

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTEENTH SESSION
Official Records



**FOURTH COMMITTEE 753rd
MEETING**

Wednesday, 8 October 1958,
at 3.25 p.m.

NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

AGENDA ITEM 39

Question of South West Africa (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the Good Offices Committee on South West Africa (A/3900);
- (b) Report of the Committee on South West Africa (A/3906 and Add.1)

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (*continued*)

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Reverend Michael Scott and Mr. Mburumba Kerina took places at the Committee table.

1. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) noted the extract from the Windhoek Advertiser quoted by the Reverend Michael Scott in his statement at the 748th meeting, to the effect that those living in South West Africa would not want their future to be decided without having an opportunity to voice their own opinions. He asked whether Mr. Scott could comment further on that extract and whether the reference was to the white population only or to the population of the Territory as a whole.

2. The Reverend Michael SCOTT replied that there was considerable opposition to the partition proposal on the part of both the German community in South West Africa and the United National South West Party, as expressed in the local Press. He had just received a report from the Territory which gave an indication of the views of certain representative Europeans there with regard to partition. According to that report, the edition of the Windhoek Advertiser for 5 September had published the results of a poll of initial reactions to the proposal which it had organized in the Territory at the request of a Union newspaper. The Advertiser had found that in general the reaction was extremely unfavourable. Windhoek businessmen, for example, had been surprised that the Union Government should even entertain such a proposal. The Advertiser had gone on to note with approval the observation of another newspaper, the Allgemeine

Zeitung, that the experience of several countries had demonstrated the impracticability of partition and that the matter should not even be discussed until the inhabitants of the Territory had been consulted. The deputy leader of the United National South West Party had said that the Territory was a geographical unit and that partition would be completely contrary to the Mandate. The Organizing Secretary of the Nationalist Party of South West Africa, who was a member of the Executive Committee of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory, had said when asked his opinion that he could not comment at that stage; the Advertiser had presumed that he was waiting until the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union Government should indicate the party's policy in the matter.

3. There was also considerable opposition to partition among Africans in Bechuanaland, who felt that their vital interests would be affected thereby. In that connexion he referred again to the memorandum from the senior chiefs of the Bechuanaland Protectorate which he had quoted in his statement at the 748th meeting. The chiefs had written that there were in the Protectorate many displaced persons, Hereros and others, who had been driven out of South West Africa by the Germans or had taken refuge there in the years since the German occupation and who would return to the Territory if the purposes of the Mandate were being duly fulfilled. Bechuanaland had a common frontier with South West Africa which was more than 400 miles long; if part of the Territory were to be annexed by the Union, Bechuanaland would be cut off from access to the sea and its possibilities for economic development would be destroyed. Finally, the memorandum had referred to the threat to Swaziland, Basutoland and Bechuanaland from the Union of South Africa.

4. Opposition to the partition proposal among certain sections of the European population of South West Africa was due also to the fear that if the southern part were annexed the Union Government would acquire control over the Territory's labour policy, at present subject to an agreement between the Legislative Assembly of the Territory and the Native labour recruiting corporation, with the result that the flow of African labourers from the North into South West African farms and mines might be diverted to the Union itself. Another important consideration was that the white population of South West Africa at present had control of its own taxation policies and that taxation there was lighter than in the Union.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.