

External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

No. 53/42 REVISION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER

Text of a statement made on October 26, 1953, by the Canadian Representative in the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Alan A. Macnaughton, Q.C., M.P., on agenda items 58, 70 and 72. These items deal with preparatory work with regard to the possible holding of a General Conference on Revision of the United Nations Charter.

The Canadian Delegation has been happy to join in co-sponsoring the draft resolution of Argentina, Cuba, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Pakistan.

Since Canada is pledged to the cause of the United Nations, we desire to see it function effectively. We recognize that no element in such functioning is more vital than that of the goodwill of Member States, and their determination to make the United Nations work; without such goodwill and determination the most perfect constitution may be set at naught. Few will claim that our Charter is in every respect perfect. It is, however, a very difficult question as to whether the realities of the international situation will permit the Charter to be changed in order to remove any imperfections it contains. The question as to whether it is or is not practical to improve the Charter is however one which we do not consider requires an answer at the present time.

We shall, however, in two years' time, be obliged to consider this question and it is realistic to consider undertaking such preparatory work now as will make our task at that time easier and more securely founded on factual premises.

The draft resolution approaches this task from two directions, each complementary to the other. Firstly, it provides for the publication in a systematic and organised fashion of the documentation of the founding conference. I think that delegates have conceded the need for such work. This material might usefully have been made available before now, for its international value is apparent, quite apart from our present purposes. Not only our own successors but historians as well, may derive benefit from this material when it is accessible and properly indexed.

Secondly, paragraphs 2 and 3 provide for the expression of the preliminary views of Member States, with regard to the possible review of the Charter, and for the due circulation of such views. These provisions should at once reassure those Delegations which have expressed doubts