

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Chairman: Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

AGENDA ITEM 39

Question of South West Africa (*continued*):

(a) Report of the Good Offices Committee on South West Africa (A/3900)

QUESTION OF A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE DEBATE ON SUB-ITEM (a) (*continued*)

1. Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) explaining his vote at the previous meeting, said that he had voted against the amendment to the draft resolution (A/C.4/L.540 and Add.1) proposed by the representative of Canada, because it implied that the verbatim record would be distributed in only one of the working languages. That was contrary to a principle which must not be departed from on any pretext. He had voted against the draft resolution, even though he sympathized with what its sponsors had in mind, because the expenditure involved appeared to him to be out of all proportion to the results which might be expected. Moreover, the Committee should not make it harder for the Fifth Committee, which had the thankless task of acting as Minister of Finance to the United Nations. Lastly, those who had some experience of under-developed countries knew how valuable even the smallest sum was in the form of assistance, as the representatives of the United States and of Ceylon had pointed out at the previous meeting. There were certainly more effective means of making the position of the United Nations known than distributing a mass of documents.

AGENDA ITEM 13

Report of the Trusteeship Council (A/3822) (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

2. Mr. BUSNIAK (Czechoslovakia) said that the question of the Trust Territories was extremely important. The collapse of the colonial system was an outstanding feature of the post-war period, but there were still nearly 150 million persons living in conditions close to slavery, particularly in Africa. One of the essential tasks of the United Nations was to help

to liberate those peoples. Czechoslovakia, which twenty years previously had gone through a period of foreign occupation, the most painful period in its history, felt the greatest sympathy for all peoples fighting for their independence. It hoped that very soon new countries, particularly countries in Africa which were at present still under trusteeship would be admitted to the United Nations as a result of the efforts of the Organization and of the Fourth Committee.

3. According to the Trusteeship Council's report (A/3822), the number of Trust Territories ready to achieve independence was greater in 1958 than in previous years. The United Nations must help them to complete the final stage. However, the Administering Authorities had a tendency to seek to prolong their domination over those Territories and to delay the solution of their problems. Most of the members of the Trusteeship Council seemed to consider that the development of the Trust Territories was satisfactory and that they were evolving rapidly enough towards independence. The Organization's main concern was whether their rate of progress would enable them to attain self-government or independence in the shortest possible time. Despite the resolutions of the Trusteeship Council and of the General Assembly, the Administering Authorities still refused to draw up and submit plans which would enable the Territories concerned to achieve their independence, and also refused to lay down specific time-tables to that end.

4. Thus, according to the Administering Authority, a series of reforms had been put into effect in the Trust Territory of Western Samoa. The proposed three stages of reforms, described in the Council's report (A/3822, vol. I, p. 58) were designed to expand the competence of the local organs of government and certainly constituted a step forward; but if they were to be truly effective, it would be necessary to indicate when they were to be applied in their entirety and on what date the Territory would become a sovereign State. The third stage of the reforms had been reached, but New Zealand still retained power and so far it had not submitted any specific plan or indicated on what date it expected to be able to hand over to the population of Western Samoa the main attributes of sovereignty, i.e., autonomy in matters of defence, foreign policy and economic and financial policy.

5. In Tanganyika, political life was fairly well-developed and political parties played an important role. However, the Administering Authority—the United Kingdom—was undertaking political reforms and transferring power to the local organs so slowly that its intentions in regard to the Territory's future were becoming suspect, particularly as it refused to say exactly how it intended to fulfil its obligations under the Charter and exactly when it contemplated offering the Territory its independence.

6. The attitude of the Administering Authorities to-

wards fixing specific time limits showed that they were trying to perpetuate their domination over the Territories in one form or another. Moreover, specific time-tables should be accompanied by other measures to expand the competence of the local organs of government and guarantee the political rights and freedoms of the population.

