

Challenges for the Future

Two of the most important challenges facing the United Nations are peace keeping and the problem of under-development. The overwhelming majority of United Nations member states are under-developed countries. So long as this condition persists, there cannot be any expectation of lasting peace and stability. We must help these countries to develop their economies. In so doing, we are making it easier for the United Nations to achieve peace in the world.

Peace Keeping and Financing

Of course, peace keeping has been a special preoccupation of Canada's since the United Nations was founded.

All nations agree that the United Nations should improve its ability to keep the peace. The basic purpose of the organization is, after all, the maintenance of peace and security. In this field the effectiveness of the United Nations depends on the means it has available for action. Unfortunately, to date, peace-keeping operations have been organized without much advance planning. It has been impossible to reach agreement as to the ways in which these operations should in general be authorized, controlled and financed.

The Charter must, of course, be our starting-point. However, part of the trouble is that the United Nations has been called upon to deal with situations which were not clearly set forth in the Charter. Also, the idea of collective security in the Charter has undergone significant changes. The changes have been gradual; each has been made for a good reason at the time. We can see how this has happened. The enforcement provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter have in practice been abandoned in favour of recommendations. The General Assembly, and not just the Security Council, can start peace-keeping action in certain circumstances. The smaller and middle powers have been asked to help by using their armed forces.

One solution would be to revise the Charter but this, I fear, has no hope of success. U Thant has drawn attention to the fact that "situations involving the restoration or maintenance of international peace and security vary so considerably that it would be very difficult to attempt to rewrite the Charter to include absolutely clear and precise provisions to deal with every given situation to the satisfaction of all members".

I am personally confident that, with goodwill and co-operation, it should be possible to find an acceptable formula, within the terms of the Charter, to overcome the present difficulties that face the organization.

We in Canada regret that, in recent years, fewer states have accepted the principle of collective financial responsibility for the costs of peace-keeping operations. Nevertheless, in the dispute over this issue in the last couple of years, there was really no reasonable alternative for the United Nations but to come to terms with the strongly held views of the Soviet Union and France. Moreover, I should