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MEETING**

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**Chairman:** Mr. Guillermo FLORES AVENDAÑO  
(Guatemala).

AGENDA ITEM 56

**Question of Southern Rhodesia: report of the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI) (A/5238, chap. II; A/C.4/560, A/C.4/561) (continued)**

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (continued)

*At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. W. A. F. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. A. D. Butler, Mr. J. Dombura, Mr. J. M. Gondo and Mr. T. J. Hlazo, representing an independent multiracial group, took places at the Committee table.*

1. Mr. HLAZO said that he was the son of a Methodist evangelist and had received a primary education up to standard V in a mission school, after which he had attended a teacher-training institution; he had entered the teaching profession in 1921. In 1922 he had married the head mistress of a girls' boarding school, who had subsequently returned to college to be trained in midwifery and had since worked in African villages giving advice on homecraft. Between 1930 and 1936 he had taught in a government school, where one of his pupils had been Mr. Joshua Nkomo. He had three sons; they had all attended secondary school and one of them had had two years at university. He and his wife were now retired on pension and lived on a small farm near Salisbury. On the occasion of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II his wife had been awarded an M.B.E. (Member of the Order of the British Empire) for meritorious services.

2. The non-racial group which he and his companions represented wished to affirm in particular four convictions; first, that a middle-of-the-road policy was the only one which could foster good relations between the races in Southern Rhodesia; secondly, that every individual, regardless of his colour or creed, should be encouraged to develop his mind and raise his level of thinking; thirdly, that in that way every individual would come to have a sense of belonging; and fourthly, that such an approach was the only one compatible with democracy.

3. All members of the community should be encouraged to attain as high a level of education as possible. At the present time, the range of professions which were open to the average African in Southern Rhodesia was limited, and there were not enough Africans qualified for responsible posts. It was vital that the number should be increased and that Africans should be able to serve as members of Parliament or as diplomatic representatives of their country. In view of the importance of education, few sins could be greater than that of burning down schools.

4. As one who had seen the rise of Southern Rhodesia from its humble beginnings to its present state of development, he would like to stress the complexity of the situation in a country where the African population lived in a state of tension between the old patterns of life and the new patterns which had been brought by the Europeans. Almost everything that the Europeans had brought to Southern Rhodesia had been new. At first, the Africans had been frightened of hospitals and African expectant mothers had been horrified at the idea of being delivered by a male doctor. Today, however, all realized that modern medicine was better than that of the witch doctor.

5. It was through education that Africans could be equipped to play their part in the life of their country and of the world. Although universal adult suffrage was the aim, the extension of the franchise to the illiterate population would mean that the people would be at the mercy of demagogues and corruption would be inevitable. Literacy was the key to democracy; at the moment there were 600,000 African children in school and in a few years' time the majority of voters would be Africans. If any other policy was followed, effective democracy would not exist because the selection of members of parliament and diplomatic representatives would be from only the top layer of the population.

6. A group of Nigerian members of parliament who had recently visited Southern Rhodesia had been impressed by the developments they had seen there. The goal in Southern Rhodesia was interracial co-operation and the preparation of Africans for participation in all aspects of the country's life. The "colour-blind" section of the population which he represented believed that it was their duty to preach unity among races and to enlist the support of men of goodwill all over the world for the introduction of an age of harmonious living between different racial communities.

7. Mr. KHOSLA (India), supported by Mr. PALAR (Indonesia), proposed that members should be given the opportunity to put questions to Mr. Hlazo forthwith.

8. The CHAIRMAN recalled that it had been suggested that the five petitioners now appearing before

the Committee should be heard consecutively, in order to save time.

9. After a procedural discussion in which Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana), Mr. DELISLE (Canada), Mr. KHOSLA (India), Miss BROOKS (Liberia), Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) and Mr. HAMDANI (Pakistan) took part, the CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, the Indian proposal would be adopted.

