan BURNS (United Kingdom): I am grateful to the special representative for his replies, and particularly for the very interesting information which he gave in answer to my first question.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): I had intended to ask the special representative some questions on the classification of forests, but I believe that he has covered all the points which I had in mind, unless he could tell us whether the Territorial Assembly, during the last year, has in fact considered the recommendation that was made by the Trusteeship Council with regard to the classification of forests and, if so, was its reaction the same as has been experienced in earlier years? Was this recommendation specifically discussed in the Territorial Assembly? The special representative will remember that last year the Trusteeship Council urged the Administering Authority to take appropriate measures in respect of soil conservation and protection of forests, and particularly the classification of forests. It expressed the hope that the Administering Authority would receive the full co-operation and support of the indigenous inhabitants.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): When the Territorial Assembly had an opportunity to deal with the problem of forestry the Commission of the Government drew its attention to the recommendations of the Trusteeship Council. I must say that the Trusteeship

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representative)

Council must have seemed, to the members of the Assembly, a less dangerous agency than the constituents were, because the position of the Assembly was not affected. They recognized that it was a problem but they recognized also that, for the time being, they were somewhat outbidden by their constituents. They could not withstand the pressure.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): In this section of the annual report dealing with forests I note that there is a technical forestry school. Could the special representative tell us whether this school is operating satisfactorily and, in particular, do the graduates have any difficulty in finding employment? I think that the report says that the students who leave the school find employment both in the public and in the private sector of industry. I wonder whether he could expand on that a little.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French):

Most of the alumni of the Forestry School find employment as forest agents, as officials. The others find jobs among the various timber or lumber companies. I have no figures here but I do not think that any difficulties were encountered this year in finding jobs for them.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): Continuing with this question of forestry, I note from the annual report that some 270 hectares of land were reforested in 1953 and that this was an increase over the area of land reforested in 1952. Is it the intention of the Administering Authority to expand this policy of reforestation and, if so, what possibilities are there of interesting the indigenous inhabitants in taking part in it?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): The reforestation activities were pursued by the local administration and I do not at this stage have concrete figures regarding 1954. But within the framework of the activities of the Forest and Water Department, we are pursuing the programme. It is an administrative action which is being taken there. Reforestation is carried out by means of the agents of the Forest and Water Service according to the plans that are drafted by the Service. Within the figures quoted here there is no local participation on the part of the native population. I do not think that at this stage the native population is sufficiently concerned with there being reforestation of the land. Neither do I think that it would be possible to ask them for any effective co-operation at this stage.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): Pages 91 and 92 of the annual report give an account of the rural development plans under the general rubric of équipement rural. This scheme appears to be making encouraging progress. In the second to last paragraph on page 92 of the report it is said that the intervention of this plan permits the integration of the rural population in the general movement of economic expansion in the Territory. Could the special representative give us some indication of the ways in which the rural inhabitants are able to play a part in this rural planning?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French):

This programme of small rural equipment is something very original and constitutes the culmination point of efforts of the Administration to equip the country. As we state in the report, perhaps in somewhat summary form, these programmes of rural equipment are carried out at a very low level, that is to say, at the village group level. The local budget, of course, has its share, as well as the budget/^{of the}Fund for Economic and Social Investment and Development. It is also envisaged that contributions will be made in kind by the local communities. A joint effort has been pursued there. The local population brings its work and, eventually, some materials. The local budget and the plan budget finance the whole effort and grant credits to the so-called sociétés de prévoyance or to the co-operatives, within the framework of this joint action.

I find, for instance, in a report on the second part of the plan, a summary list of the measures that were taken. This report bears on the first part of 1954. The report says the following:

"The credits enabled one to transpose a number of wells, to retrace roads, to retrace the cattle tracks. They have been supplied with wells, with schools, with dispensaries, the breeding of small home cattle and the setting up of fisheries, the supplying of various produce in order to improve their crops, the building up of small processing plants, the introduction of new types of culture such as European vegetables, the developing of food crop in agriculture. The action which has thus been undertaken has led to the immediate improvement in the living conditions of the farmers by helping to perfect their own economy."

One sees here a type of activity which was carried out within the framework of that plan. There has been placed at the disposal of the rural populations material or equipment or techniques which these populations would not have been able to create by themselves.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): I note from the annual report that a new agricultural school was to be opened at Nkolbisson in 1954. Has this school been established and what is the nature of the work that the graduates of this school will undertake?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French):

The official opening of the School of Nkolbisson has indeed been inaugurated this year. The promotions which arise from the school are designed to provide supervising agents. They will work in the agricultural administrative services.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): On page 110 of the annual report, paragraph 55, mention is made of the problem of over-population in the Baniléké region and it says that the Administration is seeking a solution. Would the special representative perhaps elaborate on the problem and indicate whether any solution has been found or is in the mind of the Administration?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

The Bamiléké area is indeed over-populated. The land, which is not flat, is threatened by drought and erosion. The Council has already had a chance to consider the problems in connexion with a petition from the Bambuto. The Administration wished to achieve an understanding between the local farmers and a European company that is exploiting the pastures on the hillsides, but for reasons which are apparently of a political nature, no agreement has as yet been arrived at. However, the state of malaise seems to be cooling off, and an agreement may soon be reached.

The over-all problem, of course, is rather difficult to remedy, as are all problems of over-population, and it can only be ameliorated by increasing the production of food in the area. An experimental station has been set up to improve the quality of the coffee plants and other food crops which are grown in that part of the country, and adapt them to the high altitudes. This station, of course, will not provide the final answer to the problem of over-population. The Bamiléké people are very prolific, and they are often forced to migrate. They constitute what we call in the Cameroons the "invading Bamilékés". They spread over into neighbouring areas and request land. They quarrel with the local farmers and have conflicts which come before the tribunals and before the Committee on Petitions and the Trusteeship Council. These conflicts are not easy to resolve, and the Administration can only carry out long-range measures. Under the land tenure programme, which is designed progressively to grant to the indigenous inhabitants who are exploiting land recognition of the ownership of that land, the Administering Authority may be able to achieve some results.

However, the problem is not easy of solution because when the Bamilékés have exploited a plot of land for five or six years, they then ask for recognition of their rights over that plot. Protests are then forthcoming from the local population, and it is said that the land was merely lent, but now the Bamilékés wish to become the owners.

(Mr. Becquey, Special
representative)

Those are some of the aspects of the land tenure problem upon which the Administering Authority is focussing its attention.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): I read with interest the account in the annual report of the development of rice production in the northern part of the Cameroons. Has the special representative any comment to make on the progress of that scheme?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): Rice is indeed an interesting crop because it provides the Cameroonians with a basic foodstuff which is highly appreciated. In addition to the results which have been described in the annual report, I can state that credits have been made available within the framework of the four-year plan for the development of rice culture, and explorations have been made in the valley of the Sanaga River in order to study the possibilities of growing rice there. An experimental station has been set up at Nanga-Eboko in order to improve the seed species. Tracks have also been laid down in order to link up the various rice-growing centres in other parts of the country. Similar activities are being pursued in the Logone region and in other areas. The Logone region is an area of floods, and mechanical methods of production are being experimented with there. Finally, credits are also available to other regions, particularly Mbam, for the development of rice culture.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): Am I correct in understanding that all this rice is consumed in the Territory, or is some of it exported?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): So far as I am aware, all of it is consumed on the spot.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): I notice from the statistics contained in the annual report that there has been a decline in the production, and particularly in the export, of palm kernels and palm oil. Can the special representative give us an explanation for this decline in production?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

