IV

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

As explained in the previous chapter, political items not dealt with exclusively in plenary meetings are assigned either to the First Committee or to the Special Political Committee.

The Question of Apartheid

At the seventeenth session the question of *apartheid* was combined in a single item with that of the treatment of Indo-Pakistani peoples in South Africa. A single resolution, submitted by some 36 African and Asian countries, called for economic and other sanctions against South Africa, and for the expulsion of that country from the United Nations, if it did not comply with United Nations resolutions calling upon it to abandon its *apartheid* policies. While almost all delegations condemned *apartheid,* they were not agreed as to the best means of bringing pressure to bear on South Africa to change its policies. Requests for separate votes on parts of the resolution were, however, defeated both in committee and in plenary, so that many delegations were unable effectively to reflect in their vote their exact views on the several parts of the proposal. In the end, the resolution [1761 (XVII)] was approved by the General Assembly by a vote of 67 in favour, 16 against (including Canada), with 23 abstentions.

The Canadian Delegation opposed the resolution because of grave doubts about the appropriateness of the use of sanctions by the United Nations in a situation not involving external aggression or a question of peace or war, or that, if applied, they would be effective in causing South Africa to change its policies. Canada also opposed the suggestion of expulsion because the United Nations and its individual members would have more opportunity to influence South Africa while it remained in the organization and because of the importance of maintaining the comprehensive nature of the United Nations as a world forum.

Effects of Atomic Radiation

Consistent with its strong stand during previous sessions, Canada initiated a resolution which in first part commended the United Nations