*It was so decided.*

10. Mr. KHOSLA (India) noted that the petitioner had expressed the view that if universal suffrage was introduced genuine democracy would not be possible. He would like to know whether the petitioner considered that democracy prevailed in Southern Rhodesia at present, when very few persons of African origin had the right to vote.

11. Mr. HLAZO replied that he had been endeavouring to point out how unprepared the Africans were, from the point of view of literacy, for participation in political life. As he had said, literacy was the key to democracy.

12. Mr. KHOSLA (India) said that there were many countries in Asia and Africa with a high rate of illiteracy. He would like to know whether the petitioner believed that government under free constitutions in such countries was less democratic than the rule of the Whites in Southern Africa.

13. Mr. HLAZO recalled that he had stressed in his statement the anxiety of the multiracial group that the number of Africans available for appointment to positions of authority should be increased by means of education. At present, such posts would be the monopoly of the few. He did not wish to discuss the arrangements in force in other countries.

14. Mr. KHOSLA (India) said he understood that the petitioner was a member of the United Federal Party. He asked whether there was a possibility that he might stand for election to Parliament.

15. Mr. HLAZO said that the multiracial group was composed of people of different parties and that the question of party did not arise in his petition.

16. Mr. KHOSLA (India) said that he would not press his question, but that the Committee was free to draw conclusions from the petitioner's silence.

17. The petitioner had made some interesting remarks regarding hospitals in Southern Rhodesia. He would like to know whether the petitioner was satisfied with the provisions for hospital treatment for Africans, bearing in mind the vast facilities available separately to the white settler community.

18. Mr. HLAZO said that he doubted whether there was any country in Africa with medical services comparable with those in Southern Rhodesia.

19. Mr. KHOSLA (India) asked the petitioner what pension he received from the Government of Southern Rhodesia.

20. Mr. HLAZO said that the amount of his pension was a private matter and had no relation to the question the Committee was discussing.

21. Mr. KHOSLA (India) maintained that the pension of a government servant was a matter of official record and that the Committee was entitled to have an answer to the question.

22. Mr. HLAZO said that he had understood that he would be questioned within the context of his statement.

23. Mr. KHOSLA (India) pointed out that petitioners came before the Committee of their own free will and that members of the Committee were within their rights in asking questions with a view to establishing their *bona fides*. He would not, however, press the question, since the petitioner was obviously unwilling to reply to it.

24. The petitioner had stated that his wife had been awarded the M.B.E. He asked whether honours of that type were looked upon with favour by the mass of the people of Southern Rhodesia.

25. Mr. HLAZO said that he would not like to set forth views which differed from those of the people he represented. He knew that the section of the community which he represented really appreciated titles such as that to which he had referred.

26. Mr. KHOSLA (India) asked whether the petitioner was satisfied with the progress that had been made in the development of educational institutions in Southern Rhodesia. He pointed out that only £4 or £5 per caput was being spent on African education in the Territory, whereas the expenditure for the education of European children was much larger.

27. Mr. HLAZO replied that the people whom he represented believed that the situation would not improve until all races participated in the Government and that a beginning must be made somewhere.

28. Mr. KHOSLA (India) observed that he had not received a reply to his question.

29. The attitude of the petitioner raised a question of principle. If petitioners were not prepared to answer questions it would save the Committee's time if they were simply to submit their statements in writing. The petitioner claimed to represent a multiracial group and the Indian delegation wished to know the views of that group about matters relating to the welfare of the vast majority of the inhabitants of the Territory.

30. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) thought it would be going too far to order the petitioner to reply to questions. It lay with the members of the Committee to draw their own conclusions from the fact of the petitioner's answering or not answering, but it had never been the practice of the Committee to insist that a petitioner should reply to a question when he did not wish to do so or when he chose to give an evasive reply.

31. Mr. KHOSLA (India) reported that the petitioner had disputed his right to ask questions, but he maintained that his delegation was entitled to ask any questions it wished.