There has been a decline in the export of palm oil, and there are several reasons for this decline. The first reason is that, of course, there has been a fall in the world prices of palm oil. When the price of palm oil is low, the indigenous producer does not feel inclined to climb the trees in order to pick the nuts. There has also been an increase in domestic consumption, and this increase is due to the overall rise in the standard of living of the population. The third reason is that perhaps there has been a decline in production. Most of the palm groves have been badly maintained and neglected, and as a result the trees produce less and less oil. Measures to improve the situation have been taken within the framework of the development plan. Under this plan, a so-called sector de modernisation has been set up in the south of the Territory in an effort to improve the crops. Stations have been set up in the neighbourhood of Douala, in order to carry out a programme of maintaining the natural palm groves, cleaning them up and improving the soil. The plan also provides for the setting up of nurseries to provide seedlings for the indigenous inhabitants.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): My next question refers to public works and public buildings in the Trust Territory. In the annual report there are a number of excellent photographs of public buildings, and my delegation was impressed by the substantial nature of these buildings. I noted also, in the section dealing with public works, that that service was very active in 1953. I would like to ask the special representative how far the resources of the Territory can provide the construction material for public works, such as bridges and buildings? I notice, for instance, that despite this expansion in the building programme of the Territory, there has been a decline in the import of cement. Are the buildings constructed of local timbers or stone, or is there a cement industry in the Territory?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

At present, few local building materials are used in the building of large bridges or other works. In the past, local timber was used for the bridges, but now steel girders are imported, as is cement and the other necessary

(Mr. Becquey, Special
representative)

materials. The decline in the import of cement is due to the slowing down of the plan. When the Edéa barrage and other bridges were built, cement was imported in large quantities, but at the present stage the cement imports have become more normal.

(Mr. Becquay, Special
representative)

Of course, the local industries should try to make use of locally produced materials precisely in order to make cement or to provide other building materials. For the time being, in Douala, there is a nut and bolt manufacturing plant but it uses raw materials that are imported. It does not work with locally produced iron. The point is whether local consumption will be sufficient to justify the setting up of native industries. All this applies to major projects or major artistic works for the building of native housing or smaller buildings.

Efforts have been made, particularly by the Société immobilière du Cameroun, which is a firm that is operating partly on public funds and partly on native funds, in order to improve the utilization of local materials. This company, in close co-operation with the Société de prévoyance, has drafted pilot building plans which are based on the consumption of local materials. Of course, the result is that the cost of building is reduced.

We hope that with the help of the credits that the Société immobilière du Cameroun may grant to these societies, this type of construction may expand and will result in radical improvements in rural housing.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): I have no further questions. I should like to thank the special representative for his full answers.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) (interpretation from French): On page 110 of the annual report, I read with satisfaction that the Bureau des sols has taken up the question of erosion in the Bamiléké country. Unfortunately, I also read that the recommendations of the technicians go counter to tradition or are forbidden by custom. The traditions there have made it necessary for the work to go very slowly.

The Visiting Mission in 1952 was concerned with the question of erosion in the Bamiléké region. This question appears in paragraphs 184 and 185 of the Visiting Mission's report. It is suggested there that since the Bamiléké do not want to take the advice given to them, the Visiting Mission would suggest ways to send Bamiléké to other regions, for example, so that they could see some of the terrace farming and then change their methods of farming. This measure may or may not have been adopted. I wonder if the special representative could give me any information. I also wish to ask a connected question. Do they really realize

how great the problem is? As I said at another meeting, Africa is dying. The erosion of the soil is ravaging all Africa. If something is not done, the whole continent will become sterile. In view of this situation, I wonder, as did the Visiting Mission, whether some definite and obligatory measures should not be taken so as to remedy this very grave situation.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): As regards the first question, I am somewhat perplexed because I do not know whether the agricultural services have sent Bamiléké into the Mokolo region to study the plantations there. I have not heard of such an experiment; but it may be that such an experiment was carried out. In any case, I do not think that it produced fruitful results because the situation does not seem to have been improved. Of course, some farmers have listened to the advice of the agricultural technicians in that it is better to plant their crops according to the contour of the terrain rather than the old method.

As regards the strict regulation of an obligatory character, it is definite that it would be useful. I must, however, state with regret that a strict regulation of an obligatory character already exists for the protection of forests and that the local administration is encountering steadfast opposition on the part of the local population. It is also encountering ill will and there are continuous complaints either before the courts or before the political organizations. At this stage, I think that the local administration is hardly able to institute rigorous regulations unless that had the voluntary support of the population.

The two suggestions which are made here are very useful indeed. However, they have to be thought of in connexion with a continuous propaganda action. It is a very thankless task. Yet we are urging our agricultural technicians to pursue it relentlessly.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): May I add a few words to what the special representative has just stated. The problem that was raised by the representative of Belgium and also by the representative of New Zealand deserves to have the attention of the Council focused on it for it is one of importance among the many which bear on our administration of Trust

Territories. It is a very grave problem because these Territories, and generally all the Territories of tropical Africa, suffer at this stage from constant deforestation and low-grade agricultural practices. This has gone on for centuries and perhaps for thousands of years. Very recently, since the European peoples became responsible for the administration of Territories, some measures have been taken to protect the land. Whatever measures we take, it is of course not possible in a few decades to repair damages which were caused over a period of perhaps thousands of years.

The Trusteeship Council should pay attention to this problem because it is only within the framework of international co-operation that it will be possible to remedy this progressive sterilization of African soil. I understand that a conference was held recently in Leopoldville in order to study this problem. However, as the special representative pointed out, the main obstacle, whether it is a question of measures of persuasion or measures of coercion, is the lack of comprehension by the native population. Thus is it important -- and I believe that I pointed this out in the Standing Committee on Petitions -- that we undertake a campaign of persuasion, accompanied by sanctions against the indigenous population.

Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of France and the special representative for their explanations.

Mr. S. S. LIU (China): The annual report refers in sections 56 to 60 on page 114 to various experiments which the Administration conducted during the year with a view to increasing agricultural production. The representative of New Zealand has already mentioned the cultivation of rice. Here the report also mentions the attempted introduction of tea and the planting of new varieties of cotton and tobacco. I should like to know in greater detail about the things that are being done by the Administering Authority, what progress has been achieved and what are the prospects for the future development of all these products.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): I should like to ask whether the question applies to tea and tobacco or to other products also.

Mr. S. S. LIU (China): Tea, tobacco and cotton.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): As regards tea, we are only at the experimental stage as regards acclimatizing tea, and this is being done in the region of Dschang. We have imported plants. Their growth and their yield are being closely watched. However, I do not have definite information as to the conclusions which the technicians have reached up to now. But up to the present time, the indigenous inhabitants have not themselves undertaken the growth of these agricultural products through the spreading of plants in the country. There are no native growers.

As regards tobacco, there are two types of production. One type is done by a body directed by Europeans. It is done by the Société d'exploitation industrielle des tabacs français. This company owns plantations. Nevertheless, in the eastern part of the Territory there are also indigenous producers. Production seems to be maintained at the same level in the two cases. There does not seem to be much possibility of developing this product on a very large scale because of the nature of the soil. I am not a technician, and I therefore cannot give you the reasons for this.

(Mr. Becquey, Special representative)

I think that the soil which is favourable for the growth of tobacco is not very extensive at the present time, and it does not seem that great progress can be envisaged in this field also because of the present state of our knowledge.

