

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE

LUSAKA, WEDNESDAY 26 MAY, 1965

Mr. Chairman and Members of this Committee,

I am unknown to the Members of this Committee. I have therefore to give my credentials.

This is the first time my organisation has appeared before an agency of the United Nations. This has its historical reasons. It would be remembered that the organisations that I represent are comparatively old. The All-African Convention was born in 1936 during the crisis of the Hertzog Native Bills, which abolished the last remnants of the voting rights of Non-Whites in South Africa. It was created as the mouthpiece of the whole African population. All African organisations then in existence, political, educational, professional, religious, civic, trade union, etc. belonged to this federal body, including the A.N.C., which was one of its founders. It is a fact of history that the A.N.C. broke away from this federation from the early forties because it disagreed with its policy and principles.

In 1943 the A.A.C. invited the federal organisations as well as national organisations of the other oppressed racial groups, to a conference with a view to uniting all the oppressed Non-White people of South Africa - the Africans, Indians and Coloured people. Thus the Unity Movement was born. I am currently the President of the Unity Movement...

At the time when our organisations were born, the international organisation then in existence was the League of Nations which, as you know, was later consumed by the flames of the Second World War. The failure of that body to live up to its noble ideals, together with what we considered its betrayal of the aspirations of the colonial people, left a deep impression on our minds. We could not forget the rape of Abyssinia, that time the only independent state in Africa and therefore a symbol to all colonial people. This dastardly act was committed by a Member State in the full view of the League of Nations. While this international body was condemning the aggressor state and debating sanctions, Mussolini was raining death in the form of bombs and poison gas on our brothers, using for its aeroplanes, petroleum supplied by other Members of the League of Nations. This incident, more than any other, burnt into our memories and gave birth to the belief that international organisations are instruments of the big powers for the re-division of colonies and spheres of influence amongst themselves. Is it a wonder then, that when the successor to the League of Nations, the United Nations was born, we were suspicious of its intent and purpose?

We are aware, however, of the vast changes that have taken place on a world scale since the end of the second World War. All things apparently immutable, have suffered a change. No sphere of human activity seems to escape this change. The old concepts of empires and colonies are a thing of the past. Likewise the U.N. is undergoing a change. The rapid emergence of independent states who take their place in the U.N. has given a stamp and direction to this new body, different to that of its predecessor. It is true that on all major issues it is still the big powers that get their way. There is no lack of example for this assertion, but the U.N. at least provides a forum for the smaller nations to register their protest and the world at large is given an opportunity to know what is going on. We all know that it is possible to tame a leopard, but no one can change its colour and nature.

We are, however, encouraged by the fact that the Committee entrusted with the problems of decolonisation has now decided to carry out its investigations in Africa itself, near the scene of the crime. In this way, it will not only be able to find out the true facts but assess them in all their devastating effects upon the human victims of the system.

To come now to my subject.

I understand that the scope of this Committee is limited only to investigating the problems of the colonies and the Protectorates, without in any way touching upon South Africa. This at once presents us with an insurmountable problem. How do we discuss South West Africa, for instance, without reference to South Africa? As we all know, South West Africa is not only administered by South Africa, but is in fact a fifth province of the Republic of South Africa, with its representatives sitting in Parliament passing laws against the inhabitants of both South Africa and South West Africa. The Bantustan Policy has been evolved and put into legislation by this one Parliament to be applied in both countries. This alone shows the impracticability of discussing the one without the other.

We are faced with similar problems when we have to deal with the Protectorates. They are so dependent on South Africa and so placed geographically that it is not possible to consider their fate both economically and politically, without reference to the policies of the South African Government. I shall therefore be excused if I find myself compelled to touch upon some aspects of the policy of the South African Government in order to give a rounded picture of the subject under review. This is the only way to discuss our problems in their proper perspective.

South West Africa has been the subject of discussion by the United Nations for about 18 years. It has now reached the stage when the International Court is asked to give a verdict on the legal issues involved. I do not intend to go over the ground that has been adequately covered by others. I may, however, just comment on 3 points in this regard:

- (a) We are wondering if the United Nations has considered the setting up of a machinery for enforcing the verdict of the Court now sitting in The Hague. If the decision should go against South Africa, what then? The normal procedure is that where there is a court of justice, there must also be a machinery to enforce its decisions. In this case, it seems to us, the problem is not a straightforward one. We have learnt through dire experience that the conflicting interests of the various States composing the U.N.O. tend to create confusion and disaster whenever they are asked to intervene in an African country. Here, we would make a suggestion that in the event of the necessity for intervention in South West Africa, all those countries that have vested interests in that country should be excluded from the task-force to be used, on the principle that an accomplice or defendant cannot sit as judge in his own case. We suggest that this aspect of the matter should be handed over to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which shall then decide which countries shall be called upon to supply military contingents.
- (b) Before this is decided upon, the people of South West Africa should be fully consulted on the score - for it is they, after all, who have the right to decide on their own fate. It is they who know what is good for them. For this purpose, we suggest that the task of ascertaining their views should be placed on the shoulders of the OAU, who will arrange for a

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referendum where all the issues should be clearly placed before the population of South West Africa.

