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**GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY**
 FIFTEENTH SESSION

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**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1143rd
 MEETING**

Friday, 14 April 1961,
 at 11.10 a.m.

New York

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Chairman: Mr. Adnan M. PACHACHI (Iraq).

AGENDA ITEM 13

**Report of the Trusteeship Council (A/4404)
 (continued)**

THE FUTURE OF THE CAMEROONS UNDER UNITED KINGDOM ADMINISTRATION (A/4695, A/4699, A/4726, A/4727, A/C.4/448, A/C.4/479, A/C.4/481, A/C.4/482) (*continued*)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that in view of the limited time left to the Committee and the large number of petitioners still to be heard, he would suggest that the Committee should decide to limit to thirty minutes the time allowed to each petitioner to make his statement.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Chief Martin, representative of the Bakweri Molongo, Mr. E. M. L. Endeley, representative of the Cameroons People's National Convention (CPNC), Mr. F. Ajebe Sone, representative of the CPNC, Bakossi Mwane-Ngoe, Chief Bokwe Sakwe, representative of the CPNC, Balondo Mokanya, Mr. N. N. Mbile, representative of the CPNC, Kumba Division, Mr. Samuel Ando Seh, representative of the CPNC, Nkambe Division, Mr. Oumarou Michika and Mr. Samuel Samwe, representatives of the Kamerun Freedom Party (KFP), Mr. J. N. Foncha, representative of the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP), Mr. Ibrahim Abba and Mr. Muhammadu Iya, representatives of the Northern Kamerun Democratic Party (NKDP), Mr. Ndeh Ntumagah, representative of One Kamerun (OK), Mrs. Marie N'Gapeth, representative of the Union démocratique des femmes camerounaises (UDEFEC), and Mr. Bebey-Eyidi, Mr. Manga Mado, Mr. Mayi Matip, Mr. Tetang and Malam Yero, Deputies to the National Assembly of the Republic of Cameroun, took places at the Committee table.

2. Mr. ABBA (Northern Kamerun Democratic Party) continuing the statement he had begun at the previous meeting, said that under legislation enacted by the Administering Authority, non-registered persons had been forbidden to make public statements concerning the implication of the plebiscite; that regulation had favoured the Nigerians, who had registered in good time. In addition to the high incidence of irregularities and of cases of intimidation, there had been various instances of the arrest of supporters of his party, who

had been brought before judges, most of whom were Nigerians and biased against them, and jailed for imaginary offences.

3. His party's polling agent in the Za area had been stabbed on 11 February 1961 by the polling agent of the Northern Peoples Congress, whom he had surprised in the act of transferring ballot papers from the pink box into the black box. Although the incident had been reported both to the police at Michika and to the United Nations observer at Gulak, it had not been investigated. Pro-Nigerian elements had beaten up supporters of his party in Cubunawa, Dikwa and Madagali districts. On 25 January 1961 pro-Nigerian elements had ridden through the town of Michika in a Nigerian army car calling upon the people to vote for Nigeria and threatening supporters of the Republic of Cameroun. Pro-Nigerian elements in that town had also been making misleading statements to the effect that the alternatives in the plebiscite were union with the independent Federation of Nigeria or union with France and not with the independent Republic of Cameroun. Although the leader of the Kamerun Freedom Party had reported the incidents in writing to the United Nations observer at Gulak, to the assistant district officer for Michika and Madagali districts—who was a Nigerian—and to Mr. Marshall Williams, the United Nations observer at Mubi, no action had been taken following the complaint. The Administrator, who should have been completely impartial, had urged the councillors of Cubunawa district not to vote for the Republic of Cameroun on the grounds that there was no democracy in French-speaking countries. Mr. Cooper, the returning officer for Cubunawa-Madagali district, accompanied by a pro-Nigerian, had been calling upon the local inhabitants to vote against reunification with the Republic of Cameroun, asserting that the Government of the Republic had been making false promises. Although his statements had been reported to the Administrator no action had been taken against him, to the great dismay of Mr. Abba's party. In Gwoza district, the district head who favoured reunification with the Republic of Cameroun had been exiled and replaced by another, who had forced many people to swear that they would vote for Nigeria. Expatriate British district land settlement officers had taken an active part in the campaign in favour of Nigeria. The Native Authority councillors and the district heads in Chamba district had been told by the senior district officer in charge of the Southern Trust Division to campaign in favour of Nigeria. No action had followed the complaint that the district head at Madagali had been preventing the distribution of his party's posters.

