

Having said that, I am bound to say also that we in Canada have grave doubts about policies and practices adopted to meet the problems of race differentiation which are based on notions of racial superiority. Any form of discrimination in our view is more likely to exacerbate than to solve the underlying problem. It is clear also that policies of this kind are inconsistent with the basic principles of human rights which underlie the Charter of the United Nations. And certainly to this extent the situation in South Africa is a matter of deep concern to member states.

For this reason and because Canada has favoured a broad interpretation of the Assembly's right of discussion, Canadian delegations in the past have not opposed the inscription of this item, nor argued against the Assembly's right to discuss it.

It has become apparent, however, that some delegations are disposed to press the matter far beyond mere discussion. Acting has been proposed which seems to us to undermine another basic principle of the Charter, that is, the sovereign equality of all the members of the United Nations. We have in mind the decision supported by a majority of members to establish the United Nations Commission on the Racial Situation in the Union of South Africa. This Commission has from a distance kept the situation in South Africa under surveillance and has now made three reports to the Assembly. Canada did not support the establishment of the Commission nor its continuation, although we did, of course, respect the decision of the majority of the Assembly and the conscientious efforts of the distinguished gentlemen who had served on the Commission.

From its inception we have doubted the wisdom of the procedure. Aware that the Government of South Africa was not disposed to cooperate with the Commission, we viewed its establishment not only as bordering on the kind of intervention which the Charter prohibits but, and this was a much more compelling reason in our view, as a procedure which would not yield worthwhile results. Not the least of the obstacles hampering the Commission's work has been its inability to enter the area in which the source of complaint lay.

We are strongly of the opinion that the test of practicability should be applied before proposals of this kind are adopted in the United Nations. Our fears about the inefficacy of the Commission have, we think, been borne out. Although it has produced a wealth of material on conditions in South Africa and although as a compilation its reports may be useful, in its recommendations the Commission has all but admitted its inability to come to grips with the main problem. Several delegations drew similar conclusions in the course of the general debate. I recall particularly the thoughtful interventions of the distinguished representatives of Sweden, Mexico and New Zealand. The Commission too has shown itself fully aware of the practical limitations on its work.

In arguing in favour of continuing the Commission, some members have referred to the need for maintaining the pressure of public opinion on the South African Government. They have emphasized that the reports of the Commission have helped to keep the problem before the public eye. While I agree that those arguments have some validity, I wonder