

of member states, suggestions have been made from time to time for a system of weighted voting in the Assembly. Canada considers this idea unwise. Aside from the fact that a Charter amendment to this effect would never be approved, the idea of weighted voting strikes right at the principle of state equality. Canada would agree with the comment of another Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld:

"The criticism of 'one nation, one vote' irrespective of size or strength, as constituting an obstacle to arriving at just and representative solutions, tends to exaggerate the problem. The General Assembly is not a parliament of elected individual members; it is a diplomatic meeting in which the delegates of member states represent governmental policies, and these policies are subject to all the influences that would prevail in international life in any case."*

In the early days of the United Nations, the countries that were instituting programs for action were at the same time those with the resources to carry them out. Today this is rarely the case. Indeed, in recent years the non-aligned and developing countries have increasingly used their strong voting majority to present a united front on a broad range of political and economic issues. In the eyes of some of the older countries, some of the decisions taken by the vote of the majority have appeared to be irresponsible, and in certain cases to involve a perversion of the Charter and the rules of procedure. (The contentious situation in which the organization finds itself will be discussed in Chapter Nine.) Canada believes that the situation demands a thorough reassessment of the role of the United Nations, and accordingly has given its support to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee set up in 1974 to study a possible restructuring of the United Nations system and to review the Charter. To work out a new way of implementing the time-honoured principle that power and responsibility should go hand

*Introduction to the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the organization, June 16, 1956–June 15, 1957.