4. The fact that the voting had been spread over two days, in addition to favouring the separation of the sexes, had given the imperialists an opportunity to tamper with the ballot boxes. The only area in which the polling agents of both parties had been allowed to ensure that the ballot boxes were under guard

throughout the night had been Chamba district: the results of the voting in that district spoke for themselves. At Mubi, appeals to the United Nations observer to have the ballot boxes guarded had not been heeded.

5. With the exception of the Mubi counting centre, where two United Nations officials had helped to count the ballot papers, all the counting officers had been pro-Nigerian imperialists. Representatives of his party had not been allowed to check that the prescribed safeguards were being observed. The results of the count had been reported, not at the counting tables, but from an office occupied by pro-Nigerian administrators.

6. His party, which had been aware of the fact that the administration of the Northern Cameroons had not been separated from that of the Northern Region of Nigeria and that no democratic institutions had been established in the area, had sent petitions to that effect to the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner, to the Secretary-General and to the Administrator.

7. The irregularities to which he had been referring clearly indicated that the people of the Northern Cameroons had not been allowed the free expression of their will. The people of the Cameroons would continue their fight for the unity of their country. They did not recognize the results of the plebiscite, which should immediately be annulled. Another plebiscite should be held in which, as had happened in the Southern Cameroons, only those native to the area should be allowed to take part. He was convinced that the United Nations would not wish to see the Northern Cameroons become the scene of a conflict similar to that in the Congo.

8. Mr. MANGA MADDO (Deputy to the National Assembly of the Republic of Cameroun) said that although the various petitioners appearing before the Committee might have different points of view they were unanimous in desiring their country's independence and reunification. All the petitions submitted to the Committee since 1952 had been imbued with that desire.

9. The geographical and ethnical entity of Cameroun had been determined at the end of the nineteenth century and its limits had been recognized in the treaties of 4 November 1911. It had been only after Germany's defeat in the First World War that Cameroun had been administratively divided between the United Kingdom and France. That division had not impaired the recognition of the geographical and political unity of the country. Under the terms of the Mandates and, later, of the Trusteeship Agreements, France and the United Kingdom had undertaken to safeguard the interests of Cameroun. Two methods of administration, had, however, come into being, for while France had administered the eastern part of Cameroun as one unit, the United Kingdom had created an administrative union between the western part of the country and Nigeria and, furthermore, had sub-divided the Territory under its administration into a northern and a southern zone: the southern had been attached to the Southern Region of Nigeria, while the northern zone had been entrusted to a local Nigerian chief, the Sardona of Sokoto. The only possible observation on such an abnormal practice was that the Administering Authority had deliberately set out to sacrifice the letter and the spirit of its solemn commitments.

10. The shortcomings in the Mandates System could be explained by the fact that the League of Nations

had not realized the possibility of the decolonization process touched off by the Second World War; that gap had, however, been filled by Article 76 of the United Nations Charter, which enshrined the principle that the integrity of the Trust Territories should be safeguarded. There was nothing in the provisions of the Charter to allow the Administering Authority to deprive a Territory under its administration of its identity, particularly—as in the case of the Northern Cameroons—against the wishes of the entire population.

11. Since 1948 the Cameroonians had gradually become conscious of their role in history and in the world. Reunification had become the underlying thought in national Cameroonian politics. Champions of unification had arisen in both parts of the country. The Committee would remember that Mr. Endeley had been one of those who had clamoured for reunification although he was now opposed to it, but of course, faithfulness to political principles was not a virtue always practised by those who wished to gain power.