As regards cotton, we have witnessed in the past three or four years a resurrection of cotton production in the northern part of the Territory. We produced 7,000 tons of raw cotton last year, and we will perhaps produce 8,000 tons this year. I think that the production of cotton can be expanded. Nevertheless, we are faced with another problem in this field: that of the balance of crops in the northern regions. The mechanized production of cotton is rather difficult in these regions as cotton requires much manual labour. It would be harmful to unbalance the whole situation. In other words, it would not be wise to introduce cotton on such a scale so that the production of food crops would suffer. There is also a human problem there, a human limitation. It is possible that in the future these crops can be developed by increasing the areas of production. It is not very likely that we can in the actual producing areas increase the cultivated land area, for that policy would inevitably involve a decrease in the lands devoted to food products. It is however possible to extend these crops to zones which are not now producing food products.

Mr. S. S. LIU (China): One of the conclusions reached by the Trusteeship Council at its thirteenth session was related to the question of financial returns to the cocoa farmers.

In the resolution adopted by the Council at that session, some concern was expressed over the close relationship between these returns and the fluctuations in the world market price of cocoa. The Trusteeship Council also requested the Administering Authority to study further measures which might be taken to ensure stability of returns for the cocoa producers. I do not know whether the Administration has taken any measures or is contemplating any measures to implement that resolution of the Trusteeship Council. I do not

(Mr. S. S. Liu, China)

I do not remember whether there is such a thing as a stabilization fund in this Territory as exists in some other Territories. If there is none, is it the intention of the Administering Authority to establish one?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

The need for a stabilization fund has of course not escaped the attention of the Administering Authority which has welcomed with pleasure the recommendations of the Trusteeship Council on this point. Nevertheless, I think we should stress that the Administering Authority is not the only interested party as regards this question and that in a field of this kind it does not take decisions on its own initiative any more; it must obtain the co-operation and approval of the Territorial Assembly. I do not wish to say that the Territorial Assembly is not aware of the problem and that it is not convinced of the need to do something about it. I would therefore be discrediting the local administration and letting it be thought that its power of persuasion is very weak. I am certain -- and I have spoken to several interested parties -- that the members of the Territorial Assembly are convinced of the need to do something. However, to establish a stabilization fund means the compulsory reduction of the price now paid to producers, a price which at the present time is relatively high; you also have to find some funds available in the budget which each area or department tries to use for the needs of its own section or in the public interest. I must say that the problem was taken up this year and that the members of the Territorial Assembly seem to have made some progress, but for the moment no concrete achievement can be noted. No funds have been set aside from the budget for the creation of this stabilization fund, and at this stage it has not been deemed possible to reduce the prices that are paid to the producers.

Mr. S. S. LIU (China): I have a last question with regard to income taxes. This question has engaged the close attention of the Council for some time, and at its thirteenth session the Council noted progress that had been made in attempting to introduce a progressive income tax in place of the flat-rate tax now imposed in the Territory. I wonder if the special representative would be good enough to tell us whether any further progress has been made in this matter.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): No basic structural reform has been enacted this year, and therefore there has been no progress on that score. However, I would like to note the fact that the tax is not of a single type. The tax is a unique type, and the minimum tax is staggered according to the paying capacity of the taxpayers. As regards the obligatory minimum tax, there are four categories. The basic category is category No.3; the second category is the tax multiplied by two; the first category is the tax multiplied by three; the fourth category, that of the lower echelon, involves a division by two.

As regards the contribution for solidarité sociale, the rates of multiplication and division are different -- we have the coefficients 3, 6 and 0.25. Thus, there is a staggering of the tax in accordance with the earning capacity of the people concerned. The ideal solution would be to establish a progressive tax which would apply to all taxpayers. However, that is an objective which is rather far removed from reality. In order to draw up rosters, a detailed census would have to be taken, periodic inventories would be required and a tax return verification system would have to be drawn up. All this would necessarily involve considerable personnel. I do not believe that this can be done in the near future. Nevertheless, I think that some progress can be noted in the fact that the census which has been carried out does enable us to ascertain the resources of each person checked. Gradually we shall have a roster, and this roster will have to reflect the fact that the receipt of the taxes is carried out on a village basis. Nevertheless, the chiefs who collect the taxes will be able to impose them more fairly among the members of the community.

Mr. SINGH (India): In reply to a question on forests, the special representative said that the recommendation of the Trusteeship Council was brought to the notice of the Territorial Assembly when it discussed that question. I should like to clear up a doubt in my mind in that connexion. Are the resolutions and conclusions of the Trusteeship Council brought to the notice of the Territorial Assembly as a rule, or only when a relevant question is discussed by the Territorial Assembly?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

There is no rule in this field.

Mr. SINGH (India): In connexion with the ten-year plan, in the outline I find that the main economic aims are given. They are all very admirable, and I am sure that they will bring great benefit to the Territory. I should like to know whether the special representative or the Administering Authority has some sort of an estimate -- I do not expect exact statistics -- as to what would be the rise in per capita income, if not in the villages then perhaps in the main towns, when this ten-year plan is completed.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): The local administration has attempted to make an assessment of the per capita income of the population. This was not successful because of the varied local conditions of the economy. In some areas, the economy is not of a monetary nature, and the exchange values vary from place to place, even in those removed from each other by only a few miles. It was therefore not possible to assess reliably the per capita income of the inhabitants.

Mr. SINGH (India): I find in the outline that the production of some crops has increased and for one or two crops it has decreased. I have not been able to learn whether the total area of land under cultivation has increased from 1952 to 1953 or whether it has remained the same.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

Page 349 of the Annual Report contains a table of the planted areas in hectares. There are, of course, rather unusual variations. For example, in the first line, as regards mills and sorgho, the area has decreased; as regards corn and rice, it has increased. It is obvious that we are witnessing at this stage a decline of planted areas for products which bring poor prices in the world markets. There is an increase for those crops which bring a more favourable return. Of course, too much importance should not be attached to these figures. However, there has been a fairly large increase between 1952 and 1953. We do not have the total statistics for all the planted areas.

(Mr. Becquey, Special representative)

Each official of the agricultural service responsible for a given area must supply figures for areas that have been planted and figures for the production of the areas. This is done in a rather arbitrary manner, either by personal inspection or by making inquiry on the spot. This is not a very reliable procedure. Nevertheless, an increase can be noted in the planted areas, which is due to certain fairly obvious reasons. On the one hand, there has been an improvement of the road system, which enables one to go farther inland. There has also been a change in the structure of the economy. Until now each family lived within a closed economy and produced the food crops and industrial products which it required. We are now witnessing the slow diversification of agriculture.

Mr. SINGH (India): In industrial production, I find that there was no increase in the production of soap. Also in the production of butter I note that there was a considerable decline. Can the special representative tell us why there was no increase in the production of soap? Was that the maximum amount they needed and why has there been no increase in the import of soap? Secondly, why did the production of butter fall off so much?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): I have no information on that subject. As regards the production of soap, it results from the production of palm oil. I can therefore assume that if there was no increase in the production of soap it was due to the fact that the price for palm oil was not very satisfactory, and therefore the oil was not brought to the soap plants.

(Mr. Becquey, Special representative)

Perhaps the supply from overseas covers the local needs, but that is, of course, a personal impression. As regards butter, I do not know what has caused the decrease in production. I know that it is produced by a single farm, but I have no detailed information on the subject.

Mr. SINGH (India): I have no more questions in this field, but I should like to propose, for the consideration of the Council, that the recommendations of the Council, at least in the economic, social and educational fields, should be brought to the attention of the Territorial Assembly every year.

Mr. SEARS (United States of America): I understand that a geological map of the French Cameroons is being compiled. How soon will this map be ready for distribution?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): I regret that I do not have the map with me. It is in my office in Yaoundé.

Mr. SEARS (United States of America): My question was, is it available for public distribution?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): Yes.

