

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE KEEPING

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operations administered by the Secretary-General have probably been alarmed by the very speed and good order with which action can be taken. Even in the Congo, where conditions developed in a very dangerous way, rapidly getting beyond the point at which one might envisage effective peace keeping, the discipline and imaginative diplomacy exhibited by those acting for the United Nations was truly remarkable....

DISPUTE OVER PEACE-KEEPING COSTS

...The dispute over the powers of the General Assembly in initiating, controlling and assessing the sharing of the costs of peace keeping has its roots deep in the history of the United Nations. It is not possible to review that history now. We can merely note that the United Nations has reached a very difficult point in its history; it has an accumulated debt, a patchwork of payment arrangements for operations under way and a constitutional crisis over responsibility for peace keeping....

The Soviet Union believes that only the Security Council can take decisions on questions relating to the establishment, financing and use of United Nations forces. It is using all the arguments it can muster from the Charter and all its power and influence to make its point of view prevail.

The Soviet Union can impose a kind of financial veto and is doing so. It has, of course, made a very general commitment to contribute voluntarily to a fund to overcome the debts, in recognition of the fact that the majority of nations did not finally force the issue over the loss of voting power....If the Soviet Union makes this contribution, however, it will undoubtedly extract as much benefit as possible from this act in trying to ensure that its views prevail in the future. If they do, then the Assembly would have little significant power in the peace-keeping field and the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, on whose prompt and impartial action so much depends, would be hampered seriously in their tasks.

Complete control of peace-keeping operations by the Security Council would not, of course, end all such operations or prevent any firm recommendations on world crises. The Council took a vigorous stand on the India-Pakistan conflict in September and the observation and truce supervision role of the United Nations in that area has been extended. Already, however, the Soviet Union is objecting to the follow-up actions taken by the Secretary-General to help arrange a cease-fire....

The attempt of some permanent members of the Council to return to the assumptions of 1945 meets, of course, with the stubborn opposition of other permanent members and of many other nations. A great deal has happened in 20 years. The General Assembly, which now has a great many more members, has shown that it can act effectively and responsibly. It is most unlikely to override great-power interests. For one thing, the realities of economic and military power put important limitations on too ambitious

schemes for United Nations action. But the diffusion of political power means that there are many areas in which middle and smaller powers should and do take a lead in international action....

CANADA'S POSITION

What I should like to do in this concluding section is to outline the essential points in the Canadian position. I may say that, on the important issues currently under discussion, we find ourselves very close to the United States positions. I might also take this occasion to pay tribute to the way in which the United States, with all its other preoccupations as a great power, has given unstinting political support to United Nations peace keeping. Canada has taken part in most peace-keeping operations and can appreciate that without the logistical and financial support of the United States they could not have been established and maintained.

The Canadian Government has stressed that the first priority is to restore the United Nations to financial solvency. We have pledged a voluntary contribution ourselves and hope that as many nations as possible will respond to the need. These voluntary contributions do not require commitment to particular theories about responsibility for peace keeping in the past or in the future. Overcoming the accumulated debt would be one important step towards creating confidence and defining an area of common interest from which we could try to reach a new understanding about peace keeping.

The Canadian Government has also proposed that the United Nations improve its capacity for prompt action in the peace-keeping field by preparing in advance for emergencies. Last November, a conference was convened in Ottawa with representatives of 23 countries which had shown special interest in peace keeping in order to discuss some of the technical and military aspects of these operations. The exchange of views and experience was helpful and of benefit to the United Nations....

On the central issue under debate, Canada has given full recognition to the primary responsibility of the Security Council and in particular to the responsibilities of the permanent members for the authorization of peace-keeping operations. We have insisted, however, that the General Assembly should retain its residual rights in this general field of international peace and security, in case the Council cannot act effectively. We are convinced that there is a common interest which can be found by serious negotiation and defined for the guidance of the organization in the future.

BROADLY-BASED FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY URGED

We have also laid particular stress on the necessity of a broadly-shared responsibility for financing. If it becomes the rule, voluntary financing by limited numbers of member states will undermine the moral authority of the United Nations. To achieve the greatest possible political effect, a United Nations mission, observer group or force should represent the moral commitment of as nearly universal a group