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WELCOME TO NEW UNITED NATIONS MEMBERS

Three African nations -- Morocco, the Sudan, and Tunisia -- became members of the UN on November 12th, at the beginning of this session of the General Assembly. This vanguard of the free African nations-to-be has an unusual opportunity to help speed independence in the rest of the Continent and to add counsels of wisdom and understanding to the complex problems before the UN today. This brings to seven the number of African countries in the UN, not counting South Africa.

FUTURE OF BRITISH AND FRENCH TOGOLAND TRUST TERRITORIES

A resolution calling for an end to British trusteeship over her portion of the former German West African colony of Togoland was passed by the Fourth Committee (Trusteeship) on December 5th by a vote of 58 to 0, with 11 abstentions. This resolution was sponsored by Burma, Canada, Ceylon, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan, and the Sudan.

Here to debate the issue were such important figures as K. A. Gbedemah, Finance Minister of the Gold Coast and representative of the Convention Peoples Party; S. G. Antor of the Togoland Congress Party; Sylvanus Olympio of the All Ewe Congress in French Togoland; and A. L. Santos of JUVENTO of French Togoland.

A summary of the background on the issue is as follows: A plebiscite conducted in May, 1956, under UN supervision in British Togoland resulted in a 58% majority of the votes cast (approximately 170,000 voted out of an eligible list of about 194,000) for union with the Gold Coast (Ghana) when it obtains its independence (the date is set for March 6, 1957). The alternative offered in the plebiscite was separation of the Togoland Trust Territory from the Gold Coast -- it had been administered as an integral part of that colony by the British -- and its continuation in trust status pending future developments leading to eventual freedom. As a result of the plebiscite and of subsequent general elections in the combined Gold Coast-Togoland area, which gave a clear majority over all other parties for the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), the advocates of a unitary state, the British government now urges an end to trusteeship and the integration of British Togoland into Ghana as soon as it becomes fully independent.

The great majority of the speakers in the Fourth Committee have supported the British position, but it has been opposed by some representatives of both British and French Togoland groups, particularly as the result of recent developments in French Togoland: After plans were made for the plebiscite in the British Trust Territory, the French government, which previously had not encouraged any nationalist political development, suddenly announced that the French Togolandians were ready to end trusteeship and determine their future; a law was passed granting "universal

suffrage," and four months later the UN was asked to approve a French-sponsored referendum to determine whether the Togo people wished to be "independent" under a new statute (giving the Togolandans territorial, administrative, and financial "autonomy" as to local matters, with "common" affairs determined by the French Parliament and the Assembly of the French Union, in which Togoland would be represented), or to continue under trusteeship. Under the circumstances the Trusteeship Council refused to supervise the plebiscite; the French proceeded nevertheless to hold it in October of this year and announced that over three-quarters of the voters had approved the end of trusteeship under the proposed new statute. Togolandans who oppose this future for the country claim that the voters' lists were "fixed" and that force and fraud were used in the election, which many of them boycotted as the only feasible means of opposition.

Partly as a result of these unexpected events in French Togoland, African opposition to integration of British Togoland into Ghana on the part of the National Liberation movement in the Ashanti area of the Gold Coast, the Northern Peoples Party, the Togoland Congress, and the All-Ewe Conference has emphasized the following arguments: (1) that it would separate the two parts of Togoland forever and leave French Togoland in an untenable position with no future but absorption by the French (although a united Togoland is claimed to be a real possibility in view of the recent political developments in the French territory, the common tribal traditions of the Ewe people who live in both Togolands, and the potential viability of a united Togo state); (2) that integration into neighboring Ghana is an unfortunate precedent which might be applied to the detriment of the Cameroons, Ruanda-Urundi, and other trust territories; and (3) that although there was an overwhelming majority for union, large blocs of Togolandans voted by considerable margins against union, so that there was no real or sufficient consent. The French government exacerbated these fears by opposing simultaneous consideration of the future of the two Togolands in the Fourth Committee and by refusing passports to French Togolandans who wished to argue for joint consideration until such time as the future of French Togoland was specifically before the Fourth Committee.

Opponents of integration have sought variously (a) continuation of trusteeship; (b) federation with Ghana (leaving open the possibility that French Togoland might also federate at a later date); and (c) federation with a federated (rather than unitary) Ghana. Nevertheless, it appears likely that the great majority of the Fourth Committee will approve the proposed integration. Any division among the members of the Committee will be based not on any "cold war" consideration nor on any conventional bloc (India supports and Indonesia ^{has ques-} integration), but rather on differing views of how best to solve the partly ^{tioned} historical problems of this area.

