

rural economic development of the trust territories; the dissemination of information in trust territories on the United Nations and on the International Trusteeship System; offers by member states of study and training facilities; and the more controversial items of administrative unions, Togoland unification, participation of indigenous inhabitants in the work of the Council, and the attainment by the trust territories of self-government or independence. At the tenth session of the General Assembly, most of the Fourth Committee's time was devoted to two main proposals: one for the establishment of procedures for the acceptance and the examination of petitions; and the other for the establishment of a sub-committee on the attainment by the trust territories of the objective of self-government and independence. The Fourth Committee also had before it numerous requests from petitioners concerning Somaliland under Italian administration and the Cameroons under French administration. A Canadian statement in the Fourth Committee outlined Canada's misgivings about the practice among petitioners of by-passing the Standing Committee appointed by the Trusteeship Council to deal with petitions, in favour of presenting their requests direct to the Assembly with its wider membership. Canada's votes on the hearing of petitions by the Fourth Committee were guided by the following general considerations: whether the matter was urgent, whether it had not already been studied by the Trusteeship Council or its Standing Committee on petitions, and whether it was not to be examined by one of the visiting missions and subsequently to be reported to the Council for consideration and action. Judged by these criteria, few of the petitions would have warranted a hearing by the Fourth Committee.

Of the numerous resolutions submitted in the course of the general debate on the Council's annual report, the General Assembly approved one which took note of the report, and drew the Council's attention to the comments and suggestions made in the Assembly's debate; a second resolution which requested the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy to expedite their negotiations on the Somaliland frontier and to make a progress report to the Assembly's eleventh session, and a third resolution which requested the Council to include in its succeeding reports a section on the attainment of self-government or independence and reiterated the importance attached to this question by the Assembly. The latter resolution was approved by a vote of 43 in favour, 11 against (including Canada), with 9 abstentions. Canada's vote took into consideration not only that the resolution was based on Resolution 858 (IX)¹ and other earlier resolutions which Canada had opposed², but also that the proposal was impractical, in that there were grounds for believing that it would lead to setting up additional and unnecessary machinery in the trusteeship field³.

South West Africa

The United Nations has attempted unsuccessfully to persuade the Union of South Africa to accept a trusteeship agreement for South West Africa. The Union Government has maintained that its international obligations towards the territory ceased with the demise of the League of Nations. The General Assembly asked the International Court of Justice if this argument was valid. In 1950 the Court replied that the Union was under no obligation to accept a trusteeship agreement but that South West Africa was still an international territory and that its status could not be altered without the consent of the United Nations. Furthermore, the supervisory functions formerly exercised by the League of Nations should now be exercised by the United Nations.

¹See above, p. 85.

²See *Canada and the United Nations 1951-52*, p. 121.

³See *Canada and the United Nations 1953-54*, p. 90.