

*Statements by Ministers*

I have the honour, on behalf of Canada, to chair that Committee, whose other members include the Foreign Ministers of Australia, India, Guyana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

I have been in touch with my colleagues on the Committee, and with the Commonwealth Secretariat, and am advising Parliament today that the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers will hold our first meeting in southern Africa itself, in Lusaka, Zambia, at the beginning of February. We are using the weeks before that meeting to take up directly some of the initiatives in the Okanagan Statement, and to work with the Commonwealth Secretariat on others.

The Vancouver Conference focused on three major areas—sanctions, aid to the Front Line States, and reaching into South Africa to aid the victims and opponents of apartheid, and generally promote dialogue. The Committee of Foreign Ministers, and the Secretariat, will look into means to widen and intensify the program of economic measures already in place, including an examination of the way sanctions have been frustrated and studies on the impact of sanctions and on South Africa's financial relations.

The Committee will also give priority to encouraging and assisting the opponents of apartheid within South Africa, and to counteracting the effects of censorship and propaganda. Real progress against apartheid requires genuine dialogue between the South African Government and authentic black leaders. Unfortunately, as I learned for myself during a visit to Southern Africa in August, the short term prospects of reaching that goal are not great. But we believe the Commonwealth can contribute to the possibility of internal talks by increasing our contacts with South Africans of different view points.

At Vancouver, heads of Government were unanimous in their resolve to strengthen the capacity of South Africa's neighbours to resist Pretoria's policy of destabilization and destruction. Mozambique is particularly important to the landlocked Front Line States; so the Commonwealth established a special technical assistance fund for Mozambique, and is committed to establishing secure infrastructure, including the rehabilitation of transportation routes, and measures to protect them against attack. Each country will decide how it can best contribute, and Canada has pledged \$20 million to rebuilding the vital Limpopo railway line.

The mandate of the Committee of Foreign Ministers is far-reaching. It will keep the pressure on South Africa. It will give encouragement to the opponents of apartheid. It will reinforce the Commonwealth's role in promoting change and dialogue. Canada will contribute to the committee's work in every possible way. Everyone in this House believes apartheid must be ended. The Government also believes apartheid can be ended, and a better system put in place. That of course, requires countries like Canada to continue the kind of

leadership the Prime Minister provided in Vancouver. South Africa should be in no doubt that, if other measures fail, all of Canada's economic and diplomatic contacts will be ended. That would be a last resort, when our other influence has ended. Both the Government of South Africa, and the opponents of apartheid, should also know that Canada intends to continue to mobilize our resources and our influence to maintain steady pressure and leadership against apartheid and the violence it engenders.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East):** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Government has gone a long way in its policy on South Africa. Many of its initiatives have been good. In this respect I think a good deal of credit should go to the Minister personally.

Unfortunately, however, these actions taken by Canada and other countries have only had minimal success. Apartheid, which is institutionalized racism, remains intact in South Africa and is still a way of life in that country. The state of emergency is still in place. Thousands of political prisoners, including children, are incarcerated for opposing apartheid. There is heavy censorship, and there is increasing unrest, violence, and repression.

The Minister's statement today in respect of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers is another step in the right direction, but one wonders if it will be enough. If we look at the statement, the commitment by the Minister and the committee to look into means to widen and intensify the program of economic measures already in place is a worthwhile pursuit, and we wish them success. The committee also intends to examine the whole problem of why the sanctions have been frustrated; a worthwhile pursuit that must be encouraged. Concerning the assisting of opponents of apartheid within South Africa, again we think that must be supported and we encourage the committee. Finally, again we support the initiatives to strengthen the capacity of South Africa's neighbours to resist the policy of destabilization and destruction.

● (1540)

The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers, made up of a number of countries is good; they have a lot to offer. Unfortunately, Britain is not a member. We all know that Britain would have more economic clout in getting results with respect to the goals we all pursue than many other countries. I must say that the response by the big hitters; the United Kingdom, the U.S. and West Germany, has been disappointing concerning these problems. The U.S. Government has put in place a strong economic embargo against little Nicaragua but fails to do the same with respect to South Africa.