

**Small files: South Africa
1953-1961, South-West Africa
1961: Small files: S...**

HS L 179:191

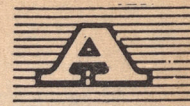


Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

South Africa

12 Nov. 60

- Statement by the Chairman of the delegation of Sweden (Gen. Assembly's document)
- and delegation of Norway. - 1 -



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/4572
14 November 1960

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifteenth session

Note verbale dated 12 November 1960 from the Chairman of the delegation of
Sweden addressed to the Secretary-General

The Chairman of the Delegation of Sweden presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the note verbale dated 20 October 1960 from the Chairman of the Delegation of the Union of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General and contained in document A/4558, has the honour to request that the attached statement be circulated as a document of the General Assembly to the Member States of the United Nations for their information.

Statement by the Chairman of the delegation of Sweden

During the course of the years, the Swedish delegation, like a great number of other delegations, has criticized the racial policies of the Union of South Africa as being inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. This attitude taken by Sweden has prompted the Foreign Minister of the Union of South Africa, Mr. Louw, to assert in his speech during this year's general debate that Sweden "has not come to this Assembly with clean hands". Mr. Louw is basing this allegation on statements quoted from three Swedish newspapers in 1958 and 1959 asserting that the Swedish Same, or Lapps, are subjected to discriminatory treatment. Mr. Louw has made no attempt to test the veracity of these statements. He uses them as a cover to excuse himself from having to prove the alleged discrimination. After quoting these statements he hastened to say: "These are not my views". It would seem, however, that the Swedish delegation may reasonably expect the Foreign Minister of the Union of South Africa to examine such press statements as to their correctness before using them as a basis for an allegation that Sweden does not come to this Assembly with clean hands.

In a note verbale, addressed to the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the delegation of the Union of South Africa has again referred to the question of the treatment of the Same or "Lapps" in Sweden. He even went as far as to allege that he has produced evidence of his accusations to the effect that this ethnical group is subjected to discriminatory treatment. He expresses himself in the following terms: "The representative of Sweden did not attempt to refute the evidence which I presented to the Assembly".

It had been the intention of the Swedish delegation, as explained during the general debate, to reply to the South African allegation in connexion with the discussion in the Special Political Committee of the item concerning the policies of apartheid of the Government of the Union of South Africa. However, the South African note verbale, which has now been circulated, makes it necessary for the Swedish delegation to use its right of reply already at this stage and in this form.

There is no basis for any accusation that discrimination is practised against the Swedish Same. How baseless such accusations are may best be illustrated by the following quotation of a statement adopted by the national organization of the

Swedish Same at their convention at Jokkmokk on 9 March this year. "The Swedish Same enjoy as Same and Swedes all freedoms and rights to which all citizens of the Kingdom of Sweden are entitled, irrespective of sex, race, language, and religion. As Swedish citizens also the Same have to carry out all civic duties and obligations."

I would like to ask, on behalf of the Swedish delegation, if such a statement can be made by those groups of South African citizens, whose treatment has given rise to criticism in Sweden, and, indeed, in the United Nations.

I would like only to add the following observations.

The Same, whose number in Sweden is about 10,000 persons, enjoy absolute equality of law. They have the same right to school education, sick benefits, pensions and other social welfare provisions as other Swedish citizens. They have equal voting rights, they have the same access to jobs and public functions as other Swedes and they have complete freedom of movement. They are not subjected to discrimination of any kind, but, on the contrary, they enjoy certain privileges with regard to the fact that they speak their own language and in order to facilitate the transition from their traditional occupation of reindeer breeding to other occupations.

The problems that have come up during recent years regarding the Same have, in the first instance, been concerned with the economic conditions for that part of the Same population which leads a nomadic life. The Swedish authorities have been anxious to protect this ethnic group with such a unique culture and way of life. This protection has been given in several ways. Firstly, the Same have the sole right to practice reindeer breeding and a corollary sole right to utilize certain natural resources. Secondly, there has been established a special school system for Same children with the approval and support of the Same population. Thirdly, special laws have been promulgated governing the rights and obligations of the nomads and of the resident population in the area with regard to reindeer breeding.

