

POLITICAL AND SECURITY QUESTIONS

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa

The Canadian Government firmly believes that the time remaining to effect peaceful change in South Africa is growing shorter and that individual and collective efforts must be intensified to resolve the central issues before armed struggle and violence become the principal instruments of change.

The Canadian position on this question was elaborated in the following statement delivered by the Honourable Robert Stanbury, P.C., M.P., on November 1, 1976 in plenary:

During the past year we have witnessed momentous developments in Southern Africa. As never before, the attention of the international community has been focused on the course of events in this region as, one after another, its various problems have dominated the international scene. Most recently, Rhodesia (the future Zimbabwe) and Namibia have preoccupied us and some important steps have been taken towards the resolution of these problems. But the subject which we are discussing today is perhaps the most difficult and intractable of those which afflict Southern Africa, and a measure of its fundamental importance is that this year we should be discussing the issue in this plenary forum rather than, as has been customary, in the Special Political Committee.

Even at this stage some question the attention devoted by the United Nations to efforts to bring about change in South Africa. Why, they ask, among all the abuses of human rights in the world, why, do we here fasten so firmly on *apartheid*? The reasons merit repetition.

The United Nations must indeed develop and put into operation effective mechanisms for the protection of human rights everywhere. It must be the advocate of minority groups whenever they are denied equal rights, and of individuals in any country which as a general policy denies to its people basic human rights. But the United Nations is so intensely preoccupied with the situation in South Africa because the institutionalized policies of racial discrimination in South Africa have troubled the international community since the formation of the United Nations in 1945. From its earliest sessions the General Assembly has found cause to appeal to the Government of South Africa to comply with the spirit and provisions of the UN Charter by guaranteeing to all its citizens an equitable share in the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of their country's life. The Government of South Africa has remained deaf to these pleas; instead it has continued to develop and extend year by year *apartheid* legislation in a direction which denies, by law, to four out of five South Africans any opportunity of realizing their inherent human rights.

A complex web of legislation constrains the daily life of 18 million non-white South Africans. It denies to them the right to live in the cities in which they work; it denies to them the right to gain full title to their homes and businesses in the sub-standard African cities in which they are obliged to live. It obliges African workers to commute long distances each day to their place of employment. It relegates tens of thousands of South African contract labourers to life in all-male barracks — separated for 51 weeks of the year from their wives and families; it prohibits them from bringing their families to the areas in which they work, areas in which their labour is essential to the South African economy. The laws of the land deny to them the opportunity to advance, in accordance with their capabilities, to jobs of greater interest and responsibility — those are reserved for the minority. Similarly, the laws establish wages for the African majority at levels which are tremendously lower than those for whites who are doing essentially the same work. This is *apartheid*.

In the last several months the victims of this demeaning and iniquitous system have risen up and confronted the Government of South Africa, and the world, with the appalling circumstances they have been required to endure for so long. On the last occasion when the reality of South Africa was put so forcefully to us, following the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, the international community responded with one voice in efforts to impress upon the South African Government the need to abandon its *apartheid* policies. It is our task during this session of the General Assembly to re-examine the situation in the light of the recent events in South Africa, and to decide what further steps should be taken to foster rapid and fundamental change for the oppressed majority there by peaceful means as long as that possibility exists.

Last year, my Government, through its representative on the Special Political Committee, presented a full exposition of its views on the *apartheid* policies and practices of the South African Government, and set forth in detail its own policies in response to the unacceptable panoply of regulations, practices and attitudes prevailing in that country. We