The suggested procedure should not depend merely on the verdict of the International Court. The stated task of the United Nations is to assist the people of South West Africa to gain their full independence. It is for this reason that their opinions should be fully and freely canvassed on the methods to be employed in gaining their nationhood.

- (c) We are aware that Dr. Verwoerd has announced his intention to impose Bantustans on South West Africa on the same pattern as in the Transkei. This point, however, can be dealt with under the discussion on the Protectorates.

The Protectorates

It is common knowledge that Verwoerd's Bantustan plan envisages the incorporation of the Protectorates. Before we deal with the full meaning and implications of the Bantustan policy, we shall read to you a copy of a letter which reveals the thinking of the Government of South Africa. The letter was written by the Chairman of the Basutoland National Party as early as November 1964 - i.e. long before the General Elections in Basutoland. It was addressed to the Commissioner-General for the South Bantu, S.A. For your information, he is one of the Afrikaners who have been placed in charge of various tribal groupings, euphemistically called "Ambassadors". The letter has since been published in an Opposition paper. It reads as follows:

"Your Excellency,

Our meeting at Riverside Lodge was very friendly, and the way you treated me gave me proof that when we are the Government of Basutoland we shall work very well together.

"I write this letter according to our agreement to repeat again the points agreed between us, and hoping that you will also repeat your guarantee to me in writing as you promised.

"You have promised that if we become the Government of Basutoland after the elections with the assistance of your Government, and also if we subscribe to your policies, your Government will give us back Witzieshoek, Matatiele, Herschel and part of the Orange Free State bordering on Basutoland, from Fouriesburg to Wepener, so that we should form a greater Basutoland and enable your Government to put right past wrongs. I can assure you in advance that we shall forever be grateful to Your Excellency and the good Government of the Republic of South Africa, and to show our thanks for this generous offer, we shall place this country and its people under the wise guidance of the Government of the Republic of South Africa economically, politically, and socially, so that you can lead us to true independence.

"You will remember, Your Excellency, that in the course of our discussion I told you that I have a lot of trouble from my General Secretary. Although he likes the money promised, he dislikes all the conditions you are imposing. Unfortunately he is supported by some intellectuals in the party who want him to take the leadership away from me. After thinking carefully about the suggestion you

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made, I have finally decided that you are right, and it will be wise not to call the annual general conference, because if I do that they will want to have party elections, and the danger is there that my opponents will kick me out of the leadership. Since the General Secretary showed that he disagrees with your conditions, I don't consult him any more, and he knows nothing about this letter.

"Having given you the guarantee in writing as you asked me, I now ask your Excellency to prevail upon your Government to press the Chamber of Mines to assist us in every way which will make the minors to vote for my party. If your plan works, which I shall not repeat again here, we shall win easily. Then the way will be opened to deal with the Communists and the refugees who are a great danger for our good relations with your wise Government which is showing so much kindness to us.

"I must now refer to something which worried Your Excellency last time. You said you did not like the support which the Catholic Church is giving me, because you said it is strongly opposing the good education policy of your Government for the Bantu people. You even told me that it had worked wonders in the Transkei because it is supported by great Bantu educationists like Mr. Qingo who is an Inspector and Professor Khoare. I repeat that you must not fear anything from me. I became a Catholic because of circumstances which I explained to you, but at heart I am still a Protestant, and I cannot let you down. When I control the Government after the elections, we shall find a good way of dealing with this Roman Catholic danger which we discussed at length with you. I also told you what is its intention in Basutoland. But at present it is wise to use them to get the overwhelming support of the Catholics in this country.

"As we are still far behind in our electioneering, I shall be thankful indeed if Your Excellency can see that at least a large part of the R15,000 you promised for your Government can be sent at once. Rothe and those leaflets have helped us very much indeed, and like a wise farmer we must plough while the soil is still moist.

"Mr. Moshesh, who introduced me to you, is still a great supporter of mine, what makes things difficult for him is that he is a civil servant, but that does not make him less useful to me.