Mr. SEARS (United States of America): In 1953 the report said that foreign investments in the Cameroons had fallen off. What was the reason for this, and how were they last year?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): I have no figures for 1954; I do not know whether they have increased or not. As regards their falling off in the past, I do not think that we should consider the rhythm of investment year in year out because there is no actual rhythm. There were foreign investments when the storage plant for hydro-carbides was built. This is due to the fact that the Cameroons is not a Territory which appeals to foreign investors -- and I use the word "appeal", in the English

(Mr. Becquey, Special representative)

sense of the word. It is not a country which is well known; investors hesitate to invest their money there. The status of the Territory is unknown. Unless safeguards of a political nature are provided, there is some reticence in regard to investing money. Safeguards might be provided by local governments; this has been done in other parts of the world. When I speak of foreign investment, I include French investment. The difficulties are due to the degree of uncertainty about the whole place.

Mr. SEARS (United States of America): There has been some talk about starting a cellulose industry in the Territory. What are the prospects for such an industry, if any, today?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): As far as I know, no progress has been made as yet in this regard, although I have no doubt that it will be carried out in the near future.

Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): I do not see in the report any figures with regard to the amount of native industry production. I should like to ask the Special representative to be kind enough to give us some estimate of the indigenous industrial production and whether such amount can be considered as a significant factor, and what would be the percentage of indigenous production as compared with non-indigenous production.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): I have no figures at my disposal in that connexion. Such figures are of a global nature. But I should like to ask the representative of El Salvador exactly what he means by industrial production.

Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): I am referring to the small industries which are operated by the indigenous population in general, but it seems to me that the answer has been given since I have noted that there are no figures in the report. I should like to ask now whether the Administering Authority has any specific plan for encouraging small industry production in order to convert it into an important factor in the over-all industrial production of the Territory and thus to improve the general standard of living.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

The industrial production of the indigenous population is of an artisan nature, although the building of houses, for example, is a type of industrial production. Several housing development concerns are in the hands of Cameroonians, but I have no figures in this connexion. Generally speaking, however, industrial production is of an artisan type. Of course, the natives who own the lumber mills can scarcely contribute significantly to the forestry exploitation of the country, as the report indicates. Actually, the largest industrial enterprises have been supported by foreign capital and are, of course, managed by outsiders.

As regards the projects of the Administering Authority, we must distinguish between two factors. First of all, the Administering Authority is, of course, concerned with increasing the industrialization of the Territory and of putting the means of industrialization in the hands of the Africans. I referred just now to the butter factory at Meiganga; I could mention also the herring-curing plant at Fort Foureau and the stockyard at Maroua.

A provident society is directed by the Chief of the Sub-divisions; it belongs to the population. The management is elected by the population, and the vice-president is elected by the board of the organization. One might say that that is a type of industry which belongs to the Cameroonians.

The same can be said of the herring-curing plant at Fort Foureau. As regards the stockyard at Maroua, it was built by public subscription and has been farmed out. The person who operates the concession is a European; nevertheless he is serving the community, and it is difficult to see whether that industry is Cameroonian or foreign.

(Mr. Becquey, Special representative)

On the other hand, within the framework of the so-called sociétés de prévoyance and the supervisory service of the co-operatives, a vigorous encouragement is offered to industrialization. A coffee planter, for instance, may own a coffee mill. The Crédit du Cameroun and the so-called communal Fund, as well as the société de prévoyance and the supervisory service of the co-operatives, offer credit every year, as large as possible, for the development of the native articles and crafts.

The situation in this field is of course fairly fluid. It is difficult to give statistical data on the subject. That is why such data does not figure in the report. Nevertheless, I can say that there is clear-cut progress in that field and, indeed, individually or collectively, the Cameroonians are participating in industry to a growing extent, and there is valid hope that the Territory will be industrialized with the growing participation of the natives, as was recommended by the Trusteeship Council.

Mr. ROMJZBAL (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): I have one final question. Concerning the industrial field, I would like to know whether, as regards the recommendation which the Trusteeship Council issued at its thirteenth session, to the effect that the Administering Authority ought to encourage and stimulate the development of light industry with the greatest possible participation of indigenous inhabitants, the Administering Authority has drawn up any specific project for the establishment or creation of light industry, as indicated by the recommendation? For example, I have in mind textiles, the processing of hides and leather and the manufacture of shoes. I should like to have some reply with regard to this particular matter.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): The Administering Authority has not looked at the problem from the same viewpoint as seems to be the case with the representative of El Salvador. The Administration said: We have to industrialize. What shall we do about it? We must draw up a plan. I remember a petition which was filed, for example, requesting that a sardine industry be set up in the Bamiléké area. But there was no sea there, there were no boats, there were no fishermen and there was no tin or metal to make the cans.

(Mr. Becquey, special representative)

Therefore, the Administration was rather embarrassed in having to answer such a petition. Our problem was not to consider it from that angle. It was based on the premise that one had to give the native population a chance to direct its attention to certain industrial projects when it felt like it. No detailed plan was drawn up following the recommendation of the Trusteeship Council. This already existed before. We found in the recommendation of the Trusteeship Council an encouragement to pursue the fulfilment of that plan so as to give the populations an opportunity to market their goods by means of the co-operatives, by means of the sociétés de prévoyance or by means of credits provided by the Crédit du Cameroun.

For the time being this type of action is being carried out. I do not think that we can deliberately direct the population in one way or another, except by setting an example. The sociétés de prévoyance or the sociétés d'économie mixte have set up oil mills for transformation of palm oil. They have set up stockyards, butter holds, and so on. We have left it to the natives to set up the small plants for the processing of coffee grain. At this stage in any case, I do not think that one can say in detail what will be the type of industry towards which the population would be inclined.

Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): I have no further questions. I simply wanted to have a clarification here. I said nothing about sardine fishing. I mentioned the manufacture of shoes and a few things of that nature. I tried to be very practical about this. I think that it would be a very good idea to establish some light industry there.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria) (interpretation from French): In chapter I of the sixth part, the Administering Authority has mentioned the powers of the Territorial Assembly in the budgetary field. On page 62 we note that the budget is prepared by the Finance Bureau and is debated chapter by chapter by the Territorial Assembly. Then, on page 65, paragraph 35, we find restrictions and reservations, with regard to the power of the Territorial Assembly, as concerns taxes.

The question I would like to put to the special representative is the following: If the Territorial Assembly is competent in the budgetary field, does its competence stop in the budget field, or does it also enter into the field of

(Mr. Tarazi, Syria)

fiscal legislation? The authority which has the power to draw up the budget would also seem to have the power to modify fiscal legislation bearing on the budget.

Mr. BARGUES (France)(interpretation from French): The deliberative power of the Assembly only as regards the budget is total and unrestricted. The fiscal deliberations which are not part of the budget are merely one of the elements which reflect on the budget. These deliberations of a fiscal nature fall within the category which I outlined yesterday. They are mandatory only under certain conditions. Some of these deliberations can be decisive only if within a period of ninety days they have not been annulled by the executive power of the metropolitan country. Other types of deliberations become mandatory once they have been sanctioned by the executive power of the metropolitan country.

As regards the taxes, the deliberations with the view of modifying the basis and collection of taxes -- the basis on which the taxes are established, the categories of taxpayers and the rules for the collection of the taxes -- must be approved by the French Conseil d'Etat. The deliberations which apply merely to the rights of taxation, according to the categories that have already been set up, become mandatory if they have not been vetoed by the executive power.

