

Although Canada has supported postponement of the Chinese representation question at each session of the General Assembly to date, the Secretary of State for External Affairs said in an address in Vancouver on August 25, 1955: "... It is becoming clearer that if the United Nations is to play the part that it should in the solution of certain Far Eastern problems, the *de facto* government of China has to be present in its discussion of these problems. If it is not, then the political conferences and negotiations concerning them will often have to be held outside the United Nations—which is unfortunate".

### Charter Review

Article 109 of the Charter of the United Nations provides for the holding of a general conference of members of the United Nations to review the Charter, upon specific conditions. Paragraph three of that Article (which was originally sponsored by Canada in 1945) provides that if such a conference has not been held before the tenth annual session of the General Assembly, the proposal to call such a conference shall be placed on the agenda of that session. A conference shall be held if so decided by a majority vote of the members of the General Assembly and by a vote of any seven members of the Security Council. Under ordinary circumstances the calling of a Review Conference requires a two-third majority of the Assembly and the vote of any seven members of the Security Council. The conference itself is not subject to veto but any Charter revisions which it recommended would be.

Recognizing the need for extensive preparation if a conference was to be held, the General Assembly, at its eighth session adopted a resolution (co-sponsored by Canada) instructing the Secretary-General to compile and index certain documents of the San Francisco Conference and prepare an appropriately indexed repertory of the practice of the United Nations organs. The Soviet bloc speakers strongly opposed the resolution and pictured everything concerned with Charter revision as part of a scheme to undermine the veto.

In Canada, various private groups and the Standing Committee on External Affairs of the House of Commons expressed interest in the subject of Charter Review and the Department of External Affairs set up a working group to examine each article of the Charter and to formulate tentative proposals for revising some of them. Views have also been exchanged with some friendly governments on these questions.

The United States and most Latin American states publicly advocated the holding of a conference. On the other hand the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and several Western European states expressed serious doubts about the wisdom of holding a conference in the near future. As a compromise the Secretary-General suggested, in his preface to the *Repertory of Practices of the United Nations Organs*, the possibility that the General Assembly at its tenth session might approve in principle the holding of a Charter Review Conference without setting any date for one at that time.

Canadian views on this subject have been based on two premises: (1) Failure to arrange a conference (which under proper circumstances could make useful studies and recommendations) might cause widespread disappointment but, on the other hand, an acrimonious and unproductive conference could have even more serious consequences; (2) A conference would not be likely to achieve success until international tensions are relaxed. Therefore, while not opposed to holding a Review Conference, Canada preferred to see it postponed to a sufficiently distant date to permit adequate preparations for it and a substantial easing of East-West differences.