

Institutional Improvement and Administrative and Budgetary Questions

The twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly saw a business-like attitude prevail in the Fifth Committee. Political considerations, though always present in the debate, rarely obstructed the fruitful conclusion of the items on the agenda.

During this session, Canada participated in three initiatives in the Fifth Committee flowing from the statement of the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the general debate identifying certain of the institutional problems confronting the organization. The Canadian delegation sponsored a resolution on the pattern of conferences designed to restrict their number and to limit servicing requirements to the essentials. This initiative met with the approval of the Committee and by the General Assembly in plenary session, where it was approved unanimously.

Another Canadian initiative was the co-sponsorship and introduction of a resolution aimed at reducing the excessive volume of documentation in the United Nations family of organizations. This resolution, too, was approved by the Committee without objection, as it was in plenary.

Canada also participated in the drafting and sponsorship of a resolution aimed at ensuring orderly expansion of headquarters accommodation in New York. The resolution, which was introduced in the Committee by the Canadian delegation, authorized the Secretary-General to proceed with the new construction in New York and also made provision for a study of the possibility of relocating certain units of the United Nations elsewhere. This resolution was also accepted by the General Assembly by a large majority.

In all, the acceptance of these and other resolutions by the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly as a whole opened the way for continued efforts towards improving the United Nations machinery both in efficiency and effectiveness.

The first reports of the UN Board of Auditors, of which Canada is a member, were discussed in the Fifth Committee and approved. The Auditor General of Canada was first appointed to the three-member board in 1967 and will be eligible for re-election for another three-year period at the fall 1970 session of the General Assembly.

Aircraft Hijacking

Thirty United Nations member states including Canada undertook an initiative at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly to inscribe on the agenda an item entitled "Forcible Diversion of Civil Aircraft in Flight". After considerable discussion and negotiation in the corridors, a resolution was passed in the General Assembly, supported by 77 countries; two were opposed, while 17 abstained.

The resolution calls on states to take every appropriate measure to ensure that their national legislations provide an adequate framework for effective legal measures against all kinds of unlawful interference with civil aircraft in flight. Specifically, it urges states to ensure that