

Peace-keeping Operations

I have been dealing with some of the main issues before this Assembly. I turn now to a set of problems which vitally affect the future of this organization.

Of fundamental importance are the United Nations peace-keeping operations in the Middle East, in the Congo and now in West New Guinea. Canada contributes men and resources to all these operations and regards this contribution as a prime responsibility of membership.

In the Congo, the United Nations has assumed its heaviest responsibility. The Secretary-General's programme for national reconciliation there has been favourably received by the parties principally concerned and Canada is encouraged to hope that this plan will go forward smoothly. The elements of success in this difficult situation are a willingness on the part of the Congolese themselves to resolve their difficulties and a readiness on the part of all other states to support the programme.

In this connection, the Commonwealth prime ministers had this to say (and I think it is important coming from that conference): "They took note, in particular, of the proposals relating to the Congo which were recently put forward by the Acting Secretary-General of the United Nations, and they expressed the hope that these would prove to be the basis for a speedy and constructive settlement."

The task which the United Nations undertook in the Congo was one which it simply could not shirk. Members of this Assembly need hardly be reminded, however, that one consequence has been a financial crisis verging on bankruptcy. Canada has supported ad hoc measures for meeting immediate financial needs, but we have also consistently sought to place the financing of United Nations peace-keeping operations on a solid foundation. We have urged that the basis should be collective responsibility.

For this reason, the Canadian Government welcomed the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on July 20, which confirmed that the costs incurred for the United Nations Emergency Force and the Congo Force were "expenses of the organization" within the meaning of Article 17 of the Charter. This authoritative opinion should be endorsed by the General Assembly and should form the basis for financing peace-keeping operations. After all, advisory opinions of the Court ought to be fully respected in the interests of establishing international rules of order.

Basing ourselves on the principle of collective responsibility, we must find a formula for apportioning peace-keeping costs, because this organization has to be in a position to fulfil its Charter purposes.