Existing economic problems relate above all to the reduction of reindeer pastures due to harnessing of water power for hydroelectric purposes which has created increased difficulties for nomadizing Same to continue reindeer breeding to the same extent as before.

I repeat on behalf of the Swedish Government: Any talk about discrimination is thus pure invention.



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/4574
14 November 1960

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifteenth session

NOTE VERBALE DATED 14 NOVEMBER 1960 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Chairman of the Norwegian delegation to the fifteenth session of the General Assembly presents his compliments to the Secretary-General and, with reference to the South African statement in the general debate at the 905th plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 14 October 1960, and the statement of the leader of the South African delegation of 18 October 1960, which has been circulated to all Members of the United Nations for their information (A/4558), has the honour to request that the attached statement from the Chairman of the Norwegian delegation be circulated to all Members of the United Nations for their information.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION

On 18 October, this year, the leader of the South African delegation, His Excellency Mr. Eric Louw, pointed out that the Norwegian representative in the general debate in exercising his right of reply did not attempt "to refute the evidence" which Mr. Louw claims that he has presented to the General Assembly in support of his accusations against the Norwegian Government for practising racial discrimination against the Lapp (Same) minority in Norway.

Mr. Louw's statement has now been circulated to all delegations and I therefore feel constrained to make the following observations:

After Mr. Louw, during the general debate, had made his attack on the Norwegian Government, the Norwegian representative, in order not to prolong the debate by turning it into a debate on racial discriminations in South Africa, reserved his right to give a reply to the South African delegation in the Special Political Committee, to which this item has been allocated.

Mr. Louw, in his statement of 18 October, indicates that he is less than satisfied with this procedure, because the South African delegation has decided not to be present during the Committee's discussion of this item. I feel, however, that this difficulty could be overcome by the South African delegation reversing its decision to stay away from the Committee. As a Member of the United Nations the Union of South Africa is indeed expected to be present.

The Norwegian delegation, for its part, still reserves its right to deal with the South African statement in the Special Political Committee when the question of the racial conflict in South Africa comes up there.

However, I should like at this stage to point out the fundamental fact that there is not one law, act or regulation in force in Norway which deprive members of the Lapp minority of any of the rights and freedoms which are enjoyed by every citizen of the Kingdom of Norway. They are in every respect Norwegian citizens, with full political rights and entitled to the same legal protection and social rights and benefits as all other Norwegian citizens.

It is in my view entirely irrelevant to draw any parallel between the conditions of the Lapps in Norway and the situation in South Africa where racial discrimination is official government policy, implemented through laws and

/...

regulations which deprive a large part of the population not only of common civil rights but also of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

The articles appearing in the Norwegian press concerning the Lapps in Norway, to which Mr. Louw has referred, do not reveal any discriminatory practices against the Lapp minority in my country. They do reveal that also amongst the Lapp people in Norway there are individuals who feel that other individuals or the society have done them wrong. Their complaints sometimes are justified; sometimes they are not. Everybody has, however, the right to have his cause brought to the attention of public opinion and to the authorities. It is essential in a democracy to have a vigilant press, and articles and reports of the kind to which Mr. Louw referred in his statement in the general debate are more than anything else evidence of a vigilant public opinion, reacting strongly against all forms of discrimination both in Norway and in other countries. In Norway, furthermore, there is no difference of opinion between the people and the authorities as regards the need to combat discrimination in all walks of life.

New York, 12 November 1960.

4P
SWEDISH DELEGATION

NOTE VERBALE DATED 12 NOVEMBER 1960 FROM THE CHAIRMAN
OF THE DELEGATION OF SWEDEN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL

The Chairman of the Delegation of Sweden presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the note verbale dated 20 October 1960 from the Chairman of the Delegation of the Union of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General and contained in document A/4558, has the honour to request that the attached statement be circulated as a document of the General Assembly to the Member States of the United Nations for their information.

