The Kaiser on Southwest Africa: Reichstag Speech by Wilhelm II (November 11, 1905)

Abstract

In January 1904, a revolt by native Africans began against German colonial rule in Southwest Africa (Namibia). The revolt was led by a Herero tribe, which overran several settlements, killing over 100 German colonialists. The Germans ruthlessly put down the revolt – within a few years, only a quarter of the original Herero population of 80,000 still survived. Here, Kaiser Wilhelm II praises German forces for conquering the indigenous population.

Source

[…] The development of our protectorates has been dealt a serious blow by the rebellion in Southwest Africa and, more recently, the unrest in East Africa. The Fatherland has been forced to pay a high price in blood and money. I know that I speak for the German people when I warmly thank and proudly acknowledge the officers and troops who answered my call and defended our territories with heroic courage at risk to their own lives. Their great sacrifices have not been made in vain. The latest dispatches reporting the defeat of the Witboi give us reason to hope that peace and order will be quickly restored in the sorely tried protectorates. Now our goal must be to make the re-conquered land profitable again. Efficient transportation routes are vital for the military defense and economic development of our protectorates, and I will be introducing parliamentary bills addressing these matters. The draft budget will propose converting the Colonial Department of the Foreign Office into an Imperial Colonial Office, which will make it easier to cope with the workload of colonial administration. The budget and accounting regulations of the protectorates are currently being simplified, which will provide a basis for colonial self-administration. […]

Source: *Die Reden Kaiser Wilhelms II;* edited by Johannes Penzler. 4 vols. Leipzig, n.d., volume 3, p. 289.

Translation: Adam Blauhut

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