"I will wait for Your Excellency's immediate reply, telling me when the money is coming, and giving me the guarantee so that my supporters can see it in writing and work hard. They are determined.

"Thanking you for the publicity which your newspapers and your radio give me,

I remain," etc.

The letter speaks for itself. It testifies to the desperate need of the Verwoerd regime for drawing the Protectorates within their political and economic ambit.

The question is. "What is the meaning of the Bantustan policy? What is its purpose?" Many people have up to now regarded it as an attempt on Verwoerd's part to counter the criticism of the United Nations. It is true that Verwoerd himself has lent credence to this view by his oft-repeated claim that he is giving independence to the oppressed people of South Africa. That this is a lie is revealed by the most cursory examination of the law that creates the Bantustans. Four-fifths of the population is by a stroke

of the pen robbed of its citizenship, of its right to belong to the country of its birth and relegated to bare, eroded and poverty-stricken enclaves which constitute less than 13% of the territory of South Africa. These Bantustans are not and cannot be viable. As it is today, only a third of the African population lives in these areas and are today in the throes of dire starvation. It is estimated that the income from the land per family is £21 per year. It is obvious, therefore, that no Government, with all the will in the world, can push the remaining two-thirds of the population back to this land of death called "Native Reserves" or Bantustans.

In addition to this, the South African Government does not give, nor does it intend to give, political independence to these Bantustans. It reserves unto itself powers to legislate on all important matters. All this gives the lie to the idea that Verwoerd is instituting a system of self-Government for the African people.

The Bantustan policy becomes logical and makes sense only when it is seen as a continuation of South African traditional policy of all White Governments, which has led to the creation of "Native Reserves" as sources of cheap labour. Verwoerd came into power at a time when there was an acute shortage of labour owing to the discovery of new and far richer gold mines in the Orange Free State during the last war, and, the phenomenal growth of secondary industry after the war. One of the first things that the Verwoerd regime did on coming to power, was to send its emissaries of experts to the Portuguese territories to learn how that country handled its problems of labour supply. I do not need to retell to this Committee the horrors of the Portuguese system in this regard. These were told in the Report of a Commission of Investigation that was appointed by Salazar as a result of a world-wide outcry against the atrocities inflicted on the African people in the so-called Portuguese territories. I merely want to recall those principles that Verwoerd adopted from the Portuguese. His experts found that under Portuguese rule modern law was not applicable to the African population. The Chiefs had unlimited powers over their subjects. They could order about, arrest, punish or dispose of any individual at will. The chiefs themselves were minions who held their positions at the will of the Portuguese authorities. By these means, the Portuguese with the aid of the chiefs, could keep the people in subjection through untold terror and thus reduce a whole population to the status of beasts of burden. When the large plantation owners and the industrialists needed labour they simply sent their quotas to the Native Commissioner, who in turn demanded the supplies from each chief. The methods used by the chiefs to obtain the labour and the bestial treatment of the labour gangs are told in all their horror in the Commissioner's Report.

Verwoerd then set about establishing all over the country what he called "Bantu Authorities", which are the basis of the Bantustans. Under these he conferred unlimited powers on his appointed chiefs. The so-called Bantustan Parliament itself is dominated by these chiefs who hold their position at the whim of the White authorities. In all the reserves, the Habeas Corpus rule has been withdrawn and tribal law installed, in order to give the chiefs complete and arbitrary power over the population. The idea is that the chiefs should be able to carry out their function, namely to order the people to do the bidding of their White masters. This is the meaning of the Bantustan policy.

Desperate situations require desperate methods. The acute shortage of labour, particularly mine labour, has been further intensified by the events happening outside South Africa. For many years, Portugal has had a standing agreement whereby she supplies South Africa with contract labour to the tune of 100,000 able-bodied men a year. This figure is often exceeded by 50,000. This is a business proposition for which

Portugal receives so much a man. In addition, South Africa has always depended for its supply of labour on the surrounding territories - Rhodesia, Nyasaland and the Protectorates. In 1962, for instance, Basutoland supplied 150,000 labourers; Swaziland 8,500; and Bechuanaland generally supplies between 15,000 and 30,000 a year. Traditionally, many workers came as far afield as what were then Tanganyika and Northern Rhodesia. The result was that 60% of the labour in the gold mines which is the mainstay in the South African economy, came from countries outside South Africa.

