

M A F E K I N G.

29th April, 1946.

To:

His Excellency, the High Commissioner for
Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland.

Parliament Street,

CAPE TOWN.

Our Friend,

We have the honour to enclose a Memorandum which we earnestly desire to be sent to the British Government, with a request that it be placed, through the proper diplomatic channels, before the Trusteeship Committee of United Nations Organisation at its next sitting in September, 1946, or whenever the Mandate of South West Africa comes up for consideration.

And we respectfully request that Your Excellency be graciously pleased to transmit by cable the contents of such Memorandum to the Secretary of State.

We have the honour to be,

Your Friends,

..... Kgari Sechele
CHIEF OF THE BAKWENA TRIBE.

..... Mokgosi S. Mokgosi
CHIEF OF THE BAMALETE TRIBE.

..... Tshekedi Khama
CHIEF OF THE BANWATO TRIBE.

..... Sedumedi Gaborone
CHIEF OF THE BATLOKWA TRIBE.

..... Moremi III.
CHIEF OF THE BATAWANA TRIBE.

..... Bathoen II.
CHIEF OF THE BANWAKETSE TRIBE.

MEMORANDUM.

1. We, the undersigned, Chiefs of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, on behalf of ourselves and our respective Peoples, having regard to the present world situation particularly as it affects this Protectorate, feel that we should be failing in our duty to our Government, our Peoples and our children, as well as to the good name of the British Empire, unless we immediately made a clear stand in conjunction with all men and nations who wish to see peace in our time and the success of the United Nations Organisation.

2. We wish to voice our feelings as a People who, by virtue of their present stage of progress, are not yet able to stand by themselves and therefore whose well-being and development form a sacred trust of civilisation.

3. For a long time past we have never failed to record our protest against any suggestion for the inclusion of the Bechuanaland Protectorate into the Union of South Africa. We continue to receive the assurance that if and when the Government of the Union of South Africa make any move to that end, the Native People of the Bechuanaland Protectorate will be fully consulted. Confident in the belief that the British Government would not transfer the administration of our Territory to the Government of the Union of South Africa against our wish, we have held our hands because of a sense of loyalty in wishing not to embarrass our Administration under the control of the Dominion Office whose duty it is to keep on the most friendly terms with those neighbouring territories under its aegis. As a result, the position of the Bechuanaland Protectorate has reached a climax.

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4. We are deeply concerned about the future of our country and more particularly with regard to its Industrial and Agricultural development.

It would appear that there is considerable mineral wealth in the Territory as yet untapped, and iron and coal fields have recently been discovered and favourably reported upon by the Colonial Office Geological Expert. The Union Government has itself explored the vast irrigation possibilities of the Okavango Swamps which lie within our Territory, and a member of the Union Cabinet has reported to the Union Parliament on the great possibilities that lie in such area.

The Colonial Office in the allocation of funds available under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1945, has set aside two and a half million pounds for the development of the High Commission Territories of South Africa.

It appears to us, therefore, that so far as our Territory is concerned, we are at the dawn of an era of industrial development.

5. But the future development of the Protectorate depends upon free and unfettered means of egress from, and access to, our Territory. At the present time no such free route exists. The existing railway line through the Protectorate is owned and controlled by the Rhodesian Railways in conjunction with Union Government Railways. It is neither in the interest of the Union Government nor of the Government of Southern Rhodesia to assist in the development of our Territory, in fact, the policy of the Union has been, and is, the negation thereof.

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If, therefore the Government has in view that this Protectorate should stand on its own feet and be politically and economically independent of the Union, the securing of an open route would be a most essential and tangible form of achieving this purpose. The natural route from the Territory lies through South West Africa to the Atlantic and now that the future of South West Africa is under consideration, we move that this is the opportune occasion to decide this problem for all time and any delay at this stage will be fatal to our well-being and development.

6. The Mandate for South West Africa was granted to the Union in 1920, subject to the following condition :-

"The Mandate shall promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants of the Territory, subject to the present Mandate."

Since 1920, the Native Policy of the Union Government has steadily and progressively deteriorated against the African, and it is difficult to see how the Union can be expected to fulfil the above condition. If South West Africa is made an integral part of the Union of South Africa this would we submit, amount to a repudiation of the purpose of the original Mandate.