/.....

SWEDISH DELEGATION

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DELEGATION OF SWEDEN
ON 12 NOVEMBER 1960.

During the course of the years, the Swedish Delegation, like a great number of other delegations, has criticized the racial policies of the Union of South Africa as being inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. This attitude taken by Sweden has prompted the Foreign Minister of the Union of South Africa, Mr. Louw, to assert in his speech during this year's general debate that Sweden "has not come to this Assembly with clean hands". Mr. Louw is basing this allegation on statements quoted from three Swedish newspapers in 1958 and 1959 asserting that the Swedish Same, or 'Lapps', are subjected to discriminatory treatment. Mr. Louw has made no attempt to test the veracity of these statements. He uses them as a cover to excuse himself from having to prove the alleged discrimination. After quoting these statements he hastened to say: "These are not my views". It would seem, however, that the Swedish delegation may reasonably expect the Foreign Minister of the Union of South Africa to examine such press statements as to their correctness before using them as a basis for an allegation that Sweden does not come to this Assembly with clean hands.

In a note verbale, addressed to the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the Delegation of the Union of South Africa has again referred to the question of the treatment of the Same or "Lapps" in Sweden. He even went

/.....

as far as to allege that he has produced evidence of his accusations to the effect that this ethnical group is subjected to discriminatory treatment. He expresses himself in the following terms: "The representative of Sweden did not attempt to refute the evidence which I presented to the Assembly".

It had been the intention of the Swedish delegation, as explained during the general debate, to reply to the South African allegation in connection with the discussion in the Special Political Committee of the item concerning the policies of apartheid of the Government of the Union of South Africa. However, the South African note verbale, which has now been circulated, makes it necessary for the Swedish Delegation to use its right of reply already at this stage and in this form.

There is no basis for any accusation that discrimination is practised against the Swedish Same. How baseless such accusations are may best be illustrated by the following quotation of a statement adopted by the national organization of the Swedish Same at their convention at Jokkmokk on 9 March this year: "The Swedish Same enjoy as Same and Swedes all freedoms and rights to which all citizens of the Kingdom of Sweden are entitled, irrespective of sex, race, language, and religion. As Swedish citizens also the Same have to carry out all civic duties and obligations."

I would like to ask, on behalf of the Swedish delegation, if such a statement can be made by those groups of South African citizens, whose treatment has given rise to criticism in Sweden, and, indeed, in the United Nations.

I would like only to add the following observations.

The Same, whose number in Sweden is about 10,000 persons, enjoy absolute equality of law. They have the same right to school education, sick benefits, pensions

/.....

and other social welfare provisions as other Swedish citizens. They have equal voting rights, they have the same access to jobs and public functions as other Swedes and they have complete freedom of movement. They are not subjected to discrimination of any kind, but, on the contrary, they enjoy certain privileges with regard to the fact that they speak their own language and in order to facilitate the transition from their traditional occupation of reindeer breeding to other occupations.

The problems that have come up during recent years regarding the Same have, in the first instance, been concerned with the economic conditions for that part of the Same population which leads a nomadic life. The Swedish authorities have been anxious to protect this ethnic group with such a unique culture and way of life. This protection has been given in several ways. Firstly, the Same have the sole right to practice reindeer breeding and a corollary sole right to utilize certain natural resources. Secondly, there has been established a special school system for Same children with the approval and support of the Same population. Thirdly, special laws have been promulgated governing the rights and obligations of the nomads and of the resident population in the area with regard to reindeer breeding.

Existing economic problems relate above all to the reduction of reindeer pastures due to harnessing of water power for hydroelectric purposes which has created increased difficulties for nomadizing Same to continue reindeer breeding to the same extent as before.

I repeat on behalf of the Swedish Government: Any talk about discrimination is thus pure invention.

New York, 12 November 1960.