32. The CHAIRMAN observed that it was impossible to lay down any rules concerning the manner in which petitioners should answer questions. It was open to representatives on the Committee to assess the replies given.

33. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) pointed out to the petitioner that it was against his own interests to be evasive in his replies. Previous petitioners had given the Committee information about the situation in Southern Rhodesia and if Mr. HLAZO's evidence conflicted with theirs it was for him to prove his case.

34. He asked the petitioner whether he could have afforded to educate all his children up to university level.
35. Mr. HLAZO replied in the negative. He might have been able to pay for one of his sons to go to university. In fact, however, the Government had for a long time granted bursaries to all post-matriculation students for further studies.
36. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) emphasized that with the petitioner's salary he would have been able to send only one of his children to a university, unlike the white settlers in the country, who could pay for a university education for all their children.
37. Mr. HLAZO agreed and added that that was because the Africans did not participate in the Government. That was the very reason why the people he represented were asking that a multiracial society should be established.
38. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) asked whether universal adult suffrage was one of the goals of the group to which the petitioner belonged and whether he considered that the present Constitution would enable it to be achieved.
39. Mr. HLAZO said that in 1925 Dr. Aggrey, a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, had advised the people of Southern Rhodesia to take what was offered them and to make use of it until they could get what they wanted. The petitioner had considered that to be sage advice. The Africans should now accept the opportunity that was given them to take part in politics and thus to improve the situation in the Territory.
40. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) observed that the result of the implementation of the present Constitution would be the permanent domination of the Territory by the white settlers.
41. Mr. HLAZO disagreed. The present school population of the Territory would be voters in a few years' time and the Africans would then be in a majority.
42. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) asked the petitioner whether he did not consider the present situation in Southern Rhodesia to be similar to the situation which had previously existed in South Africa, as a result of which the African population had been betrayed to the white settlers there.
43. Mr. HATTINGH (South Africa) observed that during the debate there had been a number of references to his country which had nothing to do with the point at issue. He asked the Chairman to give a ruling whether such references were in order.
44. Mr. PALAR (Indonesia) said that members of the Committee were entitled to compare the situation in Southern Rhodesia with that of South Africa or of any other country.
45. Mr. ARTEH (Somalia), Mr. DIALLO (Mali) and Mr. DELGADO (Senegal) associated themselves with the views expressed by the representative of Indonesia.
46. Mr. HATTINGH (South Africa) maintained that in the view of his delegation it was not in order for a representative to question the petitioners about the policy followed by another country. Representatives should confine their questions to points relating to the agenda item under discussion.
47. The CHAIRMAN said that he could do no more than ask any representative who felt that his country had been improperly referred to to wait until the speaker had finished his statement before raising a point of order.
48. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) pointed out that he was still awaiting an answer from the petitioner.
49. Mr. HLAZO replied that it was very difficult to compare different countries which pursued different policies. In 1923, during the referendum on whether Southern Rhodesia should join South Africa or have a government of its own, he had voted for the latter course, which was the one that had been adopted; since then, the two countries had followed different paths and the current policy in Southern Rhodesia was different from that in South Africa.
50. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) observed that his question had not been fully answered, perhaps because the petitioner was not accustomed to appearing before a Committee. He would consequently not press it further.
51. The Indian representative had referred to the award of the M.B.E. (Member of the Order of the British Empire) to the petitioner's wife. He asked the petitioner whether he believed in the concept of empire and colonialism and whether he would be proud to be a member of such an order.
52. Mr. HLAZO observed that in British usage the word "empire" was disappearing; the countries that had formerly belonged to that empire had since become members of the British Commonwealth. He believed that such titles were on their way out and would be replaced by something else.
53. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) said that in the course of the petitioner's statements defining the position of his group—which was in effect an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable—he had understood the petitioner to refer to the independence of Southern Rhodesia as a certainty. He would like to know whether the petitioner considered that, in the light of current events and of the anti-democratic measures which had been enacted, the accession of Southern Rhodesia to independence with a majority Government was a possibility or a mere illusion.
54. Mr. HLAZO replied that he believed that such an event would come to pass, if only on account of the numerical predominance of the African population, provided they could be given the proper preparation. It should be remembered that that was not the case at present, but the number of African children attending school afforded good grounds for hoping that in a few years' time the Africans would find themselves in the majority.
55. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) concluded that it was the petitioner's wish that his country should rapidly achieve independence with an African majority. The petitioner seemed to consider, however, that the participation of Africans should be based on literacy. In view of the obstacles that were placed in the way of the attainment of literacy by all Africans, he wondered when the petitioner thought that the African majority would be in a position to take over.
56. Mr. HLAZO hoped that that could be done as soon as possible. An African majority could certainly be achieved in a few years, provided that all eligible Africans, including in due course the 600,000 at present attending school, duly registered as voters.

57. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) requested the petitioner to be more specific with regard to the amount of time required.

58. Mr. HLAZO replied that it was difficult to give a more precise answer since eligible members of the adult population were refusing to register as voters, despite the fact that the vote was the only weapon with which they could hope to obtain independence.

59. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) asked for the petitioner's views concerning the electoral law under which the members of the next Legislative Assembly were to be chosen.

60. Mr. HLAZO replied that a start had to be made somewhere. The new Constitution had been jointly evolved by all the different parties in Southern Rhodesia, with the sole exception of the Dominion Party, which did not accept the principles behind it. Once it had been endorsed, the only proper course was for Africans to go into Parliament in order to contest it and to effect the necessary changes from within; to attempt to bring them about from outside would be useless.

61. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) asked the petitioner what he thought of the steps that the Government had just taken in respect of the leaders of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) and whether they seemed to him to indicate that Southern Rhodesia was moving towards independence in a peaceful atmosphere.

62. Mr. HLAZO replied that what should be thought of such measures depended on the line taken by the party involved. In all democratic parties, certain limits were drawn. ZAPU, however, had resorted to intimidation in order to discourage potential voters from registering and the Government had been obliged to protect them.

63. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) wished to amplify an earlier statement by the petitioner to the effect that the members of a Nigerian parliamentary group that had visited Southern Rhodesia had expressed their satisfaction with what they had seen there. The visit had been organized by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The group from Nigeria had gone in their capacity as members of that association; the Nigerian Government, which was a government of the majority, must be entirely dissociated from any views tending to favour the Southern Rhodesia Government, which was a government of the minority. Such views, if indeed they were correctly reported, at most merely indicated that the group concerned did not believe in majority rule, although its members had rejoiced with everyone else at Nigeria's accession to independence.

64. He asked the petitioner what was the composition of the multiracial group that he claimed to represent, as between Whites and Africans, and when the group had been formed.

65. Mr. HLAZO replied that the group represented a good cross-section of all races, including Africans, Indians, Coloureds and Europeans.

66. The group had been formed some time ago and had emerged from the fusion of a multiracial association, launched by a Salisbury lawyer, with the Capricorn African Society, founded by a former soldier, Colonel Stirling; its members were all persons of different races who believed in a non-racial democracy.

67. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) requested the petitioner to specify in what year the group had been formed.

68. Mr. HLAZO said that it had come into existence some four to five years ago. He did not remember the exact year and did not wish to make a mistake which might be held against him in the future.

69. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) said that in that case he would refrain from pressing the petitioner any further for an answer.

70. He had been wondering whether lack of funds was responsible for the mass illiteracy in Southern Rhodesia, and if so to what extent the white community was affected. Previous petitioners had said that white children received free, compulsory primary and secondary education. He asked the petitioner whether such facilities were extended to African children.

