

criticism expressed centred on the actual operation of the Council. Items which had already been extensively discussed by the Trusteeship Committee again formed part of its agenda, chief among these being the Ewe and Togoland unification problem and the question of Administrative Unions. Some of the trusteeship questions which occupied the Committee's time are described in greater detail below.

### Oral Hearings of Native Inhabitants

The Charter empowers both the General Assembly and the Trusteeship Council to accept petitions (either written or oral) from the native inhabitants of trust territories and to examine these in consultation with the administering authorities. The bulk of these petitions have in the past been handled by the Trusteeship Council, which has established special machinery to deal with the large number received. There has however been an increasing tendency for oral petitioners to request hearings before the Trusteeship Committee of the Assembly. While not questioning the right of the petitioners to oral hearings, the Canadian Delegation joined with others at the seventh session in doubting the wisdom of replying favourably to every request. It seemed evident that some sort of criteria should be set (e.g. a prior hearing by the Trusteeship Council) which would enable the Assembly to decide the immediate urgency of a petitioner's problem and thus its importance in relation to other business to be dealt with during the session. An attempt to help develop suitable procedure was made by the Representative of the Dominican Republic, who introduced a resolution calling for the establishment of a sub-committee to study the problem and make recommendations. Unfortunately, although the Canadian and a number of other delegations welcomed this initiative, the general reaction was lukewarm and the resolution was withdrawn. The Committee agreed to grant hearings to representatives of native organizations from the Togolands (Ewe and Togoland unification problem) Tanganyika (Wa-Meru land case), the French Cameroons and Somaliland. The petition from the Wa-Meru, which was perhaps of greatest interest, protested the carrying-out of a re-settlement project of the United Kingdom Government which it was claimed meant the transfer of the Wa-Meru tribe to inferior land in order to make way for European settlers. The Canadian Delegation joined a number of delegations in trying to find some middle ground between those who supported a resolution condemning the administering authority for its action and those who wished to leave the matter as it stood. In the final analysis, none of the various solutions which Assembly members put forward succeeded in obtaining the two-thirds majority required. The debate was not however without result as the United Kingdom announced its intention of calling a round-table conference, including Wa-Meru representatives, at which some of the suggestions advanced in the Assembly would be taken into account.

The experience of the seventh session has shown the necessity for the establishment of some sort of procedure for the more efficient handling of oral petitions. A great deal of the time of the Trusteeship Committee was taken up with these hearings, a fact which