

The year ended before completion of the Security Council's hearings, but the speeches of delegates expressed censure of the Israeli action. Reports of the Chief of Staff of the Truce Supervision Organization noted that apparent Syrian orders to fire at Israeli military boats approaching closer than 250 metres from the shore were in violation of the General Armistice Agreements but stated that the scale of the Israeli retaliation was out of proportion to the provocation cited.

Jordan Water Resources

The United Nations, through the Relief and Works Agency¹, continues to maintain close interest in the plan for the regional development of water resources of the Jordan Valley, which President Eisenhower's personal representative, Mr. Eric Johnston, has put before the governments of Israel and the Arab countries. Mr. Johnston again visited the Middle East during 1955. The plan seems well advanced in technical consultation but it has not yet gained the necessary political acceptance.

Race Conflict in South Africa

The question of race conflict in South Africa was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly at the seventh session in 1952 by India on the grounds that the racial policies of the South African Government were creating "a dangerous and explosive situation which constituted both a threat to international peace and a flagrant violation of the basic principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations". The South African Government replied that the United Nations was precluded from intervening by Article 2 (7) of the Charter which stated "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII". Nevertheless, the Assembly established a three-member Commission on The Racial Situation in South Africa. The South African Government deemed this to be an unconstitutional action and therefore refused to recognize the Commission.

The Canadian view has been that the General Assembly has a right to discuss the question and Canada has therefore supported inscription of the item on the agenda. Canada is not convinced, however, that the United Nations is competent to intervene, and has argued that the International Court of Justice should be asked for an advisory opinion on the question of jurisdiction. However, a majority of the members of the United Nations has not favoured this course of action.

The eighth and ninth sessions of the Assembly renewed the mandate of the Commission. At both sessions, the South African Delegation reiterated that the Commission was unconstitutional and said that the Commission's reports contained factual and interpretative errors. The African and Asian nations, supported by several Latin American countries, commended the Commission for its work and criticized South Africa for its unco-operative attitude. Canada opposed continuation of the Commission at both sessions since we believe that, without the co-operation of the South African Government it could do nothing useful.

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1953-54*, p. 17.