(Mr. Bargues, France)

Therefore, the powers of the Territorial Assembly are the same as the powers of the legislative assemblies in the more advanced Western European countries. In the fiscal field, the powers of the Territorial Assembly are restricted because they are subject to approval from above.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria) (interpretation from French): On page 69 of the annual report reference is made to the issue of paper money. We are told that authority for this is held by the Caisse centrale de la France d'outre-mer under the Ordinances of 24 July 1942 and 2 February 1944. In view of the fact that the CCFOM is an institution which issues paper money throughout the French Union, with the exception of the metropolitan territory, has the Administration envisaged the creation of some institution, separate from the CCFOM, since the Cameroons, as well as Togoland, has a special status in the French Union?

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): This problem has secured the attention of the French Government. The system that applies to the territories under French administration is a very complex one. The Caisse centrale de la France d'outre-mer does not have the privilege of issuing paper money in all the territories. In the metropolitan territory that privilege belongs to the Banque de France; in Algeria and Tunisia, it is exercised by the Banque d'Algerie et de Tunisie; in Morocco, it is exercised by the Banque d'Etat du Maroc; in the Associated States of Indochina, by three institutions which were set up quite recently; in Madagascar, by the Banque de Madagascar; and in West Africa and Togoland, by the Banque de l'Afrique occidentale. The Caisse centrale de la France d'outre-mer has this privilege of issuing money only in the overseas departments, such as the Antilles, Guiana and Reunion Island, the Cameroons and Equatorial Africa. Quite recently, so recently, in fact, that the information I have is based on reports of the Agence France-Presse which I received two or three days ago, two decrees have been enacted under the special powers that were given to the French Government recently by the French Parliament. Under these two decrees, two new institutions have been set up. One will replace the Banque de l'Afrique occidentale in Togoland and in West Africa, and the other will replace the

(Mr. Bargues, France)

Caisse centrale de la France d'outre-mer in the Cameroons and Equatorial Africa.

This is the only information I have, and I know that it will not satisfy the objection which was voiced by the representative of Syria, namely, that Togoland and the Cameroons have a system for the issue of paper money which does not apply to them alone, but which is also applicable to certain other overseas territories or to other parts of the French Union. Therefore, the regime is the same for territories which do not have the same political status, but I do not think that is a major objection, because it is not a matter of administration only, but of bank administration, too. For instance, France and the Principality of Monaco have the same system for the issue of money, but they have a different political status.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria) (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of France for his statement but I would take the liberty of pointing to a fact. The representative of France spoke of Tunisia and Morocco as being part of the French Union, but the sovereignty of these territories was recognized by Mr. Robert Schuman of France in a speech which he made in 1952. He said then that these States were sovereign, and I take the liberty of making this comment now.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I apologize for my lapse, which has been noted by the representative of Syria. Morocco and Tunisia are not part of the French Union, they are part of the zone franc, and since I was referring merely to the monetary problem, I had to quote them.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria) (interpretation from French): With regard to foreign trade, the Administering Authority informs us that there are no restrictions on this trade, and that the only restrictions which exist are concerned with the availability of foreign exchange. Foreign exchange is made available to the territory by the Office des changes. Could the special representative tell us whether there is such an office in the territory or whether it is the Caisse centrale d'outre-mer which makes foreign exchange available to the territory?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

There is an Office des changes in the territory, and this is connected with the Office des changes in the metropolitan country. Under its rather complicated rules, it receives instructions from the Director of the Caisse centrale. It is rather an intricate organization, but the Office des changes is a separate organization.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria) (interpretation from French): It will be recalled that under resolutions adopted at previous sessions of the Trusteeship Council it was recommended that the Administering Authority should utilize the services of the specialized agencies with regard to the economy of the territory. Reference to that also appears in the working document prepared by the Secretariat. That document, I would add, is a very excellent one and we are very grateful to the Secretariat for it. On page 12 of that document, reference is made to the utilization of the services of the specialized agencies. Has the Administering Authority had recourse to the services of the Food and Agriculture Organization, for example, during the year under review?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): No.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria) (interpretation from French): In paragraph 53 in the working paper prepared by the Secretariat, it is stated:

"At its thirteenth session, the Council noted with satisfaction the measures taken by the Administering Authority towards the industrial development of the Territory and the extension of financial assistance to existing craft industries, and recommended that the Administering Authority encourage the development of light industries with greater participation by the indigenous inhabitants."

Have the indigenous inhabitants enjoyed greater participation in the light industries, or are they still in the hands of foreign investors?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

There has been increased participation by the indigenous inhabitants within the framework of the action which I described just now, action which escapes the attention of foreign capital.

Mr. TARAZI (Syria)(interpretation from French): You will recall that during the third session my delegation raised the land question. In view of the petitions which had been sent in prior thereto and which were studied by the Standing Committee on Petitions during the thirteenth as well as the fourteenth sessions, there was some general feeling for a standardization of the land system there. According to the observations which my delegation made during the general debate, we asked that the land register system be extended all over the Territory so as to do away with the causes for conflict existing there.

Has the Administering Authority envisaged any standardization of the land recording system so as to allow the territorial farmers to work their lands with full security?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): I will stress first of all that the land tenure system is uniform in its diversity since it applies to all the Territory. Should a single system be established which would be completely rigid? Our administration does not propose to carry out immediately the recommendations issued along these lines because as my administration is responsible vis-à-vis the United Nations it is also responsible vis-à-vis the people of the Territory and it does not feel that it is entitled to do away overnight with the customary laws that govern land tenure. We are not entitled at this stage to change the whole land tenure system to a rigid system.

Last year, I had the opportunity to speak in the debate on this point. At that time, I pointed out that it would probably be a catastrophe if the system were immobilized in the present stage of its development.

The customary land tenure system is a regime which is of a collective nature. The chief has the land not as a human being but as a chief, as a symbol, as a personification of the community. The chief of the land area, according to the custom which varies, is entitled to allocate the use of a plot of land to a member of the community or even to a foreigner to the community, but he does not issue any land grant.

(Mr. Becquey,
Special representative)

The amendments which we are making are in conflict with the customary laws. This conflict exists between a more modern law and a customary law. And if there are violent disputes that sometimes lead to physical violence, such objections are sometimes justified.

While my administration has the deepest respect for the recommendations which may be made to that effect and even recognizes the fact that they may be well founded, our ideal is to bring the native population closer to a system of land tenure or land utilization that will assure to the producers greater guarantees, while recognizing that the system is desirable and conscious of the difficulties that actually oppose it in its application.

As regards the system of the cadastre or land registration, my administration is attempting to have the registrations proceed at an accelerated pace.

Mr. GUEBYAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): On page 113 of the report, it is pointed out that agricultural implements that are used by the local population are confined to the plough, so-called. I do not know whether there is any industry which is producing agricultural implements.

On page 337, it is pointed out that 101 tons of agricultural machinery were imported. If only 101 tons of agricultural implements were imported, it is obviously inadequate. I should like to ascertain whether the Administering Authority is doing anything or proposing to do anything in order to introduce more up-to-date types of agricultural implements either by building plants for the production of agricultural machinery or by increasing imports of such machinery.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): The Soviet representative was kind enough to say that agricultural implements were, practically speaking, limited to the plough. Well, the plough is not to be found all over. They use something that is called a machete, a hoe with a very short handle, because they are used to bending over and working the earth. This is not a very encouraging picture.

(Mr. Becquey,
Special representative)

The question of producing agricultural equipment in the Cameroons is very important. Personally, I am not in a position to discuss it since I have not studied it. However, it seems to me that it would be a question of having minerals and coal available, technical experts present and creating factories. This is all very expensive. Naturally, we have to get this equipment from outside the Territory. We have to import it.

