

In his opening address Prime Minister L. B. Pearson said that the Conferences of the IPU demonstrated the worth of the parliamentary system and provided the opportunity for informal exchanges in which the parliamentarians of the world might discuss their best hopes and worst fears.

It was noted by the Honourable Paul Martin, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, that the IPU Conference created opportunities for the "objective study" of problems of immediate and common concern that was essential to any real negotiation on world issues. Mr. Martin emphasized the peace-keeping role of the United Nations, with particular reference to the long-term questions of responsibility for initiating and financing future peace-keeping operations. Canadian participation in peace-keeping operations, he said, was "based on the conviction that, if the United Nations membership means anything, it means that middle and smaller powers have rights and obligations with respect to the search for security".

Message from UN Secretary-General

The problems and potentials of the United Nations were summarized as follows in a speech read for Secretary-General U Thant of the UN, who was unable to attend the Conference because of the Kashmir situation, by Mr. C. V. Narasimhan, Under-Secretary for General Assembly Affairs:

... it seems appropriate that all of us in public life should rededicate ourselves to, and reaffirm the validity and essentiality of, the objectives of peaceful settlement, collective security, economic and social justice and the regulation, reduction and elimination of armaments, especially the weapons of mass destruction. I have never tired of repeating the obvious fact that the United Nations will be as strong or as weak as its members wish it to be. On this occasion, I should like to appeal to you, who are the representatives in your respective national legislatures of the people of the United Nations, to view national actions against the international criteria of common interest, so that the United Nations can truly serve as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of common ends.

A long debate on the topic "The United Nations, Instrument of International Co-operation for Peace and Disarmament" demonstrated international concern over the many-sided problems facing the world body. Among the problems discussed were: universal representation; Kashmir; Vietnam; the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and arms control leading to complete and effective disarmament; cost-sharing; the modification of the structure of the United Nations; technical assistance to under-developed countries; and the importance of co-operative action by large and small nations for the preservation of the original principles of the UN.

A Composite Resolution

Six resolutions on the UN debate topic, which had been submitted by Britain, Israel, Argentina, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the U.S.S.R., were reduced to a composite draft that was adopted first by the Committee on Political Questions, International Security and Disarmament and then, on September 17, by the Conference itself, by a vote of 545 in favour, none against, with five abstentions. This