

It was on the basis of these observations that the Fourth Committee discussed the question of South-west Africa, but in effect the debate ranged much further afield and reopened the familiar issue whether South Africa was legally or morally obliged to place South-west Africa under the trusteeship system.

In opening the general discussion, Mr Louw (*South Africa*) made a long statement defending the past and present policy of the Union Government. He considered that there could be no legal obligation to submit a trusteeship agreement because "the League of Nations on its death-bed did not attempt to make the United Nations its legatee in respect of the mandated territories." So far as any moral obligation was concerned, Mr Louw claimed that both Europeans and indigenous inhabitants were in favour of incorporation. South Africa regretted, therefore, that she could not comply with previous Assembly resolutions recommending trusteeship for the territory; such a course would be in the interests neither of South-west Africa nor of the Union. Recent consultations with the people of South-west Africa had resulted in a tentative agreement for a closer integration of South-west Africa with the Union "along the lines envisaged in the previous mandate, since expired." South-west Africa would be represented in the Union Parliament by six members in the Assembly and two in the Senate. Such matters as defence would be dealt with by the Union Parliament, but, in regard to a number of other matters, the legislature of South-west Africa would in future be accorded powers considerably in excess of those enjoyed by the four provinces at present constituting the Union. This agreement would be incorporated in a Bill to be presented to the next session of the Union Parliament in January.

This statement brought voluble protests from many representatives, who claimed that there were only two possible solutions to mandated status—trusteeship or independence. The representative of *India* (Mrs Pandit) deplored South Africa's "mounting disrespect" for the United Nations. Nothing that had happened in the past year justified incorporation, which seemed to be imminent if not complete. Proposals to absorb the territory should be abandoned, and the *status quo* maintained until an impartial United Nations commission had visited South-west Africa to decide what was the real attitude of the inhabitants. Other representatives attacked the South African attitude as "a flagrant violation of the Charter," an obstinate rejection of three General Assembly resolutions, and a repudiation of a solemn obligation. It was suggested by *Slav* representatives that if South Africa were allowed to incorporate the territory it would later attempt to absorb Bechuanaland and other neighbouring territories.