

Recently, there has been some confused criticism of the concept of peacekeeping and Canada's role in United Nations activities in this field. The position of the Canadian Government on this question is clear; we recognize that peacekeeping and efforts at "peacemaking" should be pursued simultaneously. Peacekeeping forces contribute to the restoration or creation of conditions within which political settlements may become possible and meanwhile help prevent a deterioration in the situation. Our objective in supporting United Nations peacekeeping activities has been to buttress the ability of the Organization to hold the ring while the parties to a dispute attempt to settle their differences. We have, however, always taken the position that the parties should meanwhile make every effort to reach a settlement. Instead of belittling peacekeeping because of the problems which United Nations forces have encountered - for example in the Middle East - critics should devote their energies to suggesting ways to strengthen the UN's ability to discharge its primary responsibility for peace and security and to ensure that future UN forces will have better terms of reference for carrying out their mandate.

Canada has not simply been playing a passive role in the peacekeeping field. From the creation of the first force Canada has made a concrete contribution by participating in most peacekeeping operations. We have also sought whenever possible to promote movement by the parties towards a settlement.

I am convinced that Canadians want us to go on making a contribution to UN peacekeeping in spite of the undoubted