

Tanganyika

No. 61/14 Report of the Trusteeship Council

Statement by Mr. Martial Asselin, Canadian Representative on the 4th Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, October 10, 1961.

Madame Chairman:

At the outset may I be permitted to extend to you the sincere congratulations and good wishes of the Canadian delegation on your election as chairman of the 4th Committee. We are confident that you will preside over our deliberations with grace, tact and impartiality, those same qualities which you have so often displayed in the past. It is a matter of particular satisfaction and pleasure that you are not only the first woman to preside over this Committee but also the first African to do so. I wish to assure you, Madame Chairman, of the full cooperation of the Canadian delegation in tackling the work that lies before us.

May I also associate my delegation with the good wishes that have been extended to our vice-chairman, Mr. Lulo, and to our rapporteur, Mr. Houaiss. I am especially happy that my friend, Mr. Houaiss, who has made such an outstanding contribution to the work of this Committee, has been honoured by election to the post of rapporteur. We wish him well and we extend to all members of the Bureau our best wishes for a stimulating, productive and untroubled session.

On this occasion we would wish, through you, to extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of Heinrich Wieschhoff who died in Africa on a mission of peace in the company of his friend, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld.

Mr. Wieschhoff was a devoted servant of the United Nations, a scholar of wide learning and a friend of colonial peoples everywhere. The individual contribution which he made to fulfilment of the aims of the trusteeship system is deserving of the highest praise and will never be forgotten. He will be sorely missed.

The past year has seen further progress towards the goal of the United Nations trusteeship system - its self-liquidation. Of the original eleven trust territories, four had attained independence by the end of 1960. In less than two months' time we will welcome the accession to independence of Tanganyika, to be followed shortly afterwards by the termination of trusteeship in Western Samoa.

My delegation has already had occasion to express its gratification at the end of trusteeship administration in the Cameroons. The successful establishment, on October 1, of the Federal Republic of Cameroun in an atmosphere of amity, friendship and co-operation marks the emergence of a new federal state on the West African scene. It is a bilingual state with a federal

structure, many of whose problems will be closely akin to those which my own country, Canada, has had to resolve. In this effort the people of Cameroun can count on the friendship and goodwill of the people of Canada.

Tanganyika

Canada was happy to join as a co-sponsor of the draft resolution on the future of Tanganyika (Doc.A/C.4/L.689), introduced in Committee yesterday by the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom. The smooth and exemplary development of Tanganyika towards full self-government and independence, in conditions of harmony and intimate co-operation between the people of Tanganyika, their elected representatives and the administering authority, has been almost a model of its kind.

We desire, on this occasion, to extend our warm congratulations to the people of Tanganyika, to the Government of Tanganyika and last, and far from least, to the Government of Great Britain and the many British officials who have worked so hard through the years to bring about this great accomplishment. Canada, geographically half a world apart, will give Tanganyika a warm welcome when her representatives join us here, before the end of the sixteenth session, as Tanganyika becomes a valued member of the United Nations family.

The distinguished Prime Minister of Tanganyika, Mr. Julius Nyerere, has put it all very clearly in his statement at the 1171st meeting of the Trusteeship Council. The smooth transition to independence of Tanganyika is due to many factors, including the personal qualities of the Tanganyikan leaders and the British administrators and officials who worked with them. But Mr. Nyerere surely went to the heart of the matter when he said that three things were needed to make sure that the objectives of trusteeship would be obtained smoothly and speedily:

First, a Trusteeship Council which took its responsibilities seriously and honestly;

Secondly, an administering authority which was sensitive to world opinion; and

Thirdly, a people united and determined to achieve its independence.

In the case of Tanganyika, all three elements were there. And if I may say so, the happy and fruitful conjunction of these three factors are also seen to be present in the case of Western Samoa. But now we are talking of Tanganyika, the fulfilment of the aims of trusteeship under a wise and liberal Administering Authority, and the promise of its future under a great leader of his people.

It is the earnest hope and belief of my delegation that the three elements which Prime Minister Nyerere has singled out as crucial for the smooth and rapid transition to independence of trust territories will be repeated in the case of the remaining territories still under trusteeship. Before I turn to these matters I wish to extend to the Trusteeship Council, through its distinguished president, Mr. U Tin Maung, our sincere congratulations on the contribution which the Council has made to Tanganyika's progress to independence. The Council as a whole has never failed to take its responsibilities towards Trust Territories seriously and honestly. It must be a great satisfaction to the Council that

its work has been crowned with such success in the case of Tanganyika. We who are not members of the Council can only express our thanks and renewed confidence in the work it is doing for the peoples of territories under trusteeship.

New Guinea

The Canadian delegation welcomes the recent advances made in the trust territory of New Guinea in the political, economic, social and educational fields. Australia, as the administering authority, is to be congratulated on the reconstitution of the Legislative Council of Papua and New Guinea, which has made provision for the election of indigenous members from the trust territory and is a significant step towards the creation of a political consciousness among the people of the territory. We also welcome the administering authority's plan to extend full administrative control over the entire territory by the end of 1963. The setting of this target reflects a proper sense of urgency for the rapid and planned advance of the territory.

Likewise the announcement, by the administering authority that it is now engaged in the preparation of a comprehensive programme of economic, social and educational advancement in New Guinea from which it will be possible to derive target dates in these various fields is very much to be welcomed. We are confident that the administering authority will pursue these plans with vigour and that the "leap forward" in overall development of the territory, which is reflected in the Trusteeship Council's current report, will be further accelerated in the coming year.

Nauru

The problem of the Nauruans, in human terms, is a peculiar and tragic one. It seems clear that there will be a probable need for resettlement of the Nauruan community elsewhere, due to the exhaustion of the phosphate deposits; the population increase and the infertility of the land. It would be unfortunate if these people should remain on their remote island in a steadily contracting economy if no other means of livelihood can be found for them. Whatever solution is found, whether by resettlement in Australia under the generous offer of the Governments of Australia, New Zealand and Britain, or on another island, we hope that the Nauruan people will be enabled to preserve their own traditions and identity. We have the promise of the three governments that any solution concerning a future home for the Nauruans will be based on the freely expressed wishes of the people themselves.

It seems to my delegation that we must keep in mind this assurance of self-determination; that we must allow the Nauruan people sufficient time to weigh the difficult choices with which they are faced, and hope that in the end a consensus of opinion about their future will emerge from their own counsels. In the meantime it is surely premature to force a solution on a people who are not ready for it or to debate procedures whereby the Nauruans would be asked, here and now, to decide their destiny. The choice is for them to make when they are agreed on their future. In conclusion, my delegation hopes that the 1962 visiting mission to the territory will give special and sympathetic attention to the future of the people of Nauru.



