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ASSEMBLY**

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**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1332nd
MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Guillermo FLORES AVENDAÑO
(Guatemala).

Requests for hearings (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 56 (QUESTION OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that a telegram had been received from Mr. Enoch^{1/} requesting a hearing for himself and Mr. Sithole on behalf of "Nkomo-Zimbabwe African Peoples Union". Since it was important for the Committee to decide at once whether to grant the hearing, he suggested that the Committee should dispense with the usual procedure of having a request distributed as a document before taking a decision on it.

It was so decided.

It was further decided to grant the request for a hearing.^{2/}

AGENDA ITEM 56

Question of Southern Rhodesia: report of the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI) (A/C.4/560, A/C.4/L.747) (continued)

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (continued)

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Reverend Michael Scott took a place at the Committee table.

2. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) observed that the latest actions of the white minority Government in Southern Rhodesia and their consequences, which were but a foretaste of the things to come, could have been prevented if the United Kingdom Government had acted in time instead of upholding the legal fiction that it could not intervene in the affairs of Southern Rhodesia. He hoped that the United Kingdom Government would at least make a categorical statement warning the white minority in Southern Rhodesia not to expect any support if it continued along its present dangerous

road. He asked the petitioner what effect such a statement would have on the white minority in the country.

3. The Reverend Michael SCOTT replied that such a statement was long overdue. Had it been made immediately after the Second World War, the white settlers would have had time in which to make up their minds whether to leave Southern Rhodesia or to remain in a fully self-governing State ruled by the majority.

4. Many settlers in Southern Rhodesia had family ties with South Africa. That fact, together with the pull exerted by South Africa's industry and economy, might make Southern Rhodesia gravitate more towards South Africa.

5. Although the United Kingdom could still take action to prevent a repetition in Southern Rhodesia of what had happened in South Africa in 1910, when the indigenous inhabitants had been surrendered to a system from which they had never been able to extricate themselves, there was little the United Kingdom could do in military terms since power had been surrendered to the Government of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and to the Republic of South Africa.

6. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) agreed that a statement by the United Kingdom Government along the lines he had suggested would serve a useful purpose. He hoped that there were no legal reasons why it could not be made.

7. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) asked the petitioner why he had said that the United Kingdom could not intervene militarily in Southern Rhodesia.

8. The Reverend Michael SCOTT replied that he had not meant to imply that the United Kingdom lacked the military resources to assert itself. Ever since the end of the Second World War, however, the United Kingdom had pursued a policy of withdrawal from its colonial possessions in Asia and in Africa. That withdrawal had resulted in the emergence of several self-governing and independent States in West Africa and in East Africa but in Central Africa power had been gradually surrendered to the White minority. At the present time the only military action which the United Kingdom Government could take was to impose a naval blockade of the ports of South Africa, Mozambique and Angola.

9. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) asked the petitioner whether the surrender of power to the white settlers in Central Africa had been the result of deliberate policy or a mistake, and whether the United Kingdom would take military action in Southern Rhodesia, as it had done in Suez, Cyprus, Kenya, British Guiana and elsewhere, if the nationalist movement in Southern Rhodesia had military forces at its disposal.

10. The Reverend Michael SCOTT replied that the United Kingdom Government's policies in Central Africa had been greatly influenced by powerful eco-

^{1/} The petitioner's full name: Enoch Dumbutshena.

^{2/} The request was subsequently circulated in document A/C.4/557/Add.1, section 2.

conomic forces and vested interests. The Conservative Government in the United Kingdom was more ready to yield to its extreme right wing on colonial issues, since, unfortunately, colonial policies were not a vote-catching issue in United Kingdom elections.

11. He was convinced that the United Nations could influence United Kingdom policies in Central Africa as it had done over the Suez crisis and that it should make the United Kingdom Government aware of the dangers inherent in the mistaken policy it was pursuing in Central Africa, which could only lead to the collapse of civilization in Africa.

12. Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom), speaking in exercise of his right of reply, said that while he did not propose to enter into a discussion with the petitioner or the questioners, either in general or on particular points, or to make a statement at that state, he wished to comment on the references made to racial discrimination in Southern Rhodesia and to the influence of the vested interests.

13. With regard to the former, the petitioner, by straying from the subject under discussion, had given a dangerously misleading impression. As the petitioner himself was aware, the situation concerning racial discrimination was wholly different in Southern Rhodesia from the situation in the Republic of South Africa. The petitioner well knew that the Government of Southern Rhodesia, in public declarations and by its actions, had set itself the task of eliminating all racial discrimination. He regretted that the petitioner had not had the generosity to make that admission.

