

of our facilities and using, sometimes, the talents of our people—and that, of course, is something that we are all very pleased about.

Now, I guess the problem is how to get them to say “filmed in Canada” on those films, to show the world just what kind of a place we are.

I will take my honourable friend's inquiry under consideration. I do not know whether I can give him an answer. I can tell him that the Minister of Communications is at present engaged in conversations with his provincial colleagues, who are important in this field, to devise a movie-making policy for Canada that is better than the one we have—because I certainly think that can be done. Meanwhile, I thank my honourable friend for his interesting discourse.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SOUTH AFRICA—APARTHEID—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ADOPT UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, in light of the government's preoccupation with human rights at home, perhaps we might turn to the subject of human rights abroad. In light of the recent statements of the federal government and the Prime Minister condemning the apartheid laws in South Africa, when will the government move to adopt the United Nations convention to suppress and outlaw apartheid as being contrary to international law?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I can tell my honourable friend that at the last Commonwealth conference in Bermuda, the nations that attended, a good many of which are frontline states in southern Africa, agreed on a common policy. One of the significant initiatives adopted then was to arrange for a group of persons called “The Eminent Persons Committee” to visit South Africa in the name of the Commonwealth to attempt to open up negotiations on the whole question of apartheid.

The Canadian member of “The Eminent Persons Committee” is Archbishop Scott, the Primate of the Anglican Church in Canada. Also members of the committee are distinguished representatives from Nigeria and Australia and two other Commonwealth countries. An advance guard has already been sent to South Africa—or they will be going very soon—in order to make a preliminary sortie and to see what kind of prospects they find ahead of them. It would behoove us, as a matter of policy, to allow “The Eminent Persons Committee”—supported as it is by Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana—all countries that are on the South African border—and endorsed by those nations, to say nothing of the rest of the Commonwealth, to do what it can before we consider further steps.

Senator Grafstein: As the Leader of the Government can see, this causes some difficulty to other nations which have decided vigorously not only to speak against apartheid, to take steps to reduce and suppress apartheid, but also to adopt domestically the UN convention suppressing and outlawing apartheid as being contrary to international law. Decisive action by Canada would be an additional signal to that

country that Canadians view apartheid as an abhorrent practice. I do not see the two actions as being contrary to one another, or why one should await the other initiative.

Therefore, I would ask the Leader of the Government to take our thoughts to the government and to the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the hope that he might, as an additional step, accelerate the adoption of that convention in Canada.

Senator Roblin: Honourable senators, I do not think that I would give that undertaking, because I believe that the combined unanimous judgment of the Commonwealth countries, which are most closely associated with this matter, is the guideline that we should follow at the present time. They did not consider it productive or constructive at that particular time to move beyond the position they took in Bermuda, and I think it would be rash for me to suggest that another course would be more desirable until we have played out that option.

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

POTATO INDUSTRY—STABILIZATION OR DIVERSION PROGRAM

Hon. Eymard G. Corbin: Honourable senators, I would like to return to a question raised a few moments ago by my colleague Senator Bonnell. I want to deal with the regional problem concerning the potato industry.

The Honourable Leader of the Government will remember that last year I raised with him on a number of occasions the matter of the unfortunate decision reached by the government abolishing a commission which was inquiring into the potato industry.

At that time, I predicted that the problems faced by that industry in Eastern Canada would not disappear for all that. After some time, I knew that the industry would again knock on our doors asking for help. Unfortunately, it has happened once more this year. I described the problem as a cyclical one. In spite of repeated efforts by the previous government, especially the then Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Eugene Whelan, to find solutions to that problem, the conclusion was that a royal commission of enquiry might finally throw some light on that industry's complex problems.

Unfortunately, this government has chosen to abolish that commission. This is why once more the potato industry is coming to a deadlock. Last fall's potato crop is virtually being given away.

This is a very serious problem. I wholeheartedly support the comments made by my colleague from Prince Edward Island. I would ask the Leader of the Government if he will try with all possible speed to convince his cabinet colleagues of the urgency this year of helping in some way that sector of the Canadian farming industry.

As many others, I fear that if the provincial and federal governments cannot find a solution or solutions for establishing a marketing board for eastern Canada or other mechanisms, many family farms will have to shut down. Of course, big business will make a grab at this most valuable prime land for practically nothing.