7. The Cameroons under French administration was an example of what could happen in a Trust Territory where the political situation was extremely tense. France had declared that it was ready to grant the Territory self-government in 1960, and at first sight it would appear that the Committee should feel gratified at that decision. However, the problem presented itself in quite another light when it was realized that the Territory was subject to a reign of terror, that the political organizations claiming independence were outlawed and that French troops were stationed in the Cameroons. Moreover, there were numerous bilateral agreements between France and the Cameroons, made for the purpose of retaining certain privileges for France and binding the Cameroons economically to France, even in the event of self-government being ostensibly accorded to the Territory. Thus, as long as political conditions in the Cameroons were not normal, as long as the indigenous inhabitants were deprived of their political rights, as long as French troops were not withdrawn and until a general amnesty was granted, it would be impossible to regard the conditions existing in the Territory as likely to enable it to achieve self-government when trusteeship ended.

8. The desire of the peoples of the Cameroons under French administration and of the Cameroons under British administration to bring about the unification of their two countries also needed stressing. The United Kingdom made no secret of the fact that it would prefer the Cameroons to remain divided and the British Trust Territory to become an integral part of Nigeria after the termination of trusteeship. The United Nations must not lose sight of the primary interests of the peoples of the two Trust Territories. It must take care that self-government for Nigeria did not serve as a pretext for the premature ending of trusteeship over the Cameroons under British administration, and it must see that the people of the Territory were informed of the plans of the Administering Authority and could express their views on their own future by means of a referendum under United Nations supervision.

9. It was noteworthy that when the Administering Authorities were handing over power to the indigenous inhabitants or their representative organs, they all refused to divest themselves of their powers in the most important areas, i.e., national defence, foreign policy, external trade and finance. That was what had happened in Togoland under French administration in 1957 and that was what was happening now in Western Samoa, the Cameroons and other Territories. It was at variance with the provisions of the Charter, whose purpose was not to enable the Administering Authorities to replace one form of domination by another. He wondered how much self-government a State could be said to possess which did not decide matters relating to its own defence or foreign policy. Such self-government was merely a fiction and another form of subjection to the metropolitan country, made

still more dangerous by the absence of any United Nations control.

10. Lastly, there was the question of certain administrative unions, which had been sharply criticized at the twenty-second session of the Trusteeship Council. The reason underlying such unions was that the Administering Authorities thought it easier and more advantageous to administer certain Trust Territories from other non-self-governing territories for which they were also responsible. However, what mattered as far as the United Nations was concerned were the interests of the peoples of the Trust Territories; and their evolution was made more difficult by the existence of such administrative unions. In most cases, it would be necessary to set up executive and legislative bodies with powers in the various fields, which they would exercise under the supervision of the Administering Authority pending the attainment of complete self-government by the Territory concerned. Yet, if the case of New Guinea was examined, it would be seen that there was no embryo legislative or executive organ, because the Territory was administered from the neighbouring territory of Papua as part of an administrative union; it would also be seen that Australia co-operated in administering New Guinea with the administrative organs of West Irian (Netherlands New Guinea), which was an integral part of Indonesia although it was illegally occupied by the Netherlands. The Czechoslovak delegation therefore felt that the Committee ought to demand that administrative unions should not in any way hamper the advancement of the Trust Territories toward self-government or independence.

11. While it was true that the Administering Authorities were required under the Charter to lead the Trust Territories to political independence, it was equally true that they were required to promote the development of those Territories in all other spheres, so that they would be in a favourable position upon their accession to independence. Unfortunately the Administering Authorities were not carrying out their task satisfactorily. The measures they were taking suggested that they were trying to strengthen their position and improve the living conditions of their nationals rather than to promote the improvement of the standards of living of the indigenous peoples. Nothing, so far, had been done in any Trust Territory to foster the development of an industry. A feature of all the Trust Territories was that local products were not processed on the spot but exported as raw materials, and that the commonest consumer goods had to be imported. New Guinea, for instance, had to import one-third of all the foodstuffs it required, including rice. Monoculture, which was characteristic of the economic structure of most of the Trust Territories, was another factor militating against their economic independence. An economic policy of that kind was the best guarantee for the Administering Authorities of their continued economic domination, even where the Territories acquired an apparent independence. Indigenous producers in general were not represented in the economic bodies controlling the production and export of the main agricultural products. The Trusteeship Council's documents showed that the people of Nauru derived no benefit from the phosphate deposits which were the natural wealth of their island and that their representatives exercised no supervision over their exploitation. A similar situa-

tion could be found in the other Trust Territories. Such facts proved that the Administering Authorities considered the Trust Territories as sources of raw materials, markets for their manufactured goods and reserves of cheap manpower. They had no intention of meeting the claims of the inhabitants, who desired not merely political but also economic independence.