FUTURE OF ALGERIA

A late addition to the agenda of the General Assembly is the question of Algeria. It remains to be seen whether the French will "take a walk" as they did a year ago, on the grounds that the matter is one of exclusively domestic concern. Representatives of the Algerian National Liberation Front are at the UN with the status of delegates attached to one of the Arab countries. Possibly they will be heard by the First Committee though to date petitioners have been heard only before the Fourth Committee on Trusteeship questions. The ACOA supports the idea of the Algerians' being heard by the First Committee.

SOUTH AFRICA; APARTHEID; TREATMENT OF PERSONS OF INDIAN ORIGIN

India, Pakistan, and Indonesia have again requested consideration of the treatment of Africans in South Africa with its policy of apartheid. Particular ~~as-~~ tions complained of include forced resettlement, pass laws, restrictions on political and social rights and education. South Africa has reacted to placing this item on the agenda of the ad hoc political committee by almost withdrawing from the UN; it is

leaving token representation in the hope that the UN will decide that its racial policy is a matter of exclusively internal concern under Article 2 (7) of the Charter. India claims that the South African actions violate the human rights provisions of the Charter (Articles 55 and 56) and endanger the peace, thereby becoming a proper matter of concern for the UN.

ACOA recommends that the American delegation and our Ambassador to the UN, Henry Cabot Lodge, be urged to support the reestablishment of the UN Commission on the Racial Situation in South Africa. This Commission died in the last session of the General Assembly for failure to obtain a two-thirds vote to continue its existence.

Also India has again brought up the subject of discriminatory treatment of persons of Indian origin living in the Union. The 1955 General Assembly urged the Indian, Pakistan, and South African governments to negotiate directly on the subject, but South Africa refused to do so on the grounds again that this was a domestic matter.

SOUTHWEST AFRICA; STATUS; HEARING OF PETITIONERS

Southwest Africa, a former German colony, became a South African mandate under the League of Nations. Despite a ruling of the International Court of Justice in 1953 finding for the UN, South Africa has refused to acknowledge that Southwest Africa became a trust territory under the UN as successor to the League and has incorporated Southwest Africa into its own territory. The International Court has now upheld the right of the Committee on Southwest Africa to hear oral petitions concerning the grievances of its inhabitants (South Africa has refused to allow the Committee to enter Southwest Africa). But this session of the General Assembly still has to face the question of how it can effectuate the rights which the Court has declared: to bring Southwest Africa under the protection of Chapters 12 and 13 of the Charter (Trusteeship) and to enable petitioners to appear before the UN.

REPORTS ON NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (PORTUGAL)

Article 73 (Chapter XI) of the UN Charter obligates UN members which administer non-self-governing territories to govern such territories for the benefit of the inhabitants and, under Article 73(e), to report on the social, economic, and educational conditions in the territories. The Charter, however, does not name or define non-self-governing territories or establish any method of enforcing the requirement of reports. With the admission of Portugal to the UN, the question of the scope and effectiveness of the provisions of Article 73 is expected to come under examination again in relation to Angola, Mozambique, and other Portuguese territories. (The question has also arisen in relation to Algeria and certain other territories, including Puerto Rico.) Portugal claims that it has no non-self-governing territories, but that the Portuguese constitution and organic laws make Portuguese overseas territories integral parts of Portugal -- "provinces" as much as any similarly named geographical subdivision of Iberian Portugal: African voters, it is claimed, vote for national and local legislators in the same way as citizens in metropolitan Portugal, and in all other ways are their political equals.

Voting and other political rights are, however, limited in overseas territories to "assimilados" (indigenous people who meet special standards which are not required of native born Portuguese); Africans not meeting the standards, who constitute the great bulk of the population of the territories, do not appear to be considered citizens, a status quite different from that of the average metropolitan Portuguese who is born a citizen. In view of the disturbing reports about "forced labor," amounting to virtual slavery, which continue to filter out of the Portuguese African territories, the UN has a particular need to obtain reports on conditions in Portuguese Africa. It is to be hoped that the UN will find some method officially to classify the Portuguese African possessions as non-self-governing territories within the meaning of Article 73.