

STATEMENT DISCOURS

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85/37

Statement on South Africa
by the Right Honourable
Joe Clark, Secretary
of State for External
Affairs

Baie Comeau

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Canadian policy on human rights in South Africa follows a tradition of special involvement and concern which dates back to the early sixties. When John Diefenbaker returned from the meeting in London which resulted in South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth, in 1961, he told the House:

"I took the position that if we were to accept South Africa's request unconditionally our action would be taken as approval, or at least condonation, of racial policies which are repugnant to and unequivocally abhorred and condemned by Canadians as a whole."

Canadians are aware that no country's record is without blemish on questions of race and colour. Our own approach cannot be a vindictive or self-righteous one: we must lament all instances of prejudice.

There are flagrant violations of human rights in countries other than South Africa - and Canada has protested against them in clear and forceful terms. But we surely cannot ignore a situation, in a country once close to us, where the principles of equality and justice are so grossly denied. South Africa stands alone in continuing to pursue an official and avowed policy of separation and discrimination based on race and colour.

The fundamental changes in South Africa we had hoped for - during the past quarter century - have not come about. One tragic incident follows another - almost 400 South Africans have lost their lives in the past year, reflecting growing frustration at exclusion and rejection. In these circumstances the persistence - the enormity - of institutionalized racism can only cause a widening gulf between our two countries.

We regret that. But the time has come for basic change - for the repudiation of apartheid as a concept and a policy.

Let me address a brief word, in this context, to the Government of South Africa and its supporters. We believe a change of direction is possible within South Africa and in South Africa's relations with other countries. Though it may seem frightening to some, it is surely better to abandon conflict and to enter into partnership with all South Africans than to persist in the present course. If the Government of South Africa continues to proceed timidly and grudgingly at each step, and continues to put down non-violent opposition, even the most moderate may reach the end of their patience,

and be driven to violence. Far better to admit all South Africans to full participation in the affairs of their country now. Far better to rebuild your ties with other countries. That is the future we hope to see.

In view of the continuing violence imposed by apartheid within South Africa and the repeated attacks on neighbouring states, we must, however, make our position clear. Canada cannot tolerate a course which means continued repression within South Africa, and lawless raids outside - on countries which are our friends and our partners in the Commonwealth. There is a rising tide of revulsion in Canada - and elsewhere - at the injustices of apartheid. We cannot accept that the majority of South Africans should remain on the outside, deprived of dignity and basic human rights, harassed by police, arbitrarily held in detention, denied citizenship, some separated from their families, all deprived of a true voice in their own country's affairs.

It has been too long. Much too long when apartheid needs to be defended outside the country's border by gross violations of other countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity. And the suffering too great. It must not continue.

That is the view that has been forcefully conveyed to me by many Canadians. That is the sense drawn from many Canadians who have written to express their views and from the consultations we have held with interested Canadians from all walks of life. There is a widespread desire for Canada to take a strong stand and to play a constructive part, even if it involves some costs for us.

I am announcing today some further measures as an immediate response to the situation which confronts us. They are, however, only part of a larger process. I hope that Canadians will participate in a broader review of Canada's relations with South Africa through the hearings of the Special Joint Committee on Canada's International Relations. They can thus participate in making the choices, including what burdens we should bear.

The additional measures we are introducing, like those which preceded them, do entail some costs for all Canadians, whether as taxpayers, exporters, investors or sports people. In the circumstances, the burden is not heavy and it is widely distributed.

The new measures are as follows:

1. The government has decided to strengthen the voluntary "Code of Conduct Concerning the Employment Practices of Canadian Companies Operating in South Africa" in three ways.

- I shall shortly appoint an independent and impartial Administrator for the Code, and companies will be expected to submit to him copies of their annual public reports. He will work with the companies and other interested parties, monitor compliance with the Code, and submit an annual report to me which I will table in Parliament.
- A standard reporting format has been devised for the preparation of reports and will be made available to companies operating in South Africa.
- Because some uncertainty has arisen, I also want to make it clear that all Canadian companies operating in South Africa, including those with minority holdings, are asked to issue annual reports pertaining to their involvement there.

