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Chairman: Mr. Rodolfo MUNOZ (Argentina).

**Report of the Trusteeship Council (A/2150)
(*continued*)**
[Item 12]*

1. Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) wished to explain Belgian policies in regard to the participation of the indigenous inhabitants in public affairs. From comments made in the Committee, it was clear that the special representative's remarks on that point to the Trusteeship Council¹ had been misunderstood. The conclusion had been drawn that it was Belgian policy to exclude the indigenous inhabitants from public life in their own country. That, of course, was not the case. The indigenous inhabitants were in fact taking an increasingly important place in the administration and direction of public affairs. However, it was considered that they could best help to prepare their country for self-government or independence and serve their countrymen in the indigenous administration, which was becoming increasingly efficient and progressive.

2. When the Belgian authorities had first come to Ruanda-Urundi, they had found two monarchies, each with a solid political structure, through which the Sovereign exercised his authority. That authority was based on religious beliefs and real national feeling, and was unanimously accepted by the population. The operation of the political institutions, on the other hand, was subject to countless abuses. The first task of the Belgian Administration had been to end those abuses without destroying the traditional system, which could serve as a valuable instrument of progress. It had compelled all the agents of the indigenous authority to comply with the accepted rules of customary law, to respect the rights accorded to the persons under their administration, and to co-operate with the organs of the Administering Authority in the social and economic advancement of the people. To that end, the Administering Authority had been obliged to set up, side by side with the traditional indigenous system, its own organs of administration. A double hierarchy had thus

been created under the European Governor, who received his instructions direct from the Government of the Administering Authority. The two Residencies, Ruanda and Urundi, each had at the head of their European administration a Resident, under whom were the officers responsible for the administration of the administrative districts, with their assistants and technicians. The two indigenous administrations were headed by the *Bami*, the kings of Ruanda and Urundi, respectively, which were divided into chiefdoms and sub-chiefdoms.

3. From the outset, the Belgian administration had sought to improve the operation of the indigenous institutions and to raise the standard of the representatives of the indigenous authorities. Arbitrary dismissals were prohibited, and candidates for important offices were trained in their duties, for example, at the school at Astrida, which was well known to the members of the Visiting Missions, where they were given courses in administration and customary law, followed by a period of training in the field under a European official. From petty local potentates, the chiefs and sub-chiefs had become real servants of the indigenous administration, and the standard had risen remarkably. It had also been found necessary for the proper administration of justice to set up European courts side by side with the indigenous courts.

4. The critics of Belgian policy seemed to think that the indigenous inhabitants should be trained for self-government or independence by appointment to high posts in the European courts of European administration. The Administering Authority, on the other hand, thought that the best method would be to develop the indigenous institutions along modern and democratic lines and gradually to extend their jurisdiction, while at the same time curtailing the functions of the European authorities. There would be no place for two systems of administration when the period of trusteeship came to an end. The European administration would gradually give place to the indigenous administration, the European courts to the indigenous courts, until eventually the Europeans became no more than experts and technical advisers. The position of the indigenous inhabitants in regard to the European hierarchy could be compared to that of the nationals of an

* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

¹ See *Official Records of the Trusteeship Council, Eleventh Session, 422nd meeting.*

under-developed country in regard to a technical assistance mission. Such a mission would be composed of foreigners, and the nationals of the country would naturally occupy only subordinate posts, not because they were excluded from the important posts, but because when they were trained to fill them they would do so not as members of the mission but as part of the national administration of the country.

5. In his statement at the 282nd meeting, the Brazilian representative had said, with reference to the presence of European farmers in the Trust Territories, that although their technical knowledge might serve as a stimulus to the indigenous inhabitants, there had in the past been instances of exploitation. The Committee should concern itself with present policy rather than past events, and the Belgian Government was certainly not following a policy of exploitation. Slighting references had been made to the "white man's burden", but it was precisely that burden, the responsibility of the civilized countries towards more primitive peoples, which the Fourth Committee was shouldering when it examined information from the Non-Self-Governing Territories or the reports of the administering Powers. It was a burden which all Members of the United Nations must share, but unless it was recognized that the administering Powers were acting in good faith in carrying out their sacred trust, further discussion would be fruitless. The Belgian Government, for its part, had carried out and would carry out its obligations faithfully, to the utmost of its ability.

6. Mr. FORSYTH (Australia) noted the high standard of many statements in the general debate, which had been largely devoted to questions of principle. Despite evidence of impatience and continued misconceptions in some quarters, there had been signs of greater realism, a growing comprehension of the complexity of the task facing the Administering Authorities, and a disposition to be helpful and constructive. Nevertheless, some of the suggestions advanced continued to ignore the constitutional position of the Administering Authorities under the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreements. There was a tendency to over-emphasize political developments at the expense of economic and social problems and to ignore the basic fact that economic development was essential for social and political development.