The representative of the Soviet Union was kind enough to draw attention to the figure of 101 tons. I must say that these are statistics with respect to customs and that agricultural machinery is something very special in customs terminology. It may be that tractors and such things figure under another heading. However, I have no precise information with regard to this matter. Nevertheless, I should like to say that my administration is not just folding its arms, standing by and allowing this primitive situation to go on and on and on.

(Mr. Becquey, Special representative)

I refer to local agriculture, of course. By means of these sociétés de prévoyance, with the aid of co-operative societies and by the action of certain quarters that are interested in modern equipment, my Administration is making a vigorous effort to instruct the farmers by word of mouth, by pictures and by example so as to help the farmers to get better equipment and to assist them in the better care of their crops, the improvement of their soil, etc. This is a long-term programme because we already know that in the old countries of Western Europe the peasants are tradition-bound and they hesitate to change their methods. The farmers in the French Cameroons are very much like these old farmers in Europe; they do not like any change. We have set up what we call modernization sectors, and we hope to improve the situation; we hope to import material and equipment and we hope progressively to develop the use of animals to pull the machinery over the fields. We hope to improve the situation.

Mr. GRUBIAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): This is my second and last question. On pages 126 and 127 of the report there are figures regarding the forest concessions, and on page 127 it is pointed out that the issuance of these permits did not raise much opposition on the part of the local populations for various reasons. I should like to know whether this means that the permits for the exploitation of forests are granted to companies as regards forests which are situated on community land. I am inclined to arrive at this conclusion because we see that there were not many objections. I assume that these objections could only arise if the woods were situated on land that was privately owned or owned by the community. Is it correct that the permits are issued on lands that are owned by the native communities or by native private persons?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): I would change the phrasing somewhat, and I would say that permits to exploit forests have been issued to individuals or to companies valid for parcels of the forests occupied by certain collectivities. We must make a very clear distinction. The forests in the Cameroons, as I believe I have

(Mr. Becquey, Special
representative)

already stated, are protected. You cannot cut down certain trees unless you have a permit; you cannot clear the woods in certain regions unless you have a permit. As long as these woods are not classified as forest reserves the indigenous community maintains the right to the use of these forests, and they have a right to clear the land. They have the right to collect wood and have various other rights of transit and so on. The individuals or companies who get such permits to exploit the forests in a given zone by no means infringe the rights of the communities involved. The local authorities give them a permit and authorize them to cut down certain trees and sell them as firewood or to export them. This is quite different from the use of the soil or over-all exploitation. Of course, the forests are over the soil and the soil is under the forests. Therefore, there is some overlapping, after all, between the various rights to the forest and the rights to the soil, and some friction or conflict does arise.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We will now take a short recess.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 4.35 p.m.

Social Advancement

Mr. SINGH (India): I find that, according to the Decree of 14 September 1951, the High Commissioner is empowered to fix by order the maximum bride-price rate. Could the special representative tell us what developments have taken place in this connexion? I want to find out whether the bride-price rate has been lowered further and further so that we can see that finally it will be eliminated in the near future.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): It is a question of fixing not the maximum bride-price but the amount above which the demands of the parents of the young woman shall be considered as excessive under the terms of article 3 of the Decree of 14 September 1951. By a Decree of 1 March 1954 the High Commissioner fixed this sum at 5,000 francs CFA. He did so on his own responsibility since the Territorial Assembly had refused to make a favourable pronouncement on the draft decree in question.

Mr. SINGH (India): I was glad to see that, alongside these measures, a propaganda campaign has also been undertaken. I should like to know something in connexion with the recommendation made by the Council about the Lamine-Gueye law. The Council did say that, if necessary, modifications should be made to any measures passed for the application of that law. I wonder if any such modifications have been made recently.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): Neither the Government nor the High Commissioner has found any practical means of satisfying the recommendation of the Council at present.

Mr. SINGH (India): I find that restrictions on the freedom of the press are extremely rare. Could the special representative tell us whether, in 1953 or since then, there have been any occasions when restrictions have had to be imposed on the freedom of the press?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): For 1953 the information is given in the annual report. For 1954 there is a Decree of 13 January which forbids the sale of certain publications to minors up to eighteen years of age. There are also: a Decree of 18 August 1954 forbidding the introduction into the Territory of the newspaper Al Hayat, which is printed in Arabic and published at Beirut; a Decree of 1 September 1954 forbidding all publications issued by an organization calling itself the All-China Democratic Women's Federation and the All-China Federation of Democratic Youth; and another Decree, also dated 1 September 1954, forbidding publications issued by the International Association of Students, whose headquarters is at Prague.

Mr. SINGH (India): I was very glad to see this report of the World Health Organization on the health conditions in the Cameroons under French administration. I would like to ask one question of the representative of WHO and then of the special representative.

It states here that "the Administering Authority has developed quite an extensive government medical service covering almost the entire Territory". (T/1155, page 2). I wonder which parts have been left out and what measures the Administering Authority is taking to make the medical facilities available to the inhabitants of those territories also.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): It is rather difficult for me to comment on the report of an agency of which I am not a member. I would say that the government health services cover the whole Territory. This sentence might be interpreted to mean that the coverage is insufficient in certain areas. The network of coverage extends over the whole Territory, but in certain parts this network is not sufficiently close and therefore it might be considered to be inadequate. However, I believe that the representative of that organization should be asked to comment on that sentence.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Would the representative of the World Health Organization care to reply in this connexion?

Dr. ENCALLS (World Health Organization): I am afraid that I cannot add very much information to what is given in this document, because the document has just arrived here and I have not had any further or more detailed information on it. However, I think that I can say that the explanation of the special representative is about the correct one. While the services cover the entire Territory and go as far as its limits, some areas within it are not as well covered as they might be. Furthermore, the type of health activity carried out by these mobile units might be enlarged in scope and more kinds of services given in the future with more money and more personnel to carry out the work.

I should like, if possible, to say a few words now in connexion with the presentation of this World Health Organization paper, if that is in order.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The representative of WHO may continue.

Dr. INGALLS (World Health Organization): The World Health Organization takes great pleasure in presenting to the Trusteeship Council this document, T/1155, a report of the World Health Organization on public health conditions in the Cameroons under French administration for the year 1953. Similar reports have also been submitted on the five other Territories which the Council will consider during this session. It is hoped that these reports will aid the members in their examination of public health conditions in these Territories.

The World Health Organization is in no wise anxious to swell unduly the pile of documentation before the Council, in view of the very sensible and various resolutions of the General Assembly on the limitation of documents and on the form of Trusteeship reports. In the future, we shall try to keep down to a minimum the comments and analyses of Territories to which the Visiting Mission is not going in those years.

However, as this is the first time that WHO has submitted material on the African Trust Territories, it was deemed essential to give the background information on health conditions and facilities, the conditions and facilities on which WHO has based any suggestions or comments made in these papers, even though this information duplicates a great deal of material which the Council has had before it in the past in various annual reports.

These facts and figures, it must also be remembered, are the basis on which the World Health Organization, in conjunction with the Administering Authority, has made certain plans for health projects, some of which are being carried out now and some of which are still in the planning stage.

I wish to thank the President for allowing me to make this short explanation.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I am very grateful to the representative of the World Health Organization.

Mr. SINGH (India): I should also like to say that the Indian delegation is very grateful to the World Health Organization for its report. It is

(Mr. Singh, India)

particularly gratifying that this report was made after a special visit to the Cameroons under French administration by the staff of WHO. We are sure that the Trusteeship Council and the Administering Authority will find it useful. We do hope that the future size of these documents will not be governed by the limitation and control of documentation, but by the usefulness of the information contained in them.