12. In that connexion it was pertinent to consider the question of the association of certain Trust Territories with the European Economic Community, an association decided on without the consultation of the inhabitants of the Territories concerned and without any consideration of its effects on the Territories' economy. His delegation had pointed out to the Committee (672nd meeting) during the twelfth session of the General Assembly, that the implementation of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community constituted a new form of colonialism. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1210 (XII) the Treaty in question had been ratified, and it had come into force on 1 January 1958. The effects of the measures taken in application of that Treaty would soon be felt on the economies of the Trust Territories. It was regrettable that the General Assembly had insufficient information to be able to study the question, owing to the fact that the Administering Authorities had obstinately refused to furnish details. At the twelfth session they had asserted that the consideration of that matter by the Fourth Committee was premature since the Treaty had not yet been ratified by all the signatory States. That argument was no longer valid, but the Powers concerned were no more ready now than before to provide the United Nations with the information asked for. The General Assembly ought, therefore, to request them urgently to comply with the recommendations made earlier. It was important for the Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly to have enough information to be able, at their next sessions, to study the effects of the Treaty in question on the development of the Trust Territories.

13. With regard to social and health conditions in the Trust Territories, the situation was still disquieting. Measures of racial discrimination continued to hamper social development. In some cases the Administering Authorities pointed to the fact that there was no racial discrimination in their laws; in practice, however, the basic causes of racial discrimination had not been removed. In most Territories the indigenous people had an inferior position; their education was inadequate and they were not given sufficient medical care. In some instances they were not allowed to move about freely and were reduced to a state of near slavery. The representatives of the Administering Authorities asserted that where their qualifications were the same, the indigenous inhabitants received the same remuneration as Europeans, but that argument lost much of its force since, as everyone knew, the indigenous inhabitants had virtually no opportunity of receiving even primary education, let alone technical training. The number of teachers and doctors was grossly inadequate in relation

to the size of the Territories and the very slight progress made in that field was no cause for satisfaction.

14. The Administering Authorities asserted that the indigenous inhabitants of the Territories were not mature enough yet to permit political, economic and other reforms to be introduced more rapidly. In fact, they acted only under the pressure of events, and it was they who were preventing the indigenous peoples from maturing. Realizing that it was impossible to halt the process of emancipation of the colonized peoples they were trying to slow down that process and to replace the old forms of colonial domination by new systems which would allow them to retain their privileges in important spheres such as economies and foreign policy. With that end in view they placed a false interpretation on the United Nations Charter. The Organization was in duty bound to obstruct such manoeuvres. It should do its utmost to promote the accession of the peoples of the Trust Territories to complete independence.

15. Mr. PIETERS (Netherlands) regretted that the representative of Czechoslovakia had taken advantage of the debate on the Trusteeship Council's report to express his opinions on a question of sovereignty affecting Netherlands New Guinea. The Committee was not competent to deal with that question and should declare any reference made to it in the Committee out of order. The Netherlands Government considered that its sovereignty in Netherlands New Guinea was beyond question.

16. Mr. ABIKUSNO (Indonesia) considered that the statement of the Czechoslovak representative on the subject of West Irian was perfectly in order. The Indonesian delegation had always maintained that sovereignty over West Irian rested with the Republic of Indonesia. He also observed that the Charter did not provide for any kind of administrative union such as that referred to by the representative of Czechoslovakia.

17. Miss BROOKS (Liberia) said that her delegation wished to make its statement on the subject of Togoland under French administration after the Committee and heard the Togoland Prime Minister.

18. With regard to the other Trust Territories, the Liberian delegation drew the attention of the Administering Authorities to the need to carry out the recommendations made by the Trusteeship Council in its report. While recognizing that in certain cases the Administering Authorities were endeavouring to lead the peoples under trusteeship towards self-government or independence, she urged them to extend the application of that principle to all the Territories under trusteeship. She also asked the Administering Authorities to take into consideration the wishes expressed in the Committee by the representatives of the peoples they were administering and to be guided by the desires of those peoples.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.