

voted against, and 19 others abstained. Peace keeping, according to the Soviet Union, was the sole prerogative of the Security Council; the General Assembly's action in establishing the force and assessing the membership to pay for it was, therefore, "illegal" and no costs arising from it could be regarded as a binding charge on any member state. A number of Latin American members questioned the binding character of an assessment to provide funds for an extraordinary expenditure not part of the regular budget. Some Arab states took the position that the victim of aggression should be exempted from assessment; other governments simply pleaded poverty.

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, a number of governments began consistently to withhold payment of an assessed contribution. To attract the maximum number of contributors and to isolate those refusing to pay as a matter of principle, the United States and Britain made substantial voluntary contributions over and above their own assessment to be used to reduce the scale of the developing countries by approximately half. The number of defaulters declined slightly. The creeping indebtedness of the United Nations was a nagging worry, but funds were available to meet current costs and Article 19 was only a small cloud on the horizon.

The financial problem and all its legal and constitutional implications were brought to a head by the Congo crisis in 1960, which resulted in a Security Council decision to send troops to the assistance of the Congolese central government, the formation of ONUC and an eventual bill for the operation of approximately \$10 million a month.

The tenuous agreement which had brought ONUC into being was shattered in a matter of days. The United States and the Soviet Union were soon at odds on every substantive point of the operation's conduct. While the sending of troops to the Congo had indeed been approved by the Security Council, thus removing one traditional Soviet objection, the Soviet Union protested the Secretary-General's vigorous direction of the operation (including his exclusion of Soviet-bloc contingents from the force) as well as the General Assembly's subsequent decision to apportion costs by direct assessment. In Soviet theory, control and financing of peace-keeping operations were as much the prerogative of the Security Council as the initial authorization. The Soviet Union refused to pay its ONUC assessments.

The costs of maintaining the 18,000-man force soon outstripped the ordinary budget of the Organization, and the developing countries pressed with increasing vigour for financial relief. At the same time, Soviet arrears mounted to the point where the application of Article 19 became only a matter of time. The Soviet Union was now joined in its protests by France, which, for reasons of its own, also refused to pay its ONUC assessments.