In that connexion, I would like to ask one question. I find in the outline that the indigenous doctors of medicine were 3 in 1952 and again in 1953, and that the African doctors were 16 in 1952 and again 16 in 1953; that is to say, there was no increase. I know that the special representative in his statement on the first day said that the number of doctors in the Territory increased from 48 to 91. That is very encouraging. I should like to know whether the increase was in the number of indigenous doctors or African doctors, or more an increase in the number of European doctors.

(Mr. Singh, India)

Later on he said that more than fifty students were studying medicine in France through the scholarship and fellowship systems. I should be grateful if he would give some sort of indication as to what he thinks will be the average increase in the number of African doctors in the Territory.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

A distinction must be made between what we call African doctors and those who, in effect, are also African doctors but who have not studied medicine formally. The number of these African doctors has not increased because the Administering Authority believed that it was better not to train these so-called auxiliary African doctors since there was an adequate number of students who could undertake real medical studies and acquire full medical knowledge. There are still only three doctors of African origin because, up to the present, no student possessing a university diploma has returned to the Territory. The representative of India asks whether I can give estimates regarding the increase of African-born doctors in the Cameroons. It is difficult to do so. On the one hand, the degree of MD is not granted automatically after six or seven years of study, but after submission of a thesis and after a diploma has been awarded. The student himself must be satisfied with the diploma which he has acquired and not request continuation of his studies. The African doctor who has undertaken to serve in the Territory should agree to return in order to take up his tasks as a doctor instead of going, for example, to practise in a village in France. Therefore, there are a number of conditions which can endanger any estimates which might be given, and I had rather not make any estimate.

If the Territorial Assembly allots sufficient credits, it will be possible to recruit a larger number of doctors, either European or African. On the other hand, out of the fifty students mentioned here, we hope that five or ten of them will return each year to the Territory.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): On page 201 of the report there are some photographs of children at the Cameroons Institution for Children. Apparently this Institution looked after some thirty-one children, in 1953, under the age of sixteen years, who had been entrusted to it by a decision of the court. My question to the special representative is, are these children orphans or juvenile delinquents? What type of decision of the court would entrust the children to this institution?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

This is a Cameroonian institution which takes in juvenile delinquents who have been tried and condemned.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): There is on page 187 an interesting account of the difficulties encountered by the Administration in trying to remove the abuses of the dowry system, and I note the opposition of the Territorial Assembly and of marriageable girls to the efforts that have been made by the Administration to fix some reasonable amount for the dowry. Can the special representative tell us whether any further progress has been made concerning this problem since the account given in the annual report?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

It was, I think, to this problem that the representative of India referred just before the recess. I quoted then a decree which was enacted in 1954 setting a limit to the dowry, beyond which the demands of the parents could be regarded as unreasonable. Perhaps I did not explain in sufficient detail.

This decree defines the amount beyond which a girl can appeal to the tribunal in order to receive permission to marry without her parents agreement, and it was enacted pursuant to the revision of the decree of 1951. It amounts to 5,000 local francs, which is the equivalent of 10,000 French francs. It is a low amount, but it ensures the girl's complete protection.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): I apologize for not having been here, or not having listened carefully, to the earlier reply to this question by the special representative. I would ask him, however, if he does not consider that this decree would entail some difficulties in application.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French):

It is certain that the application of this decree entails great difficulties, not as regards the tribunals, but because the families, and the girls themselves, do not appeal to the courts in order to free themselves from the rules of the dowry. There are very few instances -- I do not know whether there were any at all during the last year -- of girls going before the tribunals to ask permission for freedom from parental authority because the dowry demanded by the parents had been excessive. Nevertheless, I know of cases where the mere threat of going before a tribunal on the question of a dowry has caused the demands of the parents to drop; they preferred to receive, for example, 50,000 francs rather than go to the tribunal and to learn that nothing would be given them beyond 5,000 francs. Therefore, the decree has some degree of effectiveness, although the Administration would like to have more success in this field.

Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand): My last question is, could the special representative tell me how many labour inspectors there are in the Trust Territory.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): There were six in 1952 and eight in 1953.

Mr. S.S. LIU (China): Some of the questions I had on my list have been asked by preceding representatives. But I still have a question which I should like to put to the special representative. The question is in relation to the wages and standards of living of the inhabitants of the Territory. Some information is provided in the annual report in regard to the investigations which have been made by the Administering Authority. However, since the study is by no means complete, I wonder if it is the intention of the Administering Authority to proceed further with the investigations and to provide the Council with more accurate information in future reports.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): The inquiries which were made with regard to the standard of living and the budgets did not result in an over-all study, for we deemed, perhaps unduly modestly, that while our information was insufficient, it nevertheless contributed to the establishment of pilot budgets for workers, and it was these pilot budgets which the Advisory Labour Committee discussed before setting up a minimum wage scale. There was a fairly important increase in wages in October of 1954. These wages were set in order to reach the level of the pilot budgets which were drafted by the statistical services.

As regards the standard of living and nutritional level of the Cameroonians, large-scale studies are being undertaken now, in liaison with the statistical services of the Territory and the general work inspection, by the technicians of the Bureau of Scientific Research. These technicians have information, which is not perhaps complete but which is fairly abundant. These documents are being screened by the staff of the statistical department and when this work has been completed I hope that the technicians will have sufficient time to draft their conclusions and comments. These conclusions and comments will be published and I can assure the Council that a copy of these conclusions and summations will be forwarded to the Secretariat.

Mr. HAMILTON (Australia): Could the special representative tell us whether the entry into effect of the labour code on 1 January 1953 has resulted in any significant increase in unemployment in the Territory? I should also be interested in any observations the special representative might like to make on the workings of the code since its entry into force.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative) (interpretation from French): the putting into effect of the labour code entailed, of course, quite a lot of agitation in the labour world in the Cameroons. Employers and employees had to adapt themselves to the novel situation, but this adaptation has been generally satisfactory, I believe. I do not think that one can attribute the increase of unemployment to the coming into effect of the labour code. The protection of employees was already ensured by earlier texts--perhaps more incomplete and less up to date -- but nevertheless I do not think that the code caused such a revolution in relations between employers and employees as to attribute to it a violent effect on labour conditions.

Last year I had the opportunity of pointing out changes, not in unemployment in the European sense of the word but as to general unsatisfactory conditions of employment. I believe that in Douala, for example, some 3,000 persons who had been working in various labour projects were unemployed. This was, of course, not due to the coming into effect of the labour code, but it was due to the completion of certain major projects and to the closing of a number of large European concerns. The situation seems to have evolved satisfactorily this year. I do not think that the problem of unemployment is really an urgent one in the Cameroons.

The coming into effect of the labour code also entailed a number of auxiliary regulations since the beginning of 1953. The report lists a number of texts. I have pointed out elsewhere, in an additional memorandum, that a number of other texts had been enacted. I think that we should stress that measures have been taken to regulate conditions of employment and work contracts, as well as the regulation of weekly rest days, night labour, and the employment of women and children. In 1953, for instance, the Advisory Labour Committee was set up with an equal membership of representatives of employees and employers. This committee is consulted prior to the enactment of any major measure. Also in 1954 the first labour tribunals were set up which, from the very outset, have been extremely active.

I do not think that it is necessary to list all the measures that have been taken in 1954. Nevertheless, a number of decrees regulating hygiene and security conditions in the various plants have been signed by the High Commissioner. I should like to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that in 1954 and, following the promulgation of the labour code, six international labour conventions were promulgated in the Territory. These are conventions which bear on the employment of women and children, weekly rest days, minimum wage scales, trade union freedoms and the protection of trade union rights. Thus there are abundant regulations affecting labour activity. These actions have not come to an end, but nevertheless important steps have been taken and I think that the results hitherto achieved are satisfactory.