7. According to his statement at the 280th meeting, the Philippine representative thought that the gold-mining companies in New Guinea should pay bigger royalties. Mr. Forsyth pointed out, first, that a royalty of 5 per cent was paid on all gold extracted; secondly, that expenditure by the gold-mining companies in the Territory promoted the economic activity and development essential to the advancement of the Territory in all fields; thirdly, that the costs of extraction was heavy and several gold-mining ventures had already gone out of business because costs were too high in relation to returns; fourthly, that the price of gold had not risen in proportion with other prices; fifthly, that the Trusteeship Council had asked the Administering Authority (A/2150, p. 278) to give further details in the next annual report and to consider the possibilities of a sliding scale of royalties, so that the Fourth Committee might do well to await the results of that request; sixthly, that the Philippine representative should be wary of discouraging investment and eco-

nomie development by seeking remote control over the activities of industries and enterprises in Trust Territories; and lastly, that the Australian Government made annual grants from Australian funds several times greater than the Territory's revenue for the benefit of administration and services in New Guinea.

8. The Philippine representative had recalled that the Trusteeship Council had asked for cost-of-living surveys, and that such surveys had not so far been forthcoming. But significant surveys were impractical in present circumstances: the majority of the population were not living in a commercial economy; subsistence agriculture was the general rule. However, sample surveys in some centres might sooner or later be possible. Highly developed statistical techniques could not be applied to primitive communities which were not integrated into a monetary economy.

9. At the 282nd meeting, the Chinese representative had again requested that Chinese residents in New Guinea should be represented in the Legislative Council. In the Trusteeship Council the Chinese representative had made it clear that he had in mind a separate Asian electorate.² Mr. Forsyth recalled that at the 280th meeting the Indian representative had emphasized the importance of the integration of groups and of reducing rather than confirming barriers and divisions. Provision existed for the representation of non-indigenous groups in the Legislative Council. The Australian Government had the interests of all the inhabitants of the Trust Territories constantly in mind; it was, however, acutely aware of the primary importance of ensuring the present and future interests of the indigenous inhabitants in the social, economic and political fields.

10. At the 283rd meeting the Polish representative had referred to the restrictions on the movements of the Chinese population in Nauru. The Committee should not overlook the fact that Nauru was in a special situation. It was a very small island. The Chinese labourers were brought in of their own free will on special conditions agreed to by them, and they were temporary immigrants, not part of the permanent population. Special measures were necessary to protect the way of life of the indigenous population, particularly since the Chinese were a relatively large group. In his statement at the 284th meeting, the Syrian representative had alleged that the Nauruan population was relegated to the background. Mr. Forsyth quoted from pages 258 and 259 of the Trusteeship Council's report (A/2150) to show the considerable part played by the Nauruans in the political and economic life of the country. He was glad that Syria was to be a member of the visiting mission which would visit the Trust Territories of the Pacific in 1953. Its representative would have an opportunity to see the true facts.

11. The Syrian representative had also criticized the Administering Authority because a large proportion of the population in New Guinea were not in contact with the Administration. Of course, the Administering Authority could have subjugated the population by military conquest, with all the suffering involved; but that was not its policy. In New Guinea it had followed a policy of "peaceful penetration", carried on by patrols of administrative officers assisted by indigenous police

² *Ibid.*, Tenth Session, 396th meeting.

interpreters and guides. The objective was to gain the confidence of the people, and the patrols were under the strictest instructions to avoid violence of any kind. Such a policy admittedly took time; quick results could be obtained by force, but the Australian Government preferred the slower, sounder process of persuasion and evolution.

12. The USSR representative had spoken at the 284th meeting of the alienation of 94,000 acres of land, and had left the impression that the Australian Administration was robbing the indigenous inhabitants of New Guinea of their land. He had failed to point out that the total area of the Trust Territory was almost 60 million acres and that less than one-sixtieth of the land had been alienated. Furthermore, the alienation of most of the land in question had been carried out under the German régime. The fundamental land policy of the Australian Government was that the land belonged to the indigenous inhabitants, and could be alienated only after proof had been given that it was not, and would not, be needed by them. Economic, social and political development must go hand in hand, and European industrial development was essential to the economic advancement of the Territory. The USSR representative's remarks were another example of the practice of distortion by incomplete citations of United Nations documents.

13. The Polish, USSR and Syrian representatives had voiced concern over the fact that it might be necessary to resettle the indigenous population of Nauru elsewhere after the phosphate deposits were exhausted. It was clear from page 260 of the Council's report that the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in the Pacific had agreed with the Australian Government that such a step might be necessary, and that, in accordance with the Council's recommendations, the Australian Government was continuing to investigate all possible alternative means of livelihood for the inhabitants.