7. It may seem presumptuous that we, Chiefs of the Protectorate, should urge that South West Africa be not transferred to the Union of South Africa, but we, as African Peoples, are not uninterested. There are presently living in our country displaced persons, Hereros and others, who were persecuted and driven out of their country by the Germans. In addition to those mentioned, a number of South West Africa natives have since taken

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refuge in the Bechuanaland Protectorate during the Union's Mandate through fear of the Union's Native Policy, and all of these would return to their native lands in South West Africa if the purpose of the Mandate were being duly fulfilled.

8. We, therefore, urge that South West Africa should be kept a separate entity from the Union of South Africa for all time in view of that Government's declared policy of racial discrimination as recorded by their Prime Minister during the debates on the recent Asiatic Act, when he confessed :-

"We are following a well-known South African principle, we are following practices and principles which have been adopted by us, which have been approved here in Parliament, practically unanimously and which we regard as essential to the structure of our complex society in South Africa. Fundamentally, the principle of separate land tenure and residence, and of separate political representation for Indians are the same here in this Bill as in the case of the Natives, and the Native legislation which is already in force in this country."

9. The Bechuanaland Protectorate is vitally interested in the future of South West Africa. A glance at the map will show the importance of this matter and the fact that South West Africa and the Protectorate have a common boundary of some four hundred miles and more, and if South West Africa is to become part and parcel of the Union of South Africa, we, as a Territory, would then be barred in not only from the South, East and North, but from the West, and our only hope for a free and open route would be lost to us, and the economic development of the Territory strangled at its birth.

10. We submit that His Britannic Majesty should be given a direct Mandate over South West Africa, or at least

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over the northern portion thereof from 25 degrees (latitude South) so as to provide the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and incidentally Rhodesia, with free access to, and a free port on, the West Coast of Africa and an opportunity for the Displaced Persons to return to their homeland.

11. In view ^{thereof} ~~therefore~~, we submit the only course open to the Trusteeship Committee of United Nations Organisation is to revoke this Mandate, and give it directly to His Britannic Majesty so that South West Africa may be dealt with in terms of the British White Paper whose aim is identical with the above quoted purpose of the Mandate, and which purpose is being effected in the adjoining territory of the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

WE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST

That the British Delegation to United Nations Organisation make on our behalf the following representations to the Trusteeship Committee of United Nations Organisation at its next session :-

- (a) That South West Africa be not incorporated in the Union of South Africa;
- (b) That the Mandate of South West Africa be handed over directly to His Britannic Majesty, failing that, to the United Nations Organisation;
- (c) That the Bechuanaland Protectorate be granted a free and open route to a free West Coast Port;

(d) /.....

- (d) That the case of the Displaced Persons presently in the Bechuanaland Protectorate be given consideration.

Kgari Sechele.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BAKWENA TRIBE.

Mokgosi S. Mokgosi.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BAMALETE TRIBE.

Tshekedi Khama.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BAMANWATO TRIBE.

Sedumedi Gaborone.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BATLOKWA TRIBE.

Moremi III.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BATAWANA TRIBE.

Bathoen II.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BANWAKETSE TRIBE.

A U T H O R I T Y.

We,

Chiefs of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, on behalf of ourselves and our respective Peoples, hereby empower CHIEF TSHEKEDI KHAMA of the Bamangwato Tribe to be duly assisted by

ADVOCATE D.M. BUCHANAN K.C.

to consult in South Africa with His Majesty's High Commissioner for Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland, and thereafter to proceed to England on our behalf and consult with His Majesty's Government in Great Britain and with any other person or persons whom they may deem advisable, and to represent us generally and enter into arrangements on our behalf in connection with the future of our Territory and the economic and political development thereof; and generally to do and perform all acts, matters and things in connection with the foregoing as fully and effectually to all intents and purposes as we might or could do if personally present and acting therein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF we have hereunto set out hands at MAFEKING on this the 29th day of APRIL in the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-six, in the presence of the subscribing witnesses.

AS WITNESS:

1. M.K. Seboni
2. P.M. Sebina.

Kgari Sechele.
CHIEF OF THE BAKWENA TRIBE.

Mokgosi S. Mokgosi.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BAMALETE TRIBE.

Tshekdi Khama.
.....
CHIEF OF THE BAMANGWATO TRIBE.

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