12. The question of the reunification of the Cameroons had been considered by the Committee on several occasions. All the petitioners the Committee had heard had stressed that the country had been split up without the consent of the population. In view of that fact, a plebiscite regarding the possible attachment of part of the country to Nigeria could not be justified. The problem was a human one, since families had been separated and clans having the same language and customs had been arbitrarily divided. The annexation to Nigeria of the northern part of the Cameroons as the result of a plebiscite was contrary to the unitary conception of national territory continually preached by international authorities. The various agreements governing the international status of the area in question made no distinction between the so-called Southern Cameroons and the so-called Northern Cameroons under United Kingdom administration. The Republic of Cameroun looked upon the two strips of land as the western part of its national territory, which had been entrusted to the administration of the United Kingdom by an accident of history. The United Kingdom tried to justify its policy by drawing attention to the cultural differences between the north and the south, the north being populated by Sudanese and the south by Bantu. There were, however, similar differences between north and south in many African countries including the Republic of Cameroun, but that did not prevent their constituting an organic whole.

13. No problem would have arisen if the United Kingdom had administered the portion entrusted to it in a uniform manner, in conformity with the Charter; instead, while a democratic evolution had taken place in the southern part, feudal structures had remained in the north and the customary authorities were still remarkably powerful. When the General Assembly had requested the United Kingdom, in resolution 1473 (XIV), to separate the administration of the Northern Cameroons from that of Nigeria, the United Kingdom Government had stated that the low level of education in the region made a complete administrative separation impossible. On the other hand, the northern area of the part of the country at that time under French administration had been able to provide its own administrative personnel and had indeed provided personnel for the south. The President of the Republic of Cameroun was himself from the northern region. Clearly, during its forty years of administration the United Kingdom

had done nothing to train personnel capable of taking over the administration in the Northern Cameroons.

14. Nevertheless, the northern part of the country had given its verdict in the 1959 plebiscite; to the surprise of all observers, the great majority of the people had expressed opposition to their integration with Nigeria. That plebiscite had been conducted in much freer conditions than that of February 1961, owing to the fact that the United Kingdom and Nigeria had not had sufficient time to plan their intervention. The United Kingdom had said that the people were expressing their hostility not to integration with Nigeria but to the administrative methods in force, but those administrative methods were in fact exercised by Nigerian authorities. The Nigerians themselves had shown their dislike of those administrative methods in an uprising which had occurred within a few hours of Nigeria's accession to independence.

15. After the 1959 plebiscite, the British had done everything possible to Nigerianize the northern part of the Cameroons. Despite General Assembly resolution 1473 (XIV) the United Kingdom had continued to administer the Territory jointly with Nigeria, and Nigerian influence had increased. Those officials favouring reunification with the Republic of Cameroun had been systematically replaced by people in favour of integration with Nigeria.

16. The fact was that the Administering Authority had done everything in its power to procure one portion of the Cameroons for a State which it knew would remain loyal to the Commonwealth. It was most regrettable that a great Power, which was a founder Member of the United Nations, should set such an example, which was calculated to encourage other smaller Powers to substitute relations based on force for those based on law and justice. The faith of small nations in the United Nations was at stake, for it served no purpose to condemn small countries like Belgium if great Powers like the United Kingdom could defy the authority of the United Nations with impunity.

17. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the half-hour which the Committee had decided to allow to each petitioner had elapsed. The full text of the petition would be circulated to the Committee and he would now call upon the next petitioner.

18. Mr. ENAHORO (Nigeria) considered it improper for a petitioner from the Republic of Cameroun to refer to conditions in Nigeria. The allegations he had made were incorrect and the disturbances to which he had referred had arisen from a dispute between two political parties and had not constituted an uprising against a duly constituted Government.

19. The CHAIRMAN agreed that the petitioners should be asked to confine their remarks to the situation in the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, and not to refer to the internal affairs of Member States.

20. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) observed that frequent reference had been made to the internal affairs of the Republic of Cameroun, and during the debate on Ruanda-Urundi to those of the Congo.

21. Mr. BAHIZI (Congo (Leopoldville)) supported the French representative's statement. References had indeed been made to the affairs of the Congo during the discussions on Ruanda-Urundi; the Congo, like Nigeria, was an independent and sovereign State.

22. The CHAIRMAN considered that all references made to the Congo during the Ruanda-Urundi debate had been relevant to the question of the Territory or had arisen from the report of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi.

23. Mr. OKALA (Cameroun), speaking on a point of order, observed that it was unusual not to allow petitioners to complete their statements. He wondered if the Chair could not perhaps show indulgence in the application of the time-limit.

