

Special Political Committee

As explained previously, political items not dealt with exclusively in plenary meetings are assigned either to the First Committee or to the Special Political Committee.

The Question of Apartheid

As a result of decisions taken at the Addis Ababa conference in May 1963, pressure on the Government of South Africa to bring about a change in its *apartheid* policies was intensified by the African states in meetings of the Specialized Agencies, notably at the ILO conference in June 1963, in the Security Council and at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly. The Special Political Committee discussed *apartheid* during October, but it was apparently the view of the African delegations that substantive action on the matter should be left to the Security Council. The Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs intervened in the debate on October 18.

As a matter of urgency, early in the session, the Committee considered a resolution which requested the Government of South Africa to abandon the arbitrary trial then in progress and to grant forthwith unconditional release to all political prisoners, and further requested all member states to make all necessary efforts to induce the Government of South Africa to put the provisions of the resolution into effect immediately. This resolution [1881 (XVIII)] was adopted almost unanimously by the Assembly, with only South Africa voting against.

Consideration of the question was resumed towards the end of the session and resulted in the adoption of a two-part resolution [1978 XVIII]. Its first part, adopted by a vote of 100 in favour, two against, with one abstention, appealed to all states to take appropriate measures and intensify their efforts to dissuade the Government of South Africa from pursuing its policy of *apartheid* and to implement the Security Council resolution of December 4 concerning the export of arms to South Africa, and continued the existence of the special committee on *apartheid*. The second part of the resolution, adopted by 99 votes in favour, two against, with no abstention, requested the Secretary-General to seek ways and means of providing relief and assistance, through the appropriate international agencies, to the families of all persons persecuted by the Government of the Republic of South Africa for their opposition to the policies of *apartheid*. Canada voted in favour of both parts of the resolution.

Effects of Atomic Radiation

In recent years the General Assembly has paid increasing attention to the harmful effects of atomic radiation. The main source of this radiation