

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
BROADCAST ON RADIO LESOTHO ON FRIDAY, 23RD
FEBRUARY, 1968

My attention has been drawn to criticism recently voiced in the press and elsewhere by certain political elements concerning the secondment of South African officials to the Lesotho Government, and specifically to the post of Chief Electoral Officer.

I am satisfied that these comments are in no way representative of the views of the Basotho people, and are inspired by party political considerations. Nevertheless, I consider it desirable that the position should be clearly stated.

It is Government's established policy to obtain the services of experts from any friendly country, able and willing to give such assistance in those fields where there are no trained Basotho officials or an insufficient number of trained Basotho to do the work required. South Africa is one of these friendly countries ready to aid Lesotho. Others are the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Korea. The United Nations Agencies have also supplied experts of various nationalities. It is a condition of service of such officials, as it is of Lesotho's own civil servants, that they shall take no part in the domestic politics of Lesotho. It is therefore ridiculous to suggest that South Africa in particular has, by seconding officials, become involved in the internal affairs of Lesotho. These officials have made personal sacrifices to come to Lesotho to render a much needed service to the Basotho people. They are not citizens of Lesotho and have no interest in its affairs. Their only purpose is to assist in the respective Ministries and Departments to which they have been assigned, and to train Lesotho officials to take over from them when they leave.

It has been suggested that the office of Chief Electoral Officer could be abused and that constituencies in the lowlands would be amalgamated and loaded. These statements appear to have been made in complete ignorance of the provisions of the Constitution. Section 52 of the Constitution clearly states:

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