

*External Affairs*

like the first question I mentioned, the policy of apartheid in the government of the Union of South Africa.

Apartheid means separation of the races. It is very much like the dispute which has been going on in the southern states of the United States—segregation. It is the policy of the government of South Africa that white people and coloured people should live apart, living according to their own traditions, cultures, and have a separate civilization. They have taken positive legal steps to see that that is carried out. The representative of the foreign minister of the government of the Union of South Africa objected to this being considered, and he raised the point that this was beyond the powers of the assembly. Since this is a matter which is frequently brought up, I think I should read the section of the charter to which he was referring. Article 2, section 7, says:

Nothing contained in the present charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require members to submit such matters to settlement under the present charter.

Mr. Louw contended that this was a purely domestic matter, that these questions of apartheid and the treatment of South Africans of Indian origin were both domestic. He refused to attend meetings when these matters were being discussed. The attitude of the South African government was shared by very few members of the United Nations. May I say at this point that the white population of South Africa amounts to only three millions compared with 11 million non-white inhabitants. Our delegation recognized that a solution of this problem which has been in existence for many years, was not going to be easy. Nevertheless we in this country have no sympathy with such a policy as that which the government of South Africa is pursuing.

We have before us now a bill of rights which will grant formally to our citizens the rights which are being taken away from residents of South Africa because of discrimination on grounds of colour in the Union of South Africa. We consider, also, that the policy of apartheid or segregation is contrary to the spirit of the United Nations charter, because several of the sections of the charter say that the purpose of the United Nations is to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

We knew that the policy of South Africa had become set and that it would be very

[Mr. Browne (St. John's West).]

difficult for them to change it. Certainly they could not change it over night. We remembered, to, that the white population in South Africa numbering, as I have said, three millions, is the biggest white population on the whole continent of Africa and must be compared with a population of 200 million people who are not white in colour. Thus the position of the government of South Africa is a very difficult one and those hon. members who have been reading the newspapers in the last few days will have noticed that there have been uprisings in various countries in Africa and that the people there are clamouring increasingly for independence. The spirit of nationality which was talked about so much after the first world war in terms of self-determination has certainly broken out anew in Africa, as it erupted in Asia previously.

All over the world there is concern about South Africa's racial policies and this was evident in the debate which took place during the thirteenth session. It was our opinion that any resolution to be brought in should take into consideration that the position in South Africa was exceptional and very difficult, and that we should not expect too much at one time. The resolution when drafted read something like this:

In a multi-racial society, harmony and respect for human rights and freedoms and the peaceful development of a unified community are best assured when patterns of legislation and practice are directed towards ensuring equality before the law of all persons, regardless of race, creed or colour, and when economic, social, cultural and political participation of all racial groups is on a basis of equality.

This is an ideal to which all members of the United Nations are striving, and since it is spoken of so freely in the charter it appeared to us that all members of the United Nations were bound to practice what they subscribe to. General Smuts was one of the original signatories to the charter of the United Nations, but it seems that since his day the government of South Africa has altered its views somewhat.

We regretted that this matter was being considered so frequently year after year. We have a special interest in South Africa because, like ourselves, South Africa is a member of the commonwealth of nations and in two world wars our forces have fought side by side. Ties are strong, so it was difficult for Canada to take a positive attitude in this matter against South Africa. However, we felt that this principle was very important and we did support the resolution. It was very moderate in tone and the whole tenor of the debate was very temperate. We took a part in drafting the resolution so that it would be inoffensive to South Africa. We pointed out in our