Now with the revolt of the people of Mozambique and Angola, and with the threatened boycott by the liberated African States, the labour problem has become most desperate. If we take into consideration that the mines and agriculture alone earn the foreign exchange currency which is needed by industry, it becomes obvious that the crippling of the mines due to the withholding of foreign labour would produce disastrous results to the whole economy of the country. Verwoerd is conscious of the fact that in this respect the handle of the knife is in the hands of the countries that are hostile to, and indeed avowed enemies of, his regime. African States can paralyse the economy of South Africa by extending the boycott of South African goods to include the withholding of labour from their countries. In self-defence Verwoerd is forced to evolve a machinery for squeezing labour from the Black population in his own country. The ruthlessness of the methods employed reveal the measure of his desperation. If people throughout the world are appalled at the inhumanity of the Apartheid Policy with all its ramifications, they fail to see the underlying causes. International Finance Capital is fully cognisant of the reasons for it. That is why investor countries are always evasive on this question and approach it with duplicity and prevarication. To put it plainly, Verwoerd's problem is in fact their problem. English and American finance capital owns practically all the mining and industrial concerns in South Africa. It is the same people who own the Protectorates and control the policies there.

I said earlier that it is impossible to discuss the problems of the people of the Protectorates without elucidating the policy of the South African Government. The letter quoted above reveals the cynicism of the South African Government in regard to the projected Independence of the Protectorates. It also puts in question the bona fides of the British Government in their declared aims, especially as they have known for many years the eagerness of South Africa to swallow up the Protectorates. The granting of self-Government without at the same time taking steps to ensure economic independence of the Protectorates is tantamount to leaving them at the mercies of the Verwoerdian regime. We want to make it abundantly clear here that we support the granting of independence to the Protectorates, but we demand that this independence be made real by ensuring that they are given the economic means to defend themselves against the predatory aims of the South African Government. Without this economic independence, the Protectorates are drawn into the vortex of the Verwoerdian Bantustans. Both Basutoland and Swaziland are islands within the territory of South Africa. To go anywhere, the inhabitants have to cross the territory of South Africa or Portugal. Even now, the South African Government often refuses to grant permission to the leaders of these countries to pass through its territory. It is not difficult to imagine what other means she can use to bring these countries to their knees.

It is significant that the Tory Government imposed a Constitution on Swaziland which makes it possible for White South African citizens resident in that country to become members of the Legislative Council. Seventy percent of the White population are Afrikaners and are members of Verwoerd's Nationalist Party. These people are now able to mount the rostrum of the Council and not only propagate the policy of Apartheid, but make laws to implement it. As South Africans pledged to the policy of Bantustans, they consider it their duty to work for the enactment of such

laws as would synchronize with the South African policy of Apartheid. And indeed, they are at this very moment agitating for the expulsion of all the Freedom Fighters who have taken refuge in Basutoland, on the ground that these people are foreigners and do not belong to any of the tribes in the country. In addition, as South African patriots, they are violently opposed to the granting of asylum to the opponents of the South African regime and those of their ally, Portugal.

I do not know if it is within the competence of this Committee to examine the position of the refugees in the Protectorates. It can't be emphasised enough that the plight of the refugees is a serious one. It is not only that they find themselves rightless, homeless and without the means of support, but that they live in daily fear of the South African and Portuguese police who seem to roam the streets in the Protectorates. The excuse they generally give when confronted is that they are looking for criminals. Our fears are further emphasised by the developments that are in line with the sentiments expressed in the letter referred to above. It is evident from the letter that this matter of expelling the refugees was one of the subjects discussed between the writer and the representative of the South African Government. As these countries become more and more drawn into the South African orbit and become completely subservient to South Africa, the fate of the refugees will indeed become extremely perilous. We are aware that under the international agreements covering the refugees there are certain conventions which bind the powers concerned. But our experience is that some countries fall far short of the minimum standards required.

In conclusion, I would like to state that you will have noticed that I have not dealt in detail with any particular country. This was deliberate, for I consider that such information is already in possession of the Committee and that in any event it can best be obtained from the inhabitants or the representatives of these countries. What I set out to do was to emphasise the interconnection between the problems of the Protectorates, South West Africa and South Africa. Our view is that this Committee, limited as it is to dealing only with individual colonies, is precluded from viewing the problems of each country in its proper perspective. It is not possible fully to comprehend the problems of satellite countries without relating these to the main country to which they are subordinated.

The main source of the difficulties of the Protectorates and South West Africa is South Africa itself. As a matter of fact we believe, even the problems of South Africa can't be divorced from those of Central and West Africa. There is a dynamic connecting link between all the countries and this link is established by economic investments which come from the same sources. For this reason, it is impossible to discuss the problems of each country in isolation. Investors by virtue of their investments evolve a unified policy to safeguard their interests. It follows from this that any attempt at political solutions must fail if it does not take into account all the economic ramifications and special interests that are to a large extent responsible for the problems.

