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Chairman: Mr. L. N. PALAR (Indonesia).

Tribute to the memory of Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike,
Prime Minister of Ceylon

1. The CHAIRMAN expressed the Committee's sympathy with the delegation of Ceylon on the occasion of the tragic death of Mr. Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister of Ceylon, and proposed that the Committee should observe a minute of silence.

The Committee observed a minute of silence.

2. Mr. KANAKARATNE (Ceylon) thanked the Chairman and the members of the Committee for their tribute to the memory of Mr. Bandaranaike.

Requests for hearings (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 13 (REPORT OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL) (continued)

3. The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Abel Kingué, on behalf of the Union des populations du Cameroun, had asked that representatives of that organization should be heard by the Committee in connexion with the Cameroons under French administration. He suggested that, if there were no objections, the telegram from Mr. Kingué should be circulated in accordance with the usual procedure.

It was so decided. 1/

1/ The telegram was subsequently circulated in document A/C.4/409/Add.1.

AGENDA ITEM 41

The future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration (A/C.4/412) (continued):

(a) Organization of the plebiscite in the southern part of the Territory: question of the two alternatives to be put to the people and the qualifications for voting (continued)

REPLIES OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE PREMIER OF THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS AND THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

4. Mr. ENDELEY (United Kingdom), Leader of the Opposition in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly, replying to the questions put to him at the previous meeting by the representative of Indonesia, said that it was possible that there would be a change of government in the Southern Cameroons before the date set for the plebiscite. It would therefore be unwise to take the desires of the party in power before the plebiscite as a basis for determining the qualifications for voting and the choice to be put before the people. If his own party returned to power before the plebiscite, it would not change its attitude on those issues.

5. On the question of whether he would accept a decision by the General Assembly which was contrary to his party's wishes, he recalled a passage in his statement at the 885th meeting in which he had said that, even if the General Assembly's decision was not in accordance with the wishes of the political parties in the Southern Cameroons, the parties would accept it, provided that it was realistic and aimed at securing the future peace and happiness of the population.

6. He then said that the "other purposes" for which it was considered necessary that Nigerians and French Cameroonians should take part in the plebiscite were, on the one hand, the fact that non-natives of the Territory, like the Hausas and Fulanis, made a material contribution to its revenue and, on the other, the fact that facilities for university and technical education for young people of the Territory existed mainly in Nigeria. Moreover, if Nigerians residing in the Territory were refused the right to take part in so important a public expression of opinion as the plebiscite, they might well become indifferent or unco-operative in supporting measures adopted by the Government of the Southern Cameroons, which might in turn cause friction between it and the Nigerian Government.

7. Expressing in more detail his views on the effects which a continuation of trusteeship might have on future relations between the Southern Cameroons and Nigeria, he said that, if the plebiscite were to be taken on two questions and if the second question related to a possible continuation of trusteeship, it would be tantamount to asking the population to choose between

association with Nigeria and trusteeship. If it voted against the first of those alternatives, it would obviously no longer be possible to consult it on that point again when trusteeship ended.

8. In regard to the Indonesian representative's question regarding procedures for the reunification of the Southern Cameroons and the Cameroons under French administration, Mr. Endeley stated that his party believed in continued association of the Southern Cameroons with an independent Nigeria on a basis of equality. He had mentioned reunification only as a proper second alternative for the population, bearing in mind that not all the parties favoured a separate Cameroonian State isolated from its larger neighbours. If the Southern Cameroons were to be separated from Nigeria, he did not think that reunification should necessarily take place at once, but considered that the population should be consulted before any negotiations for reunification were opened.

9. Finally, replying to the inquiry from the representative of Guinea as to the objections which might be raised against a question regarding the Territory's accession to independence pure and simple he said that his party, in advocating continued association with Nigeria, was moved by a desire to see the Southern Cameroons become independent at the earliest opportunity and with the minimum of difficulties.

10. Mr. FONCHA (United Kingdom), Premier of the Southern Cameroons, replied to three questions put to him at the previous meeting by the Indonesian representative. Firstly, the majority of the people of the Southern Cameroons wished to separate from the Federation of Nigeria in order to build up a united Cameroonian nation. Secondly, while it did not rule out the possibility of association with Nigeria, his party strongly believed that a united Cameroons would eventually achieve independence. Thirdly, the step which, in his view, remained to be taken before the Territory achieved genuine independence was the separation of the Southern Cameroons from Nigeria and the reorganization of its civil service and economy according to the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement. The Territory's civil service was in fact still tied to that of the Nigerian Federation and there could be no genuine independence without a completely independent civil service.

11. In reply to the questions from the representative of Ghana, he explained that when he spoke of the continuation of trusteeship and the determination of the Southern Cameroons' future at a later date, that meant that the Territory should first be separated from Nigeria. He could not suggest any time-table for determining the Territory's future; consideration of that matter had been deferred because of the pending plebiscite, and would be resumed after the separation of the Southern Cameroons from Nigeria.

12. Turning to the questions asked by the Hungarian representative, he said first that, since the issue of the Southern Cameroons' separation from Nigeria had not been settled, there had as yet been no consultation between representatives of the Southern Cameroons and representatives of the Cameroons under French administration regarding the form which any unification of the two Territories might take. Regarding a possible association with Nigeria there had likewise been no consultations, since the position in that respect was set out in paragraph 70 of the report

of the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London in September and October 1958.^{2/} The terrorist activities which had taken place in the Cameroons under French administration had created a situation of insecurity along the borders of the Southern Cameroons, and the population would therefore hesitate to vote in favour of reunification if that question were to be put to it at the plebiscite.