Educational advancement

Sir Alan BURNS (United Kingdom): The tables of figures on education, which begin on page 426 of the annual report, show a most gratifying increase in all fields. I would draw particular attention to the figures on technical education, which show a large increase in the number of institutions, and the number of pupils, which has nearly doubled since the last annual report.

Turning to the table of scholarship holders in France, given on page 428, could the special representative give us any indication of the proportion of those who attend institutions of higher education in France who return to the Territory and apply for Government service, and whether the conditions of service under the Government are thought to be sufficiently attractive to obtain the best men available?

Mr. BECQUEZ (Special representative) (interpretation from French): As the representative of the United Kingdom pointed out, there are a number of Cameroonian students in France. The question which he put is indeed an important one. He asked what proportion of students who attend institutions in France enter the Government service. During the past two years, the Administration has had a rather pleasant surprise. It has noted that the students do not return to the Territory. This is very encouraging because it means that the students who have reached a certain grade want to obtain more and more degrees. Having received their bachelor of arts degree, they want to go on to obtain a master of arts degree, and then a doctor's degree. This, of course, is very encouraging. The Administering Authority has been many times invited not to interfere in such matters, but, nevertheless, the problem exists. We hope that in the years to come these students will return to the Territory, and we hope that they will join the Government service.

The scholarship holders have undertaken a commitment to serve a certain number of years in the Territory after they have graduated, if not in Government service, at any rate in the Territory. We hope they will not evade that responsibility, and we hope that most of them will return home and serve in the Territory.

(Mr. Becquey, Special
representative)

Perhaps my reply to the first two questions will give the reply to the third, the question whether employment conditions can be regarded as satisfactory or adequate. At the present, we have had no clear indication in the Cameroons of the desires of the students or comments by the students on the conditions offered by the public service. It is certain that those students which are capable of occupying the top posts will find the employment conditions satisfactory. Nevertheless, there are additional fields which are very attractive, namely, those of trade and politics. Business pays more than the Administration does. A student who sets up a lawyer's office will make more money, we hope, than, for instance, a judge. There is, therefore, a problem, and this problem is all the more acute because of certain conditions of ineligibility which applies to officials and which may have a retarding effect on the Cameroonian students who would like to take up politics. For instance, a young Bamileké student who would like to join the Administration, may be given a post as a judge, a district officer or an officer of a subdivision in the Bamileké region. It is certain that at the next election, as a former student, he will have forfeited his right to be elected. This is not a very attractive prospect, but it seemed necessary to the Administering Authority that such safeguards should be laid down in order ultimately to protect the rights of the electorate.

Perhaps I have commented too long on this problem. I would briefly recall that, up to the present, few students have returned to the Territory. These students are committed morally to return to the Territory for a given number of years and to enter public service or to engage in private practice in the Territory. We believe that the conditions of employment for a student who can reach a high administrative level should constitute an adequate incentive.

Mr. SINGH (India): I have a number of points on the educational field. I will be very happy to put them now if the questions on the social field can be put on Monday by other delegations.

First of all, I should again like to say that the report of UNESCO on the educational conditions in six Territories in Africa has been greatly welcomed by my delegation and we appreciate their contributions to the work of this Council. In this report, they have asked for a considerable amount of information from the Administering Authority, and I am sure that they will be supplied with it. However, I wonder if some of it could not be given now. I shall ask one or two questions that will perhaps help us in the general statements.

In paragraph 34 of this report, mention has been made of an experimental school at Pitoa. I wonder when this school was opened and whether some information could not be given at this stage about it.

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): Unfortunately, the French have a number of defects. One of their greatest defects in overseas administrative fields is to speak of experiments. If I am not mistaken, the so-called experimental school at Pitoa was set up in 1953. It was the beginning of the school year in the North Cameroons. The school opened then. It was called an experimental school because it introduced a new method of teaching in that Territory. It is a type which is adapted to populations which are still very poorly developed in the intellectual field and which are not used to handling books.

This school is designed to study new methods of teaching and also to prepare so-called moniteurs in that area, the northern part of the Cameroons, which is very useful. They are trained by Europeans educated in France, and the pupil participates markedly in the work that is designed to train him for teaching. The textbooks are drawn up by the pupils themselves under the guidance of the teacher. Very interesting results have already been achieved, but it is an experimental station.

Mr. SINGH (India): In paragraph 50, it is mentioned that the primary scholarships declined from 1952 to 1953 by 145; that is to say, in 1952, there were 652 and that in 1953, only 507. Could the special representative give us some reasons why there was such a considerable decline in local primary scholarships?

Mr. BECOUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): These local scholarships are designed to enable first students to live near the schools to the extent that they require assistance. I cannot say why there has been such a drop between 1952 and 1953. I note only that this has been broadly compensated for by scholarships in the secondary education field. It is possible that, in the face of the budget which was not absolutely unlimited, preference was given to scholarships in the secondary educational field since secondary schools are still not very numerous. Therefore, more of the pupils have to travel further in order to attend. On the other hand, the primary schools are multiplying and assistance to primary students is becoming less and less necessary.

Mr. SINGH (India): I find that in 1953 there were 109 scholarships for higher education abroad and the special representative told us the other day that at the end of 1954 there were 154 students who received scholarships for advanced study in France. That is a very considerable increase which is very gratifying indeed. Are there any students who are studying abroad in other countries outside France? Have they received any scholarships for such studies?

Mr. BECOUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): For the time being, in the field of higher education, all requests for scholarships that were addressed to the local administration were granted, and all students went to France to study. Therefore, it was not deemed useful to send students that applied for such scholarships to other countries.

I note, furthermore, that scholarships offered by the Territory include not only the complete travel costs but also living allowances in the metropolitan country, the cost of tuition, which is free as in the case of French students and further benefits are awarded to the students for holiday trips. These constitute a sum of benefits which the Territory grants its students. The Administering

Authority does not deem it necessary to respond to the very generous offers that were made by other countries.

Mr. SINGH (India): May I ask how many offers were received from other countries. I know that they were also offered scholarships on the same basis: all the travel and living expenses, tuition fees and holiday allowances. Could he give us some figures on how many offers were received from other countries?

Mr. BECQUEY (Special representative)(interpretation from French): No, I am afraid that I do not have these figures in my mind. These offers are not always very explicit and I have no knowledge of the exact number of offers that have been made. A reference book is, of course, the UNESCO publication where you have fairly detailed indications. I have received fairly detailed information from the Government of India through the Government of France whereas I have not received very appropriate indications from other countries. However I must point out that the Government of the United States, through the Consul-General in Leopoldville, also contacted the local administration and supplied detailed information.

Mr. BARGUES (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to make a point of clarification in connexion with the granting of scholarships. This does not apply exclusively to the Cameroons. It so happens that the bids for scholarships are addressed to the French Government. The rules that prevail are the same, whether they apply to the overseas Territories of France or to integral parts of the French Republic. The difficulty that arises in this connexion in granting these scholarships is that the students that might benefit from them are required to know a language which is not the French language. Therefore, it is somewhat difficult at times to send students to countries except to those countries where the French language is spoken generally since few students in the overseas Territories have adequate knowledge of foreign languages, especially of English, which is the most practised in order to usefully follow their courses. However, I think that these regulations apply in the Trust Territories too. Some countries offer scholarships, but I think, contrary to what the representative of India seemed to imply, that the travel expenses will have to be covered either by the Territory from which the student comes or by the student himself.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): As there are no further questions in the field of education, at Monday's meeting we will resume our questions in the social field and after that we will continue with the field of education.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.