24. Mr. RASGOTRA (India), supported by Miss BROOKS (Liberia), endorsed the Camerounian representative's remarks; the Committee should reconsider its decision to limit the time allowed to petitioners, since a petitioner's statement might give a false impression if he was unable to complete it. The circulation of the statements was an inadequate substitute, for the Committee would not receive the documents until they were too late to be of use.

25. Mr. ZULOAGA (Venezuela) thought that the Chairman could apply the rule with elasticity, showing indulgence if the petitioners kept within five minutes or so of the time-limit.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would not restrict petitioners to half an hour, but would ask them to keep their statements as short as possible.

27. Mr. MANGA MADDO (Deputy to the National Assembly of the Republic of Cameroun), continuing his statement, said that his thesis comprised three points: firstly, the recognition of the territorial integrity of the Western Cameroons as a single territory; secondly, the failure of the United Kingdom to implement General Assembly resolution 1473 (XIV); thirdly, the evidence already provided that the consultation had not been fairly conducted and had not allowed the free expression of the will of the people of the Northern Cameroons.

28. The plebiscite had in fact given rise to so much intrigue and pressure of various kinds that its results should be reconsidered. The Administering Authority had been guilty of trickery and abuse of confidence; there was ample evidence to prove that frauds had been committed.

29. Those who had been in the Territory at the time of the plebiscite knew of the campaign carried on by the United Kingdom and Nigeria against the Republic of Cameroun. While the authorities of the Republic had remained silent and left the voters to make up their own minds, the Prime Minister of Nigeria had made speeches over the radio which had been characterized by a marked absence of good-neighbourliness.

30. It was a surprising fact that in the present century, when equality of the sexes had at last been recognized, men had had to vote on one day and women on another. Perhaps the real purpose of that curious arrangement had been to allow more time for the manipulation of the ballot-boxes. There must have been some ulterior motive, since there had been no such discrimination in the south.

31. One unsatisfactory feature had been that all residents of six months or more, whatever their origin, had been entitled to vote. That was obviously inconsistent with the right of peoples to self-determination. Of course it was easy to understand that the United Kingdom, having realized that it could not bend

the popular will, should have decided to stifle it by allowing non-nationals to vote. One figure could be cited as an illustration: in 1959 there had been 22,685 voters at Mubi; in 1961 there had been 42,221. Those figures showed that the election had been a travesty of democracy.

32. He emphasized that the Camerounians did not hold the Nigerians responsible for the actions of the Administering Authority; the Nigerians had merely accepted the gift which had been promised them. The Camerounians hoped that the plebiscite would not be a cause of discord between them and their Nigerian neighbours and that the Nigerians would reconsider their attitude.

33. The Camerounian people asked for justice. They did not intend to take the law into their own hands, since they were convinced that the overwhelming weight of evidence they had produced would suffice to establish the justice of their claims. If, however, the United Nations should fail to support their conclusions it would be guilty of a denial of justice and the entire Camerounian people might well demonstrate their indignation by actions which their leaders would prefer to avoid.

34. Cameroun, conscious of its responsibilities and aware of defending a rightful cause, believed that it had presented a valid argument in favour of a reconsideration of the plebiscite in the Northern Cameroons. He asked the United Nations to act in accordance with the precedents which it had itself established, to annul the referendum of 11 and 12 February 1961 and to ensure a free, fair and democratic consultation of the people of that part of the national territory.

35. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that he did not intend to make a statement for the time being or to comment on the statements of the petitioners. Nevertheless, he felt obliged to reply to one or two points which had been raised.

36. According to the petitioner who had just spoken, the number of registered voters in Mubi district in the Northern Cameroons had increased from some 22,000 to some 42,000. That was not at all surprising since some 20,000 of the 42,000 registered voters had been women, who had voted for the first time, in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly. As a matter of fact the registration of men had decreased by about 1,000.

37. It was not true that there had been one day on which men could vote and another day on which women could vote. Two days had been allowed for the voting, at the request of the great majority of the people and with the consent of the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner. Both men and women had voted on whichever day they pleased.

