

SECTION F

COMITÉ DE FIDÉICOMMIS
TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE

245.

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*Note de la direction des Nations Unies
pour le sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Memorandum from United Nations Division
to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs*

CONFIDENTIAL

[Ottawa], December 22, 1949

THE UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE

One of the most disturbing aspects of the Fourth Session of the Assembly was the outcome of the discussions in the Trusteeship Committee. The satisfaction which has been felt over the voting on such matters as the Soviet peace resolution, atomic energy and conventional armaments must be somewhat diminished by consideration of the voting in the Fourth Committee. Here our friends have been dangerously divided, and the Soviet Union has been able to sit back relatively quietly and exploit this situation. There has, of course, been a strong difference of opinion between the Administering Authorities on the one hand and, on the other hand, those countries who are particularly critical of "colonialism". This difference has now become much more serious, and the position is such that this issue might assume greater importance. The growing seriousness seems to be due to the increasing pretensions of the Trusteeship Committee and the anxiety over these pretensions on the part of the Administering Authorities.

This dangerous cleavage is one which Canada cannot ignore. We have in the past intervened as little as possible in trusteeship questions on the grounds that we were not directly concerned and had no special contribution to make. In the past Session, however, our representative played a more active role in the Committee. We have been quite properly reticent about speaking too much on a subject of which we have no direct experience. At times there has been a suggestion of pharisaism, however, in our explanations, the implication being that the possession of trusteeships is a sin in which we have not indulged. Our experience on the Security Council has taught us that we can play a useful role in matters which do not directly concern us and of which we have no special knowledge. If the Canadian representative on the Security Council can play the major role in securing agreement in Indonesia, it is difficult for us to argue that we can make no contribution to the controversy over Tanganyika. In the Security Council we have now acquired experience, and we have also acquired a reputation. The fact that we have never been implicated in colonial responsibilities is a fact which ought not to be counted to us either as a virtue or lack of virtue. The same is true of the absence of an important colour problem in Canada. Nevertheless, non-European peoples have shown some evidence of looking to us as more objective than those countries