

*Broad
consensus
on Rhodesia*

of the better-balanced Security Council resolution.

Progress was made on the questions of Rhodesia and Namibia, which were discussed for two months. A broad political consensus was achieved on Rhodesia by adoption of a resolution that no longer called on Britain to bring about events it had no power to effect, and a full understanding emerged between the African states and Britain regarding the wording on majority rule. The resolution on sanctions, supported by Canada, resulted in the renewed abstentions of six countries. The debate on Namibia drew increasing criticism from those countries whose national commercial interests were developing Namibian resources under agreements with South Africa. The Assembly was forced to conclude that, in some areas like Namibia, Timor and the Sahara, it was powerless to influence events, and a certain amount of frustration was evinced in discussions. In general, however, the work of the Fourth Committee was accomplished in an atmosphere of conciliation resulting from the ground-work laid by the work over the past year of the Committee of Twenty-four.

Human rights

At the opposite end of the spectrum were the discussions on issues of human rights, in which open hostility in debate was manifested to an unprecedented degree. This animosity was clearest in the Zionism discussion, but was also evident in debates on Chile, torture, International Women's Year and the well-intentioned but abortive U.S. initiative regarding amnesty for political prisoners.

On Chile, the past pattern of debate was continued with discussion of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile, and a resolution was adopted deploring the Chilean Government's refusal to receive the members of the group. Other declarations aimed at protecting all persons from torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments and affirming the rights of the disabled, broke new ground for the UN and were adopted unanimously, but with little fanfare. Canada co-sponsored these measures. The President of the Assembly considered that the declaration on torture was one of the single most important achievements of his term. It is possible that it may lead to proposals for the drafting of a full international convention.

The debate on *apartheid* was a well coordinated condemnation of South African policies in this area. The debate nevertheless revealed some divisions within

African solidarity and resulted in embarrassment for the Eastern European group when the role of the Soviet Union and Cuba in Angola was drawn to the Assembly's attention by some speakers. Canada intervened with a major statement by Mr. Louis Duclos, M.P., in his capacity as Canadian representative in the Special Political Committee. The official position on participation of Canadian groups in sporting competitions was clearly outlined. Scepticism was voiced over the utility of simply removing some forms of "petty *apartheid*" while the bulk of the offending legislation remained untouched, and a call was sounded for the participation of South Africans in the political system. The Canadian statement represented the reiteration of the firm public position that had been taken in the past. A similar attitude on the part of the United States demonstrated the growing Western impatience at the lack of change in South Africa's racial policies. The final seven resolutions covered such aspects as arms sales, the Bantustans, *apartheid* in sports (co-sponsored by Canada), and the general situation in South Africa. Canada supported all these resolutions except the last which contained excessive terminology and advocated objectives and methods that the Canadian Government opposed.

Deliberations in the First Committee on arms-control and disarmament questions were lengthy and produced a record number of resolutions. The proliferation of resolutions, statements and explanations of vote reflected both the complexity of arms-control issues and the growing frustration of most non-nuclear-weapon states at the lack of progress in the disarmament field in recent years.

Canada joined in an appeal to nuclear-weapon states to end their nuclear testing and supported a resolution calling on the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) to give the highest priority to the drawing-up of a comprehensive test-ban agreement. The Soviet Union tabled draft treaties on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing and on "the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons".

In a resolution co-sponsored by several non-aligned countries, the Committee regretted that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks had not achieved positive results, expressed concern about the objectives laid down for these talks by the United States and the Soviet Union, and again urged the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to broaden the scope and accelerate the pace

*Abortive
United States
initiative
on amnesty*