

At the opening meetings of the Committee it became clear at once that despite the apparent poverty and unimportance of the territories their future destiny would be determined only with great difficulty. The basis for future discussion in the Committee was provided by the initial statements on behalf of the four Great Powers and of the two principal claimants to the colonies, Italy and Ethiopia.

Mr Dulles (*United States*) said Libya had gone far towards autonomy and that the Assembly should insist on granting full independence to the inhabitants at an early date. For the time being, however, in view of the strategic importance of the region and its consequent relation to peace and security, the territory should be placed under the trusteeship system. Without indicating whether Libya should be treated as a whole or in parts, Mr Dulles then declared that the United Kingdom should be asked to administer Cyrenaica. Eritrea, he said, was neither homogeneous nor ready for independence. Since close racial affinities existed between certain of the inhabitants of Eritrea and Ethiopia, since Ethiopia had need of an outlet to the sea, and since it was important to protect Ethiopia from future aggression launched from Eritrea, he considered that a great part of Eritrea, including the port of Massawa and the city of Asmara, should be incorporated in Ethiopia. For the Western Province a solution might be sought which would take into account the relations of the area's inhabitants with their western neighbours. Italian Somaliland, he concluded, was of little strategic importance and would not be capable of independence for a long time. It could well therefore be entrusted to the trusteeship of the new democratic Italy.

A completely different approach was enunciated by the representative of *France*, who declared that Italy should be given trusteeship over all these territories with the exception that Ethiopia should receive some part of Eritrea as "a reparation for the past and a guarantee for the future."

Mr McNeil (*United Kingdom*) said it was unnecessary and unwise to dispose of the territories by means of a blanket solution. The United Kingdom was eager to rid itself of the heavy burden which administration of the territories entailed, but if the Assembly decided in favour of a British trusteeship for Cyrenaica the United Kingdom would undertake to promote the territory's political and economic advancement. He recalled that during the war his Government had given a pledge to the Senussi that they would never again be placed under Italian domination and he stated that this pledge would be kept. He could suggest no practical solution for Tripolitania, but stated that the United Kingdom Government might be prepared to remain as administering authority for a limited period provided they were left free to institute certain necessary progressive reforms. In Eritrea he agreed with the solution