

Adjournment Debate

I should also like to point out that legislation is currently before the House concerning immigration, and that one of the provisions of this legislation is for consultation with provincial governments on immigration demographics. As soon as the legislation is passed, and detailed consultations with the provincial governments can begin, some more systematic planning in this area will be possible.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—SOUTHWEST AFRICA—ALTERNATIVES TO TOURNHALLE CONFERENCE OFFERED BY DELEGATION

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, on April 25 I directed a question to the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs with regard to Canadian participation in a delegation to South Africa, and received no answer to my question. Subsequently I directed a question to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on the same topic and received no answer.

I am curious as to the progress of this conference. We are told through newspaper accounts that Canada has sent senior diplomats to join those of Britain, the United States, France, and West Germany in talks with the Prime Minister of South Africa regarding the future of the territory known as Southwest Africa. I realize it is rather heady stuff for Canada to be part of a five-power conference when the other four participants have been traditionally regarded as great powers in the world. But I wonder whether the government realizes what it is getting into.

Southwest Africa is a quarter of a million square miles in extent. It is larger than the combined areas of England, Austria, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, The Netherlands, Portugal and Hungary. It is two thirds the area of South Africa itself. I have a feeling that the delegation which has officially gone out, and about which so little has appeared in the newspapers, is probably less informed on conditions in South Africa than were the volunteers who sailed to take part in the Boer War almost 80 years ago.

I am amazed that the government should send any representatives, whether we have a seat on the Security Council or not, to talk to the prime minister of South Africa about the future independence of Southwest Africa. I wonder what commitments we have made in terms of the policing of that land in the future. Our experience in becoming involved in United Nations peacekeeping is one of perpetual involvement. I doubt whether the impoverished United Nations organization is in any shape to finance the policing of that vast territory. And, somehow, I doubt that we are either.

I wonder if there was a commitment there to become part of the occupational force which would supervise the proposed elections in the regions. I wonder whether we have undertaken any commitment to the various native groups of that land and whether we have any real regard for the future of the kind of state which would be formed if it followed the pattern of so many other states in Africa—I think of Uganda as an example to chill the mind—as we consider turning over Southwest Africa to that possibility.

It is very strange indeed to find the government involved in all this at a time when we have just received a report on affairs in northern Canada, a report which discusses the homeland and spells out in chilling words a policy of apartheid for Canada and one which will certainly influence the discussion of native claims in this country for a long time to come. We have in the past rejected outright the policies of the South African government. We have refused, for example, to recognize the existence of the State of Transkei. Yet we are part of a representational group of five nations who are off to Johannesburg to talk seriously to the Prime Minister of South Africa about the future of Southwest Africa, when our own native policies in this country are a record of failure from start to finish. It seems to me absolutely presumptuous that we should form part of any delegation going that far to instruct South Africa as to what it should do, either in South Africa itself or in any neighbouring territory.

We have heard little about this matter, Mr. Speaker. We have had no progress report. The minister is not here tonight. I hope we will be given some reassurance that we have not started down the road to an endless commitment in another peacekeeping operation, because I suspect that once the South African government has withdrawn, if it does withdraw, from Southwest Africa there will be a bloodbath there unless the United Nations is prepared to supervise that territory for a very long time.

Have we had any assurance from the Soviet government that they will help to pay the cost? Although they have demanded removal of South Africa from the United Nations, they have refused to make any commitment to pay the cost of what is to come if the United Nations take over the territory. Have we had any regard for the people of Namaland, Okavangoland, Boesmanland, Hereroland, or Damaraland? What commitment have we given to them or to the people of Ovamboland, the most populous of all of the proposed homelands in the area?

What has this delegation gone to South Africa to talk about? It seems to me that if we have some good minds on how to handle native relations they should be transferred from external affairs to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development so that they can begin to tell the government what to do about our own problems in this country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Fernand E. Leblanc (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the persistent illegal occupation of the international territory of Namibia by the South African government has been of concern to the international community since way before 1966, at which time its responsibility was entrusted to the United Nations. Canada voted for the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in that regard, and the decision was later reaffirmed repeatedly by the Security Council, and also in 1971 by the International Court of Justice.

Despite that clear manifestation of the international will on the matter, South Africa has refused to recognize the responsi-