

The following information from the Registry of the International Court of Justice has been communicated to the Press:

To-day the International Court of Justice held a hearing in the Peace Palace, The Hague in the matter of the Advisory Opinion concerning the Admissibility of Hearings by the Committee on South West Africa of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

This matter was referred to the Court for an Advisory Opinion by a resolution of the General Assembly dated December 3rd, 1955. And the question referred to the Court is as follows:

"Is it consistent with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 11 July 1950 for the Committee on South West Africa, established by General Assembly resolution 749 A (VIII) of 28 November 1953, to grant oral hearings to petitioners on matters relating to the Territory of South West Africa?"

As soon as it was received by the Registry on December 22nd, 1955, notice was given of the request for an Advisory Opinion to all states entitled to appear before the Court, in pursuance of Article 66, paragraph 1 of the Statute. Furthermore, in pursuance of paragraph 2 of the same article, the Members of the United Nations were notified that they were considered as likely to be able to furnish information on the question and that the Court would be prepared to receive written statements from them within a time-limit expiring on February 15th, 1956. The Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of China availed themselves of this right and submitted a written statement; the Government of India informed the Registrar by letter that it did not consider it necessary to submit any written statement in view of the fact that its views had already been indicated in the relevant records of the Tenth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

On February 16th, 1956 the Registrar informed the Members of the United Nations by letter that the Court would be prepared to hear oral statements at a public sitting. It was this public sitting that the Court held to-day. Only one government, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland designated for this purpose as its representative Sir Reginald Manningham-Buller, Q.C., M.P., assisted by Mr. F. A. Vallat, C.M.G., Deputy Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office.

Sir Reginald Manningham-Buller began and completed the statement on behalf of Her Majesty's Government at this morning's sitting, which closed at 12.45 p.m.

The Hague, March 22nd, 1956.

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