13. The Moroccan representative had asked whether there was any possibility for the people of the Southern Cameroons to choose a solution other than association with Nigeria or integration with the Cameroons formerly under French administration. Mr. Foncha's reply was that the majority of the people wished to see a continuation of United Kingdom trusteeship. For the time being, therefore, there was no other choice. As for the possibility of the Southern Cameroons' immediate accession to independence, which had been mentioned by the representative of Guinea, the people, after carefully considering the economic, social and political problems facing the Territory, had come to the conclusion that immediate independence would have serious consequences.

14. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) said that he would first of all reply to the question asked at the previous meeting by the representative of Ghana as to whether, in his view, the inhabitants of the Southern Cameroons were capable of deciding their own future and whether they would understand the meaning of a plebiscite. In informing the General Assembly, at its thirteenth session, that the United Kingdom Government was ready to hold a plebiscite in the Southern Cameroons, and in voting for resolution 1350 (XIII), his delegation had expressed its confidence on those two points. Admittedly the future of the Southern Cameroons raised some complicated problems, as was inevitable in any attempt to settle political questions by democratic means. It was for the Fourth Committee to decide which was the best course to take in the matter, bearing in mind the differences of opinion which had arisen among the political parties in the Southern Cameroons regarding the arrangements for the plebiscite.

15. Describing the opinions expressed at the Southern Cameroons Plebiscite Conference, he said that there had been general agreement among the participants that one of the choices offered to the Southern Cameroons should be to become a self-governing Region within an independent Federation of Nigeria. As to the second question to be put, there had been a divergence of views, the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) proposing a choice between separation from Nigeria and the continuation of trusteeship for a period and the Kamerun National Congress/Kamerun People's Party (KNC/KPP) Alliance wanting the second alternative to be unification with the future Cameroons Republic. There had also been a difference of view on voting qualifications, the KNDP representatives arguing that both French Cameroonians and Nigerians should be excluded, and the KNC/KPP Alliance advocating the use of the existing electoral register.

16. In reply to the representative of the Philippines, he said that if the General Assembly decided to postpone the plebiscite until both Nigeria and the Cameroons under French administration were independent,

^{2/} Report by the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference, Cmd. 569 (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office).

the United Kingdom would be willing to continue to administer the Southern Cameroons as a Trust Territory until its future had been finally settled. The United Kingdom has assumed certain obligations towards the inhabitants of the Southern Cameroons, and it believed that it should continue to fulfil them until the objectives of trusteeship had been attained. In that case, however, the Southern Cameroons could clearly not continue to be administered as an integral part of Nigeria.

17. On the subject of the Plebiscite Conference, the representative of Venezuela had expressed surprise that, apart from the KNDP and the KNC/KPP Alliance, political parties had, unlike the Native Authorities and the chiefs, been so little represented there. The reason why One Kamerun and the Kamerun United Party had been represented by only one person each was that the former had obtained no seats and only very few votes at the last general election, while the latter, which was an entirely new party, had not yet tested its strength at an election. In any case the Conference had been for the purpose of discussion only, and no votes had been taken.

18. The representative of Venezuela had also asked whether, in order to break the present deadlock, it might not be possible to go back on the decision of the General Assembly and to arrange for three questions to be put in the plebiscite. That possibility had in fact been considered at the Plebiscite Conference; but members of the Conference had feared that three questions might confuse the voters and prevent the emergence of a clear majority for any one of the solutions proposed. He did not think the idea of having three questions could usefully be pursued.

19. To the representative of Czechoslovakia, who had asked for his personal opinion on the possibility of the Southern Cameroons becoming a viable economic entity, he replied that the Southern Cameroons had a potential for considerable agricultural development; the realization of that potential, however, called for capital which was not available in the Territory itself.

Moreover, if it became independent the Southern Cameroons would have to face serious financial difficulties, particularly at the outset. That was one of the important considerations which the leaders and people of the Southern Cameroons—and the Administering Authority so long as it retained responsibility—must take into account in considering a permanent solution.

20. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) thanked the representative of the United Kingdom for the very full and clear replies which he had given to his two questions. He regretted that Mr. Endeley had not been as categorical in saying whether or not he shared Mr. Mbile's view that the population of the Southern Cameroons would not be in a position to understand the consequences of the decision which it would be called upon to take at a plebiscite. In considering the question of the Southern Cameroons, the Committee started from the assumption that the people of the Territory were politically mature and perfectly capable of deciding their own future; but it had heard no formal statement to that effect. Mr. Endeley's silence could be interpreted as a tacit admission of the correctness of Mr. Mbile's view, and the Committee ought not to be left in any doubt about that point.

21. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) observed that, although the last statements made by Mr. Endeley contained the reply to the question put by Mr. Carpio, the Leader of the Opposition would be ready to explain his views in greater detail if the Committee considered it necessary.

22. He said that the informal negotiations embarked upon with a view to finding a solution acceptable to all concerned were about to conclude, and he proposed that the Committee should adjourn the debate until the following afternoon at 3 p.m.

23. Miss BROOKS (Liberia) seconded that proposal.

The proposal of the United Kingdom representative was adopted.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.