

The whole tenor of the United Nations Charter assumes a balanced process of evolution. It lays commitments on the administering powers and it recognizes in every paragraph that the fulfilment of those commitments must be a gradual process whose rapidity will vary with each case. Colonialism, in short, is made the instrument of its own disappearance.

That is a responsibility whose formidable nature must surely be recognized and respected by those of us who do not share it. It is the task of fitting various societies, some of them primitive societies, to take place in this modern and highly integrated world. It is not enough to waken in these societies a desire to run their own affairs; they must also be trained to the necessary level of ability, and if this essential process is interfered with or frustrated, or if on the other hand it is rushed too recklessly and precipitately, it will be to the detriment of the prosperity and security and future advancement of these colonial territories themselves.

While accepting these principles, Canadian decisions on specific colonial questions at the United Nations are based on our judgment of their merits, conditioned only by our sincere desire to help reach the maximum common agreement that is consistent with the welfare of the dependent peoples themselves and the interests of the international community.

I think this problem has come most concretely to our attention in connection with the South African items which are now on the agenda of the United Nations and which were dealt with last week. They are not in themselves colonial problems, but they represent a problem of the relationship of dependent people to a sovereign state and a sovereign government. They are problems of discrimination.

These South African items illustrate the difficulties of that problem and they also illustrate the danger of friendly nations dividing in their approach to it. Probably the best single example of this difficulty is the item on the agenda itself called "race conflict in South Africa" and the introduction under that item of a resolution by certain Asian states challenging the South African legislation, challenging South African policy and setting up an agency of the United Nations to intervene in this matter.

At the same time there have been introduced other resolutions on the same subject. South Africa's defence against these charges - this defence has been carried on lengthily, vigorously and skilfully by the South African representative at the United Nations - has been the legal defence that the Assembly is simply not competent even to consider these matters under Article 2, Paragraph 7, of the Charter, which reserves domestic jurisdiction to the states themselves.

On the other hand, members on the other side of the argument pointed to articles of the Charter which pledged its members to co-operate for the achievement of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race. Members on the other side of this argument, that is the other side from the South African side, have attempted to