14. With regard to vested interests, it had been implied that the policy pursued by his country had been dictated by financial, commercial and particularly mining interests. Time and again he had had occasion to refer to United Kingdom policy in the matter. All but 5 per cent of the hundreds of millions of people administered by the United Kingdom at the end of the Second World War had since attained self-government and independence. Were it not for special difficulties, the remaining 5 per cent would also have become independent by now. The commercial and mining interests in Ghana, Tanganyika and Nigeria had not delayed the accession of those countries to independence. Similarly, it would be wrong to suggest that they were responsible for delaying action in Central Africa. The fallacy of the argument became even more apparent if the situation in Northern Rhodesia was compared with that in Southern Rhodesia, in view of the fact that the mining interests in the former were much more important. He therefore denied the allegations that his Government's policy was being dictated or influenced by the commercial or vested interests to which reference had been made. The petitioner, who, he knew, felt a deep concern for the fate of the African peoples, would not be serving their best interests if he failed to give a full and fair picture of the situation in the Territories under discussion.

15. Mr. MARSH (Jamaica) asked the petitioner whether in his opinion the recent banning of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union had been designed to bring about a situation such that the withdrawal of rights from Africans could be more easily justified by constitutional means.

16. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that the two measures involved—the amendments to the Unlawful Organizations Act and the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act—had been passed only very recently and

it was too early to say what further legislation might be introduced and to what extent the activities of the African population might be further paralysed thereby. Some such result was, however, to be expected.

17. He hoped that in his statement at the previous meeting he had succeeded in making clear the considerable difference between the consequences of the United Kingdom's policies in North and West Africa and those in the southern part of the continent. Cynics had said that the difference consisted in an investment of £2,000 million. In fact, it was impossible to deny that the mining industry in Southern and Central Africa depended on cheap migratory labour, and it was in all the legislation limiting the movements and the rights of Africans and forcing them to seek work in the mines that the explanation of the difference in policy was to be found. While it was true that Nigeria, Ghana and Tanganyika had achieved independence almost painlessly, in Southern Rhodesia the presence of powerful vested interests and of a large permanent white population had resulted in a very different situation and it seemed that United Kingdom policy was to make concessions to those circles rather than to grant self-government to the African population.

18. With regard to discrimination, he himself had been a prohibited immigrant for the past ten years and had consequently not had an opportunity of witnessing the trend towards social equality which he understood had become much more marked in Southern Rhodesia in the interval. The African population was, however, still being discriminated against in the matter of the possession and occupation of land and of political power. There was a permanent white parliamentary majority in Southern Rhodesia and until the recent constitutional changes there had not been a single African in the legislature. Even under the federal structure based on "partnership", there were not more than four African representatives in the Federal Parliament and they had been elected not by Africans but by Whites.

19. Mr. SHABA (Tanganyika) recalled that at the previous meeting the petitioner had stated that the United Kingdom had nominal powers in Southern Rhodesia. He would like to know why, in the petitioner's opinion, it had never applied its reserved powers.

20. The Reverend Michael SCOTT explained that the United Kingdom Government had had the right of veto over legislation in Southern Rhodesia for the past twenty years but he could not recall a single instance of its being exercised. Until very recently self-government in Southern Rhodesia had meant self-government for the Whites, and even under the new Constitution there was no provision for an African majority. The Africans had been boycotting the new electoral system and he understood that not more than some 4,000 to 7,000 Africans had been enrolled. Yet such an approach was termed non-racialism and moderation, and those who advocated democracy were considered to be the extremists. He quoted from a statement by Sir Roy Welensky in which the latter had declared that he intended to support the policy of "moderation" by force if necessary. Thus the more enlightened approach in the matter of social equality had still to be reflected in the political system by the granting of political power to the Africans; otherwise it would be a mere sham.

21. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) recalled that the United Kingdom representative had referred to the

5 per cent of the population of the Commonwealth who still remained under colonial rule and had hinted that there were special difficulties involved in granting independence to them. He would like to have some clarification from the petitioner about what those difficulties might be.

22. He would also like to know whether the petitioner thought that the mining industries in Southern Rhodesia were connected with those in Katanga and South Africa.

23. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that it was quite true that the mining interests in Rhodesia, South Africa and Katanga were interrelated; a study of the directorships of the companies concerned was enough to establish that fact.

