

External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

No. 53/31

THE QUESTION OF MOROCCO

Text of a statement made on October 16, 1953 by the Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, Mr. Alcide Cote, M.P., in the First Committee of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly. (Agenda Item 157)

I intervene briefly to explain the attitude of the Canadian Delegation on the resolution before us. It may have been noted that we did not speak in the general debate. This was not due to any lack of interest in the Moroccan question or because we considered it to be an unimportant one. Our reasons for not speaking in the general debate were of a different order and stemmed from the fact that we did not feel we had anything substantial to add to what the Canadian Representative said on this and the related Tunisian question at the seventh session of the General Assembly.

Let me restate briefly the views we then expressed on the competence of the General Assembly to consider this matter and on the substance of the question.

On the question of competence we do not take the view expressed in the general debate by several delegations that any discussion of the Moroccan question is contrary to Article 2(7) of the Charter. Although we do not ourselves subscribe to this interpretation of the Charter, we have full respect for those who do. As the Canadian Representative made clear last year, we make a distinction between "competence to discuss" and "competence to intervene". Once a question has been included on our agenda we accept the Assembly's competence to discuss it, but we consider the right of discussion should not be abused. As has been forcefully pointed out by the Delegation of the United Kingdom in this debate, the distinction between discussion and intervention is perhaps a fine one, but it is one which we nevertheless maintain can in practice be usefully made. In the absence of any decision by the International Court of Justice we will use our best judgment in determining whether any resolution resulting from our discussions constitutes an intervention prohibited by Article 2(7) of the Charter.

As regards the substance of the matter we said last year that if the historical experience of the Canadian people has any relevance to this discussion, it points to the value of peaceful evolution towards self-government. The use of force breeds hatred and makes hatred and makes future collaboration difficult, if not impossible, regardless of the final outcome. Indeed, Canadian experience has always pointed to the usefulness, if not the necessity, of maintaining, in this interdependent world, economic, cultural and even political ties between the newly emerging state and its former protector. At the same time we recognize as a

It will be recognized that this is a principle which can be a principal condition to the achievement of self-government, the creation of competent administrative services, a practical understanding of democratic processes and insofar as possible, a viable economy. Again from our own Canadian experience we are particularly conscious of the necessity for the full protection of the rights of minorities.

The resolution adopted by the Assembly last year urging the continuation of discussions between the two parties in the spirit of the Charter was, we felt, in harmony with our conciliatory approach to the problem and we supported it. In the light of what I have said above it will, however, be clear that the resolution tabled by the 13 Arab-Asian countries defining in categorical terms the action which should now be taken by France goes beyond what, in our view, it would be appropriate and useful for this assembly to recommend on the question of Morocco. For this reason we are unable to support it in its present form. The Canadian Delegation reserves its position on the draft resolution which the distinguished delegate of Bolivia has first indicated that he proposes to introduce.



On the question of competence we do not take the view expressed in the general debate by several delegates that any discussion of the Moroccan question is contrary to Article 2(V) of the Charter. Although we do not ourselves subscribe to this interpretation of the Charter, we have full respect for those who do. As the Canadian Representative made clear last year, we make a distinction between "competence to discuss" and "competence to intervene". A question has been included on our agenda we accept the Assembly's competence to discuss it, but we consider that of discussion should not be entered as has been pointed out by the Delegation of the United Kingdom in its debate, the distinction between discussion and intervention is perhaps a fine one, but it is one which we nevertheless maintain in practice as usefully made. In the case of any decision by the International Court of Justice we will use our best judgment in determining whether any resolution resulting from our discussions constitutes an intervention prohibited by Article 2(V) of the Charter. As regards the substance of the matter we said last year that if the historical experience of the Canadian has any relevance to this discussion, it points to the fact of peaceful evolution towards self-government. The use of force breeds hatred and makes hatred and makes future cooperation difficult, if not impossible. Canadian experience has always pointed to the usefulness, if not the necessity, of maintaining in this interdependent world, economic, cultural and political ties between the newly emerging states and former protector. At the same time we recognize as a