ADDENDUM:

Delivered extempore

I would like now to answer some of the questions that were put by members of this committee to petitioners who gave evidence earlier.

German Experts Train S.A. Forces.

Major-General Friedrich Wilhelm von Mellenthin, an internationally known military theoretician (his book 'Panzer Battles', a manual for experts), was a member of Hitler's General Staff. In 1950 Mellenthin was sent to South Africa on a special mission. He founded 'Trek Airways' to serve as a cover for himself and many other German officers. (After 1945, over two thousand Wehrmacht officers and S.S. officers had sought asylum in South Africa. Many of these served as military instructors in the S.A. army.) At first Mellenthin founded a South African-German Flying Club, of which he was Honorary President. This was training-ground as well as a recruiting centre for German and South African Fascists.

As early as 1959-60, leading military figures in NATO, acting in collaboration with South African military circles, demanded a close link between NATO and South Africa. More than this, they demanded the formation of a SATO (South Atlantic Treaty Organization), consisting of the Portuguese territories of Mozambique and Angola, Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa. This SATO was to be closely connected with NATO.

Mellenthin advocated the establishment of this 'South Atlantic Treaty Organization' and spelled out his reasons in 'Afrika Post', an organ of German settlers in South Africa, whose editor was formerly a Nazi journalist in Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry. The reasons Mellenthin gave were:-

a) The unreliability of the newly-formed Independent African States;
b) the SATO area is geographically a favourable defense unit;
c) there was a need for a unified leadership provided by a Commander-in-Chief. "There must be a united leadership provided by a commander-in-chief with a mixed staff, similar to NATO. In addition it must dispose over already existing mobilised mechanised units consisting of a few brigades; a professional army consisting only of cadres, which only mobilises its forces in an emergency, comes too late. These units must be fully trained and very flexible in close cooperation with available air transport. (These are the present-day Afrikaner Commandos) "The formation of new independent states in Africa has changed the military situation not only for the South African area, but for the whole world. The West must realise that the military vacuum which has now been created, particularly in Central Africa, and the factor of uncertainty presented by the new native states, means that the South African states and territories are the only reliable allies upon whom the West can reckon in a crisis." Mellenthin concluded his military and political survey with the demand that South Africa should be given "full moral and material support as long as there is still peace".

The basis for all this activity is provided in the Secret Agreement of July 1961 between West Germany and South Africa.

In 1961, Mellenthin sold his lucrative 'Trek Airways' and returned to Germany. But in November 1961 he returned to South Africa as "General Director of Lufthansa for the African Continent". Lufthansa is jointly controlled by the Federal Government and the 'Deutsche Bank', the biggest bank in Germany.

The "permanent striking power" advocated by Mellenthin is as much directed against the liberation movements as against the independent African states ... These so-called White Mercenaries fighting in the Congo are by no means the adventurers they make themselves out to be. They are professional military officers seconded by the South African Government. They are sent there both to learn about guerrilla methods, and to fight in the defense of South Africa with its baaskap. The militarists regard the Congo as the first line of defense for South Africa against the liberation struggle throughout Africa.

We in South Africa see all these activities as the first steps towards a third world war. The inter-connections of interests which tie together European, American and British finance capital with the racist regimes in Africa make it impossible to localise the present wars of racists on the inhabitants of African countries.

There is no point in prevarication. If we want to deal seriously with the problem of liberation, which is inseparably bound up with the problem of peace and war, we must make straight for the powder-keg, namely South Africa. Unless and until South Africa is rid of the cancerous political regime which consumes the body of the African population there will always be the great threat of a world war.

The 1936 Spanish war was a dress-rehearsal for the 1939-45 war. At that time Hitler's Germany tested her weapons of war. Today the major countries are testing their weapons in various theatres all over the world, mainly in Asia and Africa. It is our belief that the present war in Vietnam is a prelude to a wider war against Africa. Vietnam is a laboratory used by American militarists to test not only their weapons but their various theories on the best methods of dealing with guerrilla fighters in every part of the world where there are still oppressed people. More than this, American imperialism is using Vietnam in the nature of 'kite-flying' to test world reaction. Will the world accept America's claim to have the moral right to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries throughout the world? What would be world reaction to America's use of poison gases, napalm etc? These are answers America must have before she turns her attention seriously to crushing all liberation movements in Africa, and re-subjugating the whole continent.

It is in this context that the activities of the Hitlerite military experts in South Africa must be viewed.

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