14. The Polish and USSR representatives had criticized the contribution of the British Phosphate Commissioners to the welfare and other services in Nauru. Mr. Forsyth recalled that, at its tenth session, the Council had been informed that the capitation tax had been abolished in Nauru, that the Phosphate Commissioners had made an increased contribution to the revenue and special funds in the Territory, and that wages had been substantially increased. The relevant details could be found on page 67-70 of the verbatim record of the 400th meeting of the Council (T/PV. 400) and on page 261 of the Council's report.

15. The USSR representative had alleged that the population of New Guinea was completely deprived of political rights and excluded from participation in the Administration. Mr. Forsyth quoted the Council's conclusions on the Legislative Council and village councils, on pages 271 and 272 of the report, to disprove that statement. The Administering Authority's efforts and achievements in associating the indigenous inhabitants in the political organs of the Territory had been placed on record in his first statement in the general debate (279th meeting), in the Trusteeship Council, and in the annual report.

16. The Czechoslovak representative, who had spoken at the 284th meeting, had been concerned at the fact

that there was a single Legislative Council for New Guinea and Papua. It was curious that while many members of the Committee wished to promote the amalgamation of the two Togolands and to unite the Ewe people, they were very critical of the administrative union of Papua and New Guinea, and seemed anxious to preserve forever an artificial boundary between peoples of the same culture and stage of development. The only consistent element in their attitude was their desire to find fault with the Administering Authorities.

17. The USSR representative had been very distressed over the maintenance of the tribal system. That system was not highly developed in New Guinea, where the units were small village units. To the extent that it did exist, it represented the people's own wishes. If it was destroyed, the Administering Authority would have to impose an alternative from above. That was not its attitude; it did not favour revolutionary methods or the proletarianization of New Guinea, but rather evolution and the utilization of features of indigenous society through which development along democratic lines could be promoted.

18. In conclusion, he pointed out that every question raised in the Fourth Committee had already been raised and answered in the Trusteeship Council. The statements of the special representative, the Council's conclusions and the annual report were on record. They showed that Australia was faithfully fulfilling its obligations under the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreements. He suggested that it might be better to leave the question of details to the Council and deal only with questions of principle in the Committee.

19. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) said that the speech made by the USSR representative at the 284th meeting had contained a number of half-truths from which he had deduced fallacious conclusions concerning the administration of Trust Territories. For example, he had said that some 75,000 acres in Western Samoa owned by the New Zealand Government, the New Zealand Reparation Estates, had been withdrawn from the purview of the Administration of Western Samoa. The same statement had been made year after year and had been refuted each time. The Trusteeship Council's report (p. 247) showed that more than half that acreage, or some 41,000 acres, had been transferred to the Samoan Government. Some of the land was economically unworkable and much of it would be held as conservation reserves. Other parts would be used to relieve population pressure in a few areas where there was a shortage of land for the Samoans. The decision of the Samoan Government concerning the disposal of the land had been, and would be, taken in full consultation with the Samoan people themselves. The New Zealand representative had pointed out in his speech in the general debate (282nd meeting) that the Samoans participated directly in such decisions, as a consequence of their majority in the Legislative Assembly and their equality in the Executive Council.

20. The USSR representative had also alleged that all the profits from the New Zealand Reparation Estates went to the New Zealand Treasury. The Committee had already been informed that none of that money was spent by the New Zealand Government for its own purposes. Ever since the beginning of trusteeship in Western Samoa, it had been the policy of the

New Zealand Government to apply the money as grants to the Government of Western Samoa, exclusively for various purposes relating to the economic and social advancement of the Territory. So far the sum of £241,000 had been spent, chiefly upon capital works as the building of schools, hospitals and other public works. That point had been made quite clear in the New Zealand representative's statement in the general debate.

21. The USSR representative had accused the New Zealand representative of turning the subject of the examination of petitions into a joke. New Zealand's record in the matter was a sufficient answer to that assertion. It had been the New Zealand Government which had suggested to the Trusteeship Council³ that a mission of inquiry should be sent to investigate a petition from the Samoan people in 1947 regarding self-government (T/Pet.1/1). Every member of the

Committee knew that that Mission had reported that the Samoans were not ready for full self-government⁴ and that conclusion had been confirmed by the 1950 United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in the Pacific (T/792, para. 37). Since then, however, the Administering Authority had made rapid progress in promoting self-government in Western Samoa by the establishment of the legislative and executive bodies to which he had already referred. As the New Zealand representative had said in the general debate, a recognition of the profound differences between one Trust Territory and another, and greater familiarity with conditions in all Trust Territories as a result of a more careful examination of the information available to the members of the Committee would lead to the adoption of more valuable resolutions by the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.

³ *Ibid.*, First Session, 21st meeting.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Second Session, Special Supplement No. 1, p. 24.