



Bulletin

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SOUTH WEST AFRICA PROBLEM

The following is part of a statement made to the United Nations General Assembly by the Canadian Representative, Mr. George Ignatieff, on May 15:

...First of all I think that we should never lose sight of the important achievement of 1966. That year, the United Nations took the historic decision that the mandate over South West Africa was terminated, that South Africa has no right to administer the territory, and that, henceforth, South West Africa would come under the direct responsibility of the United Nations. And that decision was supported by the overwhelming majority of membership of this organization. One hundred and fourteen countries voted in favour of it. All these countries supported the proposition that the United Nations must assist the people of the territory of South West Africa to exercise the right of self-determination and to achieve independence.

Since that time, efforts of the organization to implement that resolution have been focused in one direction. That this direction did not receive the same kind of overwhelming support as did Resolution 2145 has been obvious. My delegation still believes that the method of exercising United Nations responsibility for the territory as envisaged in Resolution 2248 was not the most practicable method and nothing has happened since to change this opinion; nor do we see any balance of advantage in promoting a solution favourable to independence and self-determination of the people of South West Africa by resort to violence.

I would stress that we do not imply at all abandonment of principle. The people of South West Africa should be able to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. But I think it would be most unfortunate if, through too rigid an insis-

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tence on a particular method, we were to fail to take advantage of opportunities for progress that may arise. While holding to the principles which have been clearly defined by the Assembly, I do suggest we now seek other more promising methods within the operational capacity of the United Nations. It is not possible to predict whether or not a different approach will be successful but it is obvious that the method chosen so far has not been, and has only led to dilemma and deadlock.

ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION

We believe the main problem on which we have to focus now is how to end the isolation in which these people and their present *de facto* administration are living. We have to think how best to establish communications in order to bring the people of South West Africa into the stream of the international community to enjoy self-government and independence. To this end every possible opportunity should, in our view, be explored - none overlooked. Indeed the United Nations is bound, in our view, to explore every diplomatic method in order to find the key which would unlock the barrier which separates the people of South West Africa from their destiny of self-government and independence.

There have been events recently in which South Africa seems to have shown an intensified disregard for the wishes of the United Nations, but there has been one development that might offer some possibility. At least in our view it would be irresponsible of