

Council throughout this period, having previously refused to participate on the grounds that the trusteeship agreements were unconstitutional. Unfortunately the objective standards of debate that were hoped for at San Francisco have not been apparent in the deliberations of the Trusteeship Council. This is partly due to the fact that, unlike its predecessor—the Permanent Mandates Commission—the Trusteeship Council has become a political rather than a technical body. A tendency has developed for the Council to be used as a forum for propaganda by the representative of the Soviet Union. Discussion in the Council has often been unnecessarily protracted with procedural questions. A lack of practical experience of the problems inherent in the administration of Native peoples has detracted from the validity of certain criticisms offered by the non-administering Powers who have nevertheless endeavoured to base their views and suggestions on humanitarian principles. In spite of these failings, the positive achievements of the Trusteeship Council have been considerable in the period under review. Reports from trust territories have been examined, petitions considered, visits to trust territories carried out, and some constructive recommendations proposed.

The most important questions dealt with by the Trusteeship Council and by the General Assembly were :—

(i) *Examination of Annual Reports on Trust Territories*

At its third session, June–August, 1948, the Trusteeship Council examined reports submitted by the administering Powers for Ruanda Urundi (Belgium), Tanganyika (United Kingdom), and New Guinea (Australia). Special representatives who were thoroughly familiar with the territories concerned attended on behalf of the administering Powers to answer questions put by members of the Council. During the consideration of New Zealand's report on Western Samoa at the fourth session, January–March, 1949, general satisfaction was expressed with the progress made and constructive suggestions for the political, economic, and educational development of the territory were offered.

(ii) *Administrative Unions*

The most important issue arising out of the examination of the annual reports on Ruanda Urundi, Tanganyika, and New Guinea was the right of the administering Powers, in pursuance of permissive provisions in the trusteeship agreements for those territories, to establish a Customs, fiscal, and administrative union between the trust territory in question and the adjacent non-self-governing territories of the Belgian Congo, Kenya and Uganda, and Papua