

a lengthy statement arguing against the item being put on the agenda. However, the item was inscribed on the agenda after a vote of 61 in favour (including Canada), 8 against, with 7 abstentions. The South African Minister of External Affairs then announced on November 24 that South Africa would maintain only token representation at the United Nations.

The question of race conflict in South Africa was considered at six meetings of the Special Political Committee, and the South African Representative attended none of these meetings. The Special Political Committee adopted a resolution by a vote of 56 in favour, 5 against, with 10 abstentions (including Canada) which invited "the Government of the Union of South Africa to co-operate in a constructive approach to this question more particularly by its presence in the United Nations"; and requested "the Secretary-General, as appropriate, to communicate with the Government of the Union of South Africa to carry forward the purposes of this resolution". When the question came before the General Assembly in plenary session on January 30, the resolution was adopted by a vote of 56 in favour, 5 against, with 12 abstentions (including Canada).

During the discussion on this agenda item, the principal concern of the Canadian Delegation was that an attempt to re-establish the Commission on the Racial Situation in South Africa might result in South Africa completely severing its relations with the United Nations. On January 16 the Canadian Representative explained that since consideration of this problem year after year brought no progress towards a solution, the Canadian Delegation became more of the opinion that this kind of intervention by the United Nations in matters of domestic concern of a member country not only had serious constitutional implications for the United Nations but had little practical value. The Canadian Representative suggested that an organization of sovereign states which did not respect the sovereignty of a member state would make little impression upon a government which chose to attend to its own affairs without heed to the advice of other governments. He emphasized, however, that Canadians have grave doubts about policies of racial discrimination based on notions of the superiority of one racial group in a multi-racial society.

Treatment of Indians in South Africa

The General Assembly has considered this question at ten of its sessions. The seventh session in 1952 set up a Good Offices Commission¹ (GOC), consisting of Cuba, Syria and Czechoslovakia to arrange and assist in negotiations between the Government of the Union of South Africa and those of India and Pakistan. The General Assembly also called on the South African Government to suspend implementation of the Group Areas Act restricting various racial groups to specific areas of residence and economic activity until negotiations were concluded. Canada, although wholeheartedly supporting the principles expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the Charter, abstained in the vote on the resolution setting up the GOC because, in the absence of an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice, there is a legitimate doubt

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1952-53*, pp. 12-13.