38. The qualifications for registration had been laid down by resolution of the General Assembly.

39. Mr. TETANG (Deputy to the National Assembly of the Republic of Cameroun) said that on 7 November 1959, in the first plebiscite held in the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, the northern part of the Territory had refused by an overwhelming majority to be integrated into Nigeria. In the second plebiscite, on 11 and 12 February 1961, they had agreed to that integration. Such a change of opinion in so serious a matter called forth justifiable reservations. If the first plebiscite had been freely and fairly conducted, then the results of the second must have been

fraudulent. The United Kingdom Government had never abandoned the idea of offering the northern part of the Trust Territory as a gift to Nigeria, and ever since the result of the plebiscite of November 1959 had been announced the United Kingdom had been taking steps to ensure the attainment of its ends. Having been surprised by the results of the first plebiscite, it had done everything to falsify the results of the second. Otherwise there would have been no object in asking the people of the Northern Cameroons whether they wished to join Nigeria, seeing that in 1959 they had rejected that alternative by a large majority.

40. For over a year, despite the recommendations of the United Nations, the United Kingdom had been placing Nigerian officials in responsible positions in the Northern Cameroons in order to further its plans for the corruption, intimidation and persecution of Camerounians who were known to be in favour of the Republic of Cameroun. Thus in the drawing up of the electoral lists there had been discrimination against the members of parties which were in favour of reunification of the two parts of the Cameroons. Even those whose names were on the list had not been sure of being able to vote, since all kinds of pretexts had been used to deprive them of their electoral cards and so to prevent them from voting. On the other hand every device had been used to enable non-Camerounians to register and vote.

41. Such methods were unworthy of a Member of the United Nations. The desire of certain British and Nigerian officials to falsify the results of the plebiscite had been known well in advance. For example, in January 1961 Mr. Muffett, the Resident of Mubi, had told Malan Yero, in the presence of a police officer, that he was wasting his time, because it looked as if Nigeria would win. Such a statement by a high official of the Administering Authority, who should have been absolutely impartial, showed that the results had been known beforehand. On 27 January 1961 Mr. Aboubakar Koge, of Sokoto, had made a speech to the chiefs of the region in which he had accused them of being insufficiently severe with Camerounians regarded as favouring the reunification of the two parts of the country. On 1 February 1961 four Camerounians had been imprisoned because they had visited Malam Yero, representative of the Republic of Cameroun. The campaign of intimidation had been so harsh that the Deputy for Gwoza, in a letter dated 27 January 1961 to Mr. Moussa Yaya, had said that anyone who expressed in public a desire for reunification would be arrested and imprisoned. Before a vehicle from the Republic of Cameroun could be driven in the Northern Cameroons it had to be registered at Jimeta, in Nigeria. After a number of protests that rule had been abrogated and registration had been possible in the Cameroons. The sale of petrol to supporters of reunification had been prohibited.

42. Those measures had not been enough to satisfy the British authorities; they had made no effort to prevent physical assaults on people from the Republic of Cameroun who had legal authorization to take part in the plebiscite campaign and on inhabitants of the Northern Cameroons whose only crime had been to work for the reunification of their country. On 29 January 1961, at Gwoza, when delegates of the Republic of Cameroun had been threatened and some of them beaten by pro-Nigerians, all that the district officer had done had been to have them shut up in a hut while

a Nigerian Minister had toured the village carrying out propaganda in favour of his country. On the same day there had been demonstrations of hostility against the same delegates at Ashigashiya and on that occasion no authority had come to their rescue.

43. Thus a psychological climate had been established favourable to the attainment of the results desired by the United Kingdom. While Nigerian emissaries travelled about the country spreading propaganda in favour of the attachment of that part of the territory to Nigeria, many of those who supported the Camerounian cause had been unjustly imprisoned, contrary to the most elementary rules of democracy.

44. On the orders of the Administrator, the propaganda campaign had been stopped two days before the plebiscite. The authorities had, however, ordered the paramount chiefs and notables to go into the countryside

and intimidate the people into voting in favour of integration with Nigeria. The campaign of intimidation had been continued during the two days on which voting had taken place. In front of each polling station there had been a chief or a notable for the purpose of influencing people to vote in favour of integration with Nigeria. There had been armed Nigerian police everywhere. Naturally the voters had been terrified, since to reach the ballot boxes they had had to pass through ranks of armed policemen, traditional chiefs and notables.

45. There was only one possible conclusion: the plebiscite must be annulled. Only a fresh consultation, accompanied by all the necessary guarantees, could determine the future of the Northern Cameroons. Anything else would be a violation of the right of peoples to self-determination.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.