2. The government will tighten its application of the United Nations arms embargo by restricting exports of sensitive equipment such as computers to the police, the armed forces, and other South African departments and agencies involved in the enforcement of apartheid.

3. The government has accepted the voluntary United Nations embargo on the importation of arms manufactured in South Africa. This measure was recommended by the UN Security Council late last year. It will now be enforced in Canada.

We are, by several steps, terminating a number of official measures which lend support to trade with and investment in South Africa.

4. The Canada-South Africa Double Taxation Agreements will be abrogated. That is the fourth measure.

5. The Programme for Export Market Development (PEMD) will no longer be available to Canadian exporters for market development in South Africa.

6. We are also terminating the applicability to South Africa of global insurance policies issued by the Export Development Corporation under Section 24 of its Act.

7. Canada has been a faithful adherent of the sports boycott first agreed at the Commonwealth Meeting in 1977. We are now reaffirming our backing of the boycott on sporting contacts between nationally-representative Canadian and South African athletes. For greater clarity and certainty in its application, the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sports and I have agreed to specific guidelines. They are being issued today in the form of a press release and will be made widely available to sporting organizations. They cover contacts in Canada, South Africa and third countries.

8. The next measure relates specifically to Namibia. As a further voluntary measure, under Security Council Resolution 283, which recommended that countries end commercial activities related to Namibia by agencies under government control, the government has decided to terminate all toll-processing of Namibian uranium imported from South Africa. Such processing, has been carried out under contracts between Eldorado Nuclear, a crown corporation, and parties in third countries. Existing contracts will be honoured but no new contracts for the processing of Namibian uranium imported from South Africa will be entered into. Should South Africa set a date for the implementation of the UN Plan for Namibian independence, we shall consider rescinding this measure.

9. The Security Council recently recommended that governments prohibit the sale of Kruggerands in their jurisdiction. Because that may involve problems with GATT, we have decided to discourage their sale by drawing that resolution to the attention of all Canadians and by conveying it to the financial institutions which deal in gold coins. I would emphasize that the Security Council's resolution is not binding. There is therefore no coercion in this matter but our consultations make us confident that the recommendation will be respected.

10. Because cooperation between government departments and agencies may directly or indirectly lend support to the enforcement of apartheid, the government has decided to monitor more closely contacts between federal departments and agencies and departments and agencies of the South African Government, particularly in sensitive areas.

The measures I have cited reinforce Canada's opposition to apartheid. We are also introducing several measures specifically designed to help facilitate peaceful change.

11. We intend to appoint an officer to our embassy in South Africa charged with responsibility for labour affairs. The mandate of that officer will be to follow the rapidly evolving labour scene in South Africa, the development of non-racial trade unions, and to facilitate cooperation in the labour area. We shall, of course, be consulting with the CLC on this matter.

12. Finally, we plan to increase very substantially the funding available to support the education and training of blacks in South Africa and Canada. Some \$5 million has been set aside to support an expanded programme. The World University Service of Canada and the South African Institute for Race Relations have played a key role in our current project and I wish to pay tribute to them. We shall be examining how best to proceed with an expanded programme.

Those are the measures I am announcing today. As I mentioned earlier, they are part of an on-going process.

First, we shall continue our review of policy toward South Africa in consultation with the parliamentary committee and interested Canadians who come forward to address it. We invite them to do so.

Second, we are going to discuss these questions and the choices open to us with our close friends and allies. That will not be done on one occasion, but through continuing talks and exchanges. The meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government in October will, however, be a particularly important occasion for examining how our goal of peaceful progress toward a free and equal society in South Africa, living at peace with its neighbours, can best be realized. Some conclusions may be drawn at that time.

Third, the recommendations of the parliamentary committee, after its hearings are concluded, will provide a further basis for determining the course to pursue and the progress being made in dismantling apartheid. That is the process we are pursuing.

Let us look to a brighter and better day -- when such measures may be abandoned. When tolerance and understanding may grow out of the sad ashes of conquest, colonialism and racial separation; when the people of South Africa may join in a common effort and build a common society.

Mr. Diefenbaker said there would always be a light in the window for South Africa. That remains true today. We look to the resumption of old ties and the creation of new ones when all South Africans are treated on the same basis under their law and constitution. The steps I have announced are signs of Canada's commitment to that goal.