

The question of race conflict in South Africa was included in the agenda of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly without a vote being taken and was allocated to the Special Political Committee for consideration. Of the fifty delegations which participated in the general debate in the Committee, all were critical to one degree or another, of the South African Government's racial policies; however, most delegations couched their interventions rather in terms of an appeal to the South African Government to alter its policies than in tones of condemnation. A draft resolution in keeping with this moderate approach was co-sponsored by thirty-three delegations from all principal geographical regions of the world; they included delegations from Latin America, from Africa and Asia (including all Asian and African members of the Commonwealth) and from Scandinavia and other parts of Europe (but not from the Soviet bloc). The resolution called upon all member states to bring their policies into conformity with their obligations under the Charter, and, in this context, expressed regret and concern that the Government of the Union of South Africa had not yet responded to the appeals of the General Assembly that it reconsider its governmental policies which impaired the rights of all racial groups to enjoy the same rights and fundamental freedoms. By presenting a more moderate resolution, the co-sponsors obtained a wider measure of support than had been given to such resolutions in other years. The resolution was adopted in plenary by a vote of 70 in favour (including Canada) to 5 against (Australia, Belgium, France, Portugal, United Kingdom) with 4 abstentions (Dominican Republic, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain). The members states which moved from a position of abstention in voting on this item at the 12th session to a vote in favour of the resolution presented at the 13th session included: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Finland, Honduras, Italy, Nicaragua, New Zealand, the Philippines, Turkey and the United States. Those delegations which voted against the resolution, or abstained, made clear that they disapproved of racial segregation, but had considered the resolution in contravention of the provisions of the Charter.

In United Nations consideration of the racial situation in South Africa, Canada has not supported resolutions which it considered to be outside the competence of the General Assembly, or resolutions which dealt with the South Africa situation in a condemnatory spirit. At the thirteenth session the Canadian Delegation joined in supporting the resolution introduced on this question, believing that it was in keeping with the terms of the Charter, that it usefully appealed to all members to bring their policies in conformity with the provisions of the Charter, and that it had been formulated in a spirit of goodwill towards South Africa and with appreciation of the complexity of its problems.

Complaint of U.S.S.R. Concerning Flights of U.S. Bombers

At the request of the U.S.S.R., the Security Council was convened on April 21, 1958, to consider a Soviet complaint requesting immediate measures to stop United States military aircraft armed with nuclear weapons flying in the direction of the U.S.S.R. frontiers. The Soviet Representative attempted to demonstrate that the policies followed by the United States Strategic Air Command constituted a danger to world peace. He failed to obtain any support in the Council and finally withdrew his draft resolution.