*Mr. Nabavi (Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

71. Mr. HLAZO replied that that was one of the fields in which an accelerated effort was required. Facilities for primary and higher education were better in the industrial areas than in the rural areas, where the number of central day schools was inadequate. Improvement in the field of education was one of the basic aims of his group.

72. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked the petitioner whether, in view of his anxiety to secure such improvements, he felt they could best be achieved by relying on the white settler community, which was fundamentally opposed to such a policy, or by taking matters into his own hands.

73. Mr. HLAZO said that some Europeans were trustworthy, but there were also those who believed in white domination. Certainly he was aware of instances of schools which were receiving help from many European concerns. He believed that right would prevail if it were given a chance.

74. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked the petitioner how the members of his group felt about the total absence of any African representatives in the Southern Rhodesian legislature.

75. Mr. HLAZO said that, as he had pointed out, the field of selection was still very limited. He believed that education was the only key which would enable Africans to gain access to, and finally to take over, the Government.

76. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked the petitioner if his people would object if a learned African such as himself were appointed, for instance as Minister for Home Affairs, to look after the interests of the African people.

77. Mr. HLAZO said that the issue was an important one. The biggest obstacle was the fact that certain persons were preventing the others from registering as voters.

*Mr. Flores Avendaño (Guatemala) resumed the Chair.*

78. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked whether there were no qualified and responsible Africans who could hold the reins of government in Southern Rhodesia.

79. Mr. HLAZO replied that there were sufficient qualified Africans at least for a start to be made, but it was difficult to do anything as long as potential voters were being prevented from registering.

80. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) inquired what was the influence and political strength of the multiracial group in Southern Rhodesia.

81. Mr. HLAZO said that his presence at the United Nations bore sufficient testimony to the fact that the group was not lacking in supporters or influence.

82. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria), recalling that ZAPU claimed to advocate a non-racial programme, asked whether the petitioner considered that a merger of the two groups might be desirable as a means towards securing more effective action.

83. Mr. HLAZO said that if all groups could merge and create a non-racial State, that result would correspond exactly with the aims of his group.

84. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) stressed that, although most of the inhabitants of Nigeria were still illiterate, that fact did not prevent them from understanding the meaning of such expressions as independence, freedom, franchise or political rights. He asked the petitioner how many Africans in Southern Rhodesia, at least within his own group, were politically aware of the happenings around them.

85. Mr. HLAZO replied that the literate Africans understood the world situation perfectly, but illiterate Africans depended upon its being outlined to them by the literates.

86. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) recalled that the petitioner had mentioned having taken the advice given him by Dr. Aggrey in 1925 to accept what was offered and then ask for more. A considerable time had elapsed since then and he wondered how much longer it would be before the demand was actually made.

87. Mr. HLAZO emphasized once again that literacy was the key to all objectives. His group did not be-

lieve in having representatives elected from among only a few. Africans had proved they were capable of learning. He was much concerned about the prospect of his country attaining a form of independence in which the masses would not enjoy effective participation because they were insufficiently prepared.

88. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked whether the petitioner considered that the 1961 Constitution was equitable in giving fifteen seats to 4 million Africans and fifty to 300,000 Whites.

89. Mr. HLAZO said that the situation could not be put right by vociferation from without. The Africans should enter Parliament and bring pressure to bear there, while at the same time the masses were acquiring a suitable education; in that way at least a start would be made in tackling the problem.

90. Mr. MONGUNO (Nigeria) asked the petitioner whether he was happy about the present situation in Southern Rhodesia.

91. Mr. HLAZO said that he would not be happy about that situation until Africans participated fully in the Administration and in the professions.

92. Mr. HOUAISS (Brazil) observed that the procedure of questioning each petitioner separately after his statement seemed to be sound. As, however, it had originally been decided that they would be questioned as a group, he suggested that a time-table should be drawn up for the Committee's work and circulated to the members of the Committee.

93. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat had taken note of that suggestion and would endeavour to comply with it.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.