24. With regard to the first question, he could only repeat the answer he had already given. The European communities in Southern Rhodesia had become accustomed to enjoying privileges that they would not relinquish. Thanks in particular to the cheap labour that was available, their level of living was much higher than it would probably be in England or Europe; it was as simple as that. The system had been built round the privileges of the white settlers and the much more powerful vested interests of the big industrial concerns, which happened to coincide. In South Africa, moreover, an additional factor was the white trade unions, which wished to keep Africans out of the skilled occupations.

25. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) thanked the petitioner for his replies and expressed the hope that the United Kingdom delegation would have some further comments to make on his questions and the answers that had been given.

26. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) said that in view of the replies that had been given he would like to ask the petitioner whether in his opinion there was any real difference between the current political status of the Africans in Southern Rhodesia and that which had obtained in Nigeria, Ghana or Tanganyika just before they had attained independence, when the United Kingdom had been responsible for defence and foreign affairs.

27. The Reverend Michael SCOTT replied that the difference was a structural one inasmuch as in Southern Rhodesia the Africans were prevented from obtaining a majority in Parliament, which was therefore representative of the white population but did not reflect the true majority. Responsibility for relations with other countries and foreign affairs generally lay with the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in conjunction with the United Kingdom Government, which was to act as a spokesman for the Federation.

28. The question of the political status of the people of Southern Rhodesia could not be considered in the abstract but only in relation to their actual rights and the manner in which they could effectively be exercised. A considerable disability was being placed on the African populations in consequence of the two recent measures to which he had alluded. For example, the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act would certainly hinder the development of normal political activities by extending the powers of the Minister at the expense of the individual. Under the amended Act an individual could be prevented from attending meetings at any time for a period of three months, if the Minister deemed that necessary in the interest of law and order. New restrictions were also placed on public

and private gatherings. In those circumstances it was difficult to see how the abstract rights of the African population could be exercised in practice.

29. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) recalled that Mr. Nkomo's party, the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, had been banned in virtue of the recent amendments to the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act and the Unlawful Organizations Act. He asked the petitioner whether he would agree that under the Southern Rhodesian Constitution those amendments could not have become law without the assent of the United Kingdom Government.

30. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that he thought that the United Kingdom Government could have withheld assent if it had wished to do so.

31. Mr. EOUAGNIGNON (Dahomey) asked whether Africans were employed in the Southern Rhodesian armed forces and in the policy force, and, if so, what was the proportion of Africans to non-Africans.

32. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that he did not possess that information.

33. Mr. DIALLO (Mali) said that the petitioner's statement had confirmed the fact that racial discrimination existed in Southern Rhodesia. He wondered whether the petitioner could give any information regarding the economic and social consequences of racially discriminatory practices in Southern Rhodesia. In South Africa, for example, it was known that racial discrimination entailed grave consequences for the social and economic life of the inhabitants.

34. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that there could be no doubt that discriminatory practices hampered the development of the country. In South Africa, the low wages paid to Africans employed in the mines and on farms prevented the growth of home demand and made South Africa dependent on its agricultural and mineral exports; at the same time, the majority of its population remained notoriously undernourished. In Southern Rhodesia, the Government was faced with a very serious economic situation as the result of the instability of the present imposed political system and the consequent decline in the inflow of foreign capital. If the Southern Rhodesian Government continued its present policy, the Territory would become increasingly isolated and the inevitable rupture of economic links with Northern Rhodesia would deprive it of the copper revenues on which its recent economic expansion had been based. Wide-spread unemployment would follow. That was one of the many unfortunate consequences of the present political and economic restrictions imposed on the African population.

35. Mr. FAYEK (United Arab Republic) asked whether the petitioner had any information on the intentions of the Southern Rhodesian authorities with regard to the introduction of the 1961 Constitution.

36. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that he understood that the new Constitution was to come into force in March 1963.

37. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked whether the United Kingdom could not bring economic pressure to bear on Southern Rhodesia.

38. The Reverend Michael SCOTT said that that course was certainly open to the United Kingdom, but in view of the extent of United Kingdom investment in the Southern Rhodesian mining industry it seemed

unlikely that the United Kingdom Government would impose sanctions of that kind.

39. Mr. EASTMAN (Liberia) proposed that the full text of the petitioner's statements at the 1330th and

